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THE
PRACTICAL EXPOSITOR:

OR, AN
EXPOSITION

OF THE
NEW TESTAMENT,

IN THE FORM OF A
PARAPHRASE;

WITH OCCASIONAL NOTES IN THEIR PROPER PLACES
FOR FURTHER EXPLICATION,

AND
SERIOUS RECOLLECTIONS AT THE CLOSE OF EVERY CHAPTER.

TO WHICH IS ADDED,
AN ALPHABETICAL TABLE OF THE PRINCIPAL THINGS CONTAINED
IN THE PARAPHRASE, ESPECIALLY IN THE NOTES.

For the Use of the FAMILY and CLOSET.

By **JOHN GUYSE, D. D.**

THE FIFTH EDITION.

VOL. I.

CONTAINING THE
EVANGELISTS MATTHEW AND MARK.

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A PRAC-

AN ACCOUNT
OF THE
LIFE AND CHARACTER
OF THE
AUTHOR.

THE Reverend and worthy Dr. Conder gives the following account of the life and death of this much esteemed and pious Christian, in a funeral sermon preached by him on that mournful occasion, November 29, 1761.

DR. GUYSE, writes he, was originally of Hertford; descended of religious and creditable parents; blessed with a strictly virtuous education; and early called by the grace of God; so that he was admitted a member of the church of Protestant dissenters in that town, at fourteen years of age. His views were also very early directed towards the work of the ministry; and all his youthful years were accordingly spent in close application to study, under the direction of the most able instructors; first in the learned languages, and then in the several branches of academical erudition. He entered upon the ministry in his twentieth year, and Providence soon opened a door for his public ministrations at Hertford, as assistant to the aged Mr. Haworth, who being thereafter removed by death, he succeeded, by unanimous call, in the pastoral office and charge of that people; a charge which, with great reluctance and self-diffidence, he at length consented to undertake. Here God was with him, and for many years

continued his labours with a great degree of acceptance and success; and became particularly useful in guarding his flock against the erroneous sentiments of the favourers of the Arian scheme, which with much assiduity they laboured to propagate. Some years after, he received an invitation to London, which he accepted, (from the consideration of his inability to perform the duties of his function as he wished at Hertford, on account of his imperfect measure of health); and accordingly took leave of that people 26th July, 1727.

His sphere of activity was now greatly enlarged, and he was better enabled to exert himself to most useful and important purposes. By an uniform, genteel, religious, and friendly carriage, he became dear to his brethren in the ministry, and highly valued and esteemed by all. His reputation as a scholar, Christian, and divine, was widely spread, and his worth was generally known. His character and conduct were uniform and amiable in all the various points of light. In his religious principles he was fixed, steady, consistent, and open; never ashamed to own what he believed, or to vindicate it when opposed.—As a preacher, he was endowed with excellent and acceptable ministerial gifts; his compositions were solid, regular, well digested, and highly scriptural: In the holy books his knowledge and readiness were very remarkable, and have been the surprise of many.—As a pastor, he was an active, able, loving, and faithful guide and example to his flock, both in faith and practical godliness: He studied the things which made for peace, and godly edifying; and as he had the welfare of his people greatly at heart, so there were few ministers to be found more honoured and regarded than he was by them.

For many years he was favoured with a considerable share of health and spirits; but in the latter part of life he was afflicted with a painful lameness and a weak sight. These, it was feared, would have put a period to his public labours; but he was wonderfully sup-

supported by the comforts of grace; so that with remarkable resignation and cheerfulness, though under sensible decays of vigour and strength, he persevered in his ministrations till within a very few weeks of his decease.

SUCH was Dr. Guyse in life: But now, as to the closing scene, it is natural to ask, How did he leave the world? How did the Lord deal with him in his latest moments? Partly from personal knowledge, partly from proper information, continues our author, I am enabled to conclude the delightful narrative.

His latter end to a remarkable degree, was peace; he was enabled to leave the world with great composure, serenity, and hope of a blessed immortality. To friends that attended him in his confinement, he witnessed a good, a precious confession; he again and again declared his faith firm fixed upon him who is the Rock of ages; his hopes were alive towards God without a distressful cloud; hopes grounded upon the blood and righteousness of the dear Redeemer.—“Thanks
 “be to God, said he, I have no doubt, no difficulty
 “upon my mind, as to my eternal state; if I had, I
 “could not bear what I now feel! I know in whom I
 “have believed: Here my faith rests; the peculiar
 “doctrines of the gospel which I have long preached
 “are now the support of my soul: I live upon them
 “every day; and thence derive my never-failing com-
 “fort.” At another time,—“How good is my God
 “to me! how often has he made good to me that pro-
 “mise, *As thy days are, so shall thy strength be!*”

His great request to those that were about him to the last, was, to read the word and join in prayer with him: The vth chapter of Second Corinthians was particularly of singular use and satisfaction to his mind, on which he commented to this effect: *For we know, that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved,* &c. “Oh! when shall it be dissolved indeed! when

“shall this mortal put on immortality!” *In this we groan earnestly, desiring to be clothed upon, &c.* “This, this is my earnest desire, and what I am waiting for.” *For we that are in this tabernacle do groan being burdened:* “For this I groan daily, and ere long shall groan no more.” *Now he that hath wrought us for the self-same thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of his Spirit:* “This I have, this I do enjoy, and therefore am I confident. I am not afraid of death; I am rather afraid that I should err on the other hand, in being too desirous of it.” Thus on the morning of the Lord’s day in which he died, it was still the language of his heart and lips, “When shall I get through this valley?” and some of the last words he was capable of pronouncing so as to be understood, were, “Oh, my God, thou who hast always been with me, wilt not leave me.” Sweet confidence! Blessed readiness! With the apostle he was desirous to depart, that he might be with Christ: *Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright; for the end of that man is peace.*

DURING the fourscore years of his life, he sustained for sixty of them a public character; and departed the 22d November, 1761, in the 81st of his age.

T H E

THE
P R E F A C E
TO THE
FIRST AND SECOND VOLUMES,
CONTAINING THE
FOUR EVANGELISTS.

THE knowledge of the Holy Scriptures is so necessary to make us wise unto salvation, through faith in Christ Jesus, that it ought to have an uppermost place in our daily thoughts and desires, and in all our aims at keeping up vital religion in the family and closet, and in the whole of our conversation in the world. And as the sacred history, contained in the four Evangelists, relating to the birth, life, discourses and prayers, miracles, death and resurrection of the great Redeemer, carries the highest evidence of the truth and excellence of the Christian religion; and as it leads us to the foundation of all the doctrines of the gospel, which were afterwards more fully revealed; it is of great importance to be well acquainted with these parts of the oracles of God. I have therefore set them in as plain, practical, and evangelical a light as I can; and have neither refused nor confined myself to, helps of ancient or modern date, while my grand dependence has been on assistances from above; nor have I designedly slipt over any thing that I take to be the truth of the gospel, or given a wrong turn to so much as one passage in the whole, either from a desire of pleasing, or a fear of offending, much less from an inclination to disoblige, any party of men whatsoever.

THOUGH

THOUGH some inconveniences attend the paraphrastic way of interpretation, there are advantages in it that amply make amends for them: The true connection may therein be most easily discovered, and false constructions detected; and the explained text may be read in a regular series, in much less time than most of the admirable expositions which abound amongst us; they are generally too long for any considerable number of verses, with their explication, to be read at once, in the ordinary course of personal or social devotion, even on the Lord's day.

IN this *Paraphrase*, I have endeavoured to comprise all the senses that seem probable to me, and, mostly, to keep up the order of the several parts of the text itself; and the whole is disposed in such a manner, as may at once answer the design of a *Commentary*, and *Annotations*, with practical, and sometimes critical enlargements, in a continued thread of discourse, without any other breaks than of the chapters and verses themselves. For this purpose I have drawn as much as I could into the paraphrase, to save notes, because they are seldom turned to by the bulk of common Christians, and cannot be so well read out to company in due connection: And where *Notes* seemed necessary to support the given sense, or to add things that could not be brought into the paraphrastic form without making it too tedious, I have laboured to render them intelligible, not only to the learned, but likewise to the *English* reader, for whose benefit the whole of this work is chiefly intended.

WHEN the same things, for substance, are recited in two or more of the Evangelists, I have attempted to reconcile seeming contradictions; and, as often as it appeared to be of any great moment, to adjust the harmony: And instead of transcribing from a former gospel when the same things occur in another, I have taken some pains to alter the phrases and to set the same thoughts in different views, and with
various

various enlargements; for this, under the Spirit's guidance and influence, may be more likely to strike the mind, and to afford profitable and delightful entertainment, than if just the same ideas were to be repeated, and represented in the same turn of expression. These parallel places are often to be found in *Matthew*, *Mark*, and *Luke*: But the greatest part of *John* is, in a manner, a gospel by itself, containing new particulars relating to the same grand subject: And, as this divine historian wrote last, he not only supplies what the others had omitted, but the gospel-dispensation being then further advanced, and several errors broached in opposition to it, I cannot help observing, that he recites more of the evangelical parts of *John the Baptist's* testimony, and of our blessed Lord's discourses and prayers, and exhibits things of that nature in a stronger light, than they had done who wrote before him. And, with a view correspondent to this, I have ventured to break so far in upon the strictest rules of paraphrase, as sometimes to insert passages from the *Acts* and the *Epistles*, though they were written after the days of Christ's ministry upon earth, that I might take the advantage of *New Testament* light when it came to shine with brighter glory; and might explain things in the language of the Holy Ghost, by whom all scripture was inspired, though some of those things were not so well understood in their full evidence and extent when they were first delivered: And, for the like reason, I have given an interpretation of such things as our blessed Lord did not think proper at that time to explain; and to enliven the reading, have often anticipated his own explication of parables. See the note on Mat. xiii. 3.

EVERY one, who hath any acquaintance with the *Greek* language, knows that several particles, (such as *καί*, *δέ*, and *υἱ*,) in profane, as well as sacred writers, are of divers acceptations, the determinate sense of which is to be learnt from the coherence of the discourse. Thus *καί* and *δέ* are often put promiscuously
one

one for the other, as appears by comparing the same discourses in different gospels. $\kappa\alpha\iota$ is frequently used for *but, yea, even, yet, &c.* as well as *and*; $\delta\epsilon$ for *and, then, yet, &c.* as well as *but*; and $\nu\upsilon$ for *then, now, &c.* as well as *therefore*: And all these are sometimes particles of transition; and at others expletives, (as $\epsilon\gamma\epsilon\gamma\epsilon\tau\omicron$, *it came to pass*, also is.) See *Blackwell's Sacred Classics*, Vol. I. p. 143, &c. and *Whitby's* notes on John xvii. 11. and Rom. vi. 11. I therefore give such a sense of these small words as I apprehend may best preserve the connection; and when there is any departure from our translation, the Greek is usually inserted, as it likewise is in other instances, that it may be instead of notes, for men of letters to see the word, and judge about its force: And when the connection would be rather disturbed, than improved, by giving the forementioned, and such like particles any place in our idiom, I look upon them as pleonastic, and leave them out. And tho' $\iota\delta\epsilon$, *behold*, may sometimes be allowed to be expletive; yet it seems to me, that it is most frequently used for emphasis sake, and to awaken attention; accordingly I have most commonly given it a cast of that kind.

SEVERAL *Greek* words, and citations of other passages of scripture, and references to notes are, to save room, inclosed in parentheses in the body of the paraphrase; and so they may be easily passed over in reading, and consulted at leisure, as occasions require. In reading to a family, it may be best to omit them; but in retirement, every one may take the method that pleases him most.

As to what I call *Recollections*, because they sum up, in a pathetic and practical strain the principal things contained in the chapter, they are generally longer or shorter, in some proportion to the variety and importance of the preceding contents; and I hope the parts referred to may easily be discerned, though they are not recollected exactly according to the order in which

which things are laid down in the several chapters; but are sortéd together in such a manner, as seeméd most convenient for a short and moving discourse. And when, in secret or family exercises of religion, there may not be time enough for going through the paraphrase, the recollections, at a medium, may be read in two or three minutes, and the longest of them in four at most; and may be of good use, by the grace of God, for exciting pious affections after reading the chapter itself, and may throw some light upon it. But I hope frequent opportunities, especially in the closet, may be found to go through a middling chapter, with the paraphrase and recollections, which may be dispatched in less time than a sermon of common length: And I would beg leave to point out the Lord's-day evenings, as proper stated seasons, for this way of reading the word of God in Christian families, that they may be led into a familiar and impressive acquaintance with his mind and will therein, and that the children of the household may be brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

I HAVE long wished for a work of this nature to be undertaken by some better hand; but hearing of no such design being on foot by any one whatsoever, I was persuaded by several friends, and began to set about it, at leisure moments, in its present form, as God might enable me, several years ago: And I trust it has not been altogether without such divine assistances as have given me great pleasure, and some religious improvement, in composing it.

AND as many friends, whose favour I own with gratitude, have far exceeded my expectation in so readily encouraging this service of their own accord; I would hope it may be a token for good, that God will own it with some degree of usefulness, for spreading the favour of the knowledge of Christ, where it comes, notwithstanding all the defects, which I am sensible must be many, that attend it.

I HAVE so much exceeded the proposed number of sheets, that, for the *Bookseller's* sake, several things must be left out that were designed for the preface: And therefore I shall only add, that as, if I know myself, I have uprightly intended this labour for the glory of the great Lord of all, and for the good of the present and rising generations, without any sinister views, I now humbly lay it at his feet, looking up to him for a blessing upon it, that spiritual fruit may abound to the account of many, and that it may turn to my own salvation, through their prayers, and the supply of the spirit of Jesus Christ.

JOHN GUYSE.

A PRACTICAL EXPOSITION

OF THE

EVANGELIST MATTHEW,

IN THE FORM OF A

PARAPHRASE.

CH A P. I.

Christ's lineage from Abraham by Joseph, 1,—17. His conception and birth, 18,—25.

TEXT.

THE book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham.

PARAPHRASE.

AS the *Old Testament* begins with an account of the creation of this world; so it is proper to introduce the *New Testament* with a narrative of the genealogy and birth of Jesus Christ, according to the flesh, in the line of † *Joseph* his reputed father;

N O T E.

† This genealogy is given in the line of *Joseph*, because Christ was born of the virgin *Mary* in lawful wedlock with him; accordingly the *Jews* commonly accounted and called him *Joseph's* son. And as it was a rule with them to reckon genealogies by the family of the father; so this account of Christ's pedigree, by *Joseph*, from *Abraham* and *David*, was a sufficient proof of his descent from them by his mother too, because *Joseph* and *Mary* really were of the same tribe and family, as appears by their going to the same city of *David*, viz. *Bethlehem*, to be taxed, *Luke* ii. 4, 5. And the genealogy in his mother's line is also given by the evangelist *Luke*, chap. iii. See the notes there.

But it would carry us beyond the nature and compass of my design to enter into all the particular difficulties which attend these severally, and as compared with each other. The enemies of Christianity have started and urged them, and many learned men have laboured with good success in accounting for them. But if there were any that could not ea-

sily be removed, they rather affect the *Jewish* tables, than any point of our faith: For the evangelists herein only act the part of historians, setting down the genealogies as they stood in those public and allowed records; and therefore they were to take them as they found them. Nor was it needful that they should be inspired to correct the mistakes, if there were any; for these accounts sufficiently answer the end for which they are recited, as they unquestionably prove the grand point in view, viz. That Christ is of the family from whence the promised seed was to spring: And they had more weight with the *Jews* for this purpose, than if any alterations had been made by inspiration itself; for such alterations would only have introduced endless disputes between them and the disciples of our Lord, to no advantage. It was therefore highly prudent in the sacred writers, to avoid all foolish questions and genealogies. &c. for they are unprofitable and vain, Tit. iii. 9.: And for the like reasons, it becomes us to avoid captious inquiries about them.

ther; by which it appears, that the great Head and Author of a yet more glorious and abiding creation was the legal seed of *David*, who should sit on *his Father's throne*. (Luke i. 32); and of *Abraham*, in whom all nations were to be blessed*, (Gen. xxii. 18.); and so his lineage stands in the following order.

2 Abraham begat Isaac, and Isaac begat Jacob, and Jacob begat Judas, and his brethren.

3 And Judas begat Phares and Zara of Thamar, and Phares begat Esrom, and Esrom begat Aram.

4 And Aram begat Aminadab, and Aminadab begat Naasson, and Naasson begat Salmon.

5 And Salmon begat Booz of Rachab, and Booz begat Obed of Ruth, and Obed begat Jesse.

6 And Jesse begat David the king, and David the king begat Solomon of her that had been the wife of Urias.

7 And Solomon begat Roboam, and Roboam begat Abia, and Abia, begat Asa.

8 And Asa begat Josaphat, and Josaphat begat Joram, and Joram begat Ozias.

2 Abraham was the father of Isaac, and Isaac of Jacob, and Jacob of Judas, and his brethren.

3 Judas had Phares, and Zara, by Thamar or Tamar; Phares was the father of Esrom, and Esrom of Aram.

4 Aram was the father of Aminadab, and Aminadab of Naasson, and Naasson of Salmon.

5 Salmon had Booz by Rachab or Rabab, and Booz had Obed by Ruth, and Obed was the father of Jesse.

6 Jesse was the father of king David, and king David of Solomon by Bathsheba, who had been the wife of Urias.

7 Solomon was the father of Roboam or Rehoboam, and Roboam of Abia, and Abia of Asa.

8 Asa was the father of Josaphat or Jehoshaphat, and Josaphat of Joram or Jehoram, and from † Joram was lineally descended Ozias or Uzziab.

9 Ozias

NOTES.

* As this evangelist wrote particularly for the use of the Jews, he carries his genealogy no further back than to David and Abraham; for this sufficiently answered his end, which was to prove, that according to the scriptures of the Old Testament, and their own expectations, Christ descended from both these eminent men.

† Azariab, Joash, and Amaziab, were intermediate descendants between Jehoram and Uzziab. But it was usual with

the Jews to speak of remote posterity, as being often by their ancestors; accordingly the progeny of Hezekiab, after several generations, were called the sons, that should issue from him, which he should beget. (Isa. xxxix. 7.) And either the three above-mentioned persons were not found in the Jewish public genealogies of the kings of Judah; or the evangelist, designing, for memory's sake, to cast Christ's ancestor's into three fourteens, might chuse to omit the offspring of the detestable

9 And Ozias begat Joatham, and Joatham begat Achaz, and Achaz begat Ezekias.

10 And Ezekias begat Manasses, and Manasses begat Amon, and Amon begat Josias.

11 And Josias begat Jechonias & his brethren, about the time they were carried away to Babylon.

12 And after they were brought to Babylon, Jechonias begat Salathiel, and Salathiel begat Zorobabel.

13 And Zorobabel begat Abiud, and Abiud begat Eliakim, and Eliakim begat Azor.

14 And Azor begat Sadoc, and Sadoc begat Achim, and Achim begat Eliud.

15 And Eliud begat Eleazar, and Eleazar begat Matthan, and Matthan begat Jacob.

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

9 Ozias was the father of *Joatham* or *Jotham*, and *Joatham* of *Achaz* or *Abaz*, and *Achaz* of *Hexekias* or *Hexekiah*.

10 *Ezekias* was the father of *Manasses*, and *Manasses* of *Amon*, and *Amon* of *Josias*.

11 *Josias* was the father of *Jechonias* or *Jehoiakim* and his brethren, about the time that the Jews were carried into captivity in *Babylon*.

12 And after they were carried captive into *Babylon*, *Jechonias* had *Salathiel*, who was the father of *Zorobabel*.

13 *Zorobabel* was the father of *Abiud*, and *Abiud* of *Eliakim*, and *Eliakim* of *Azor*.

14 *Azor* was the father of *Sadoc*, and *Sadoc* of *Achim*, and *Achim* of *Eliud*.

15 *Eliud* was the father of *Eleazar*, and *Eleazar* of *Matthan*, and *Matthan* of *Jacob*.

16 And *Jacob* was the father of *Joseph*, who was the husband of *Mary*, the mother of our Lord, *Joseph* having been lawfully married to her before the time of her delivery; and the child, which she brought forth, was, according to the admonition of the angel hereafter mentioned, (ver. 21.) called *Jesus*; he being that Saviour, who is properly styled *the Messiah*, or *the Christ*; the first of which in the *Hebrew*, and the last in the *Greek*, signifies *the anointed*, because God anointed him to his office †.

17 Ac-

NOTES.

able *Athaliah* to the third generation; she having been the daughter of *Abab*, and *Yehoram*'s wife; and having introduced *Abab*'s idolatry into the family of *David*, 2 Kings viii. 18, 19.

† Among the ancestors of Christ, in the direct line of descent, several others are named. *Judas*'s brethren are mentioned with him, (ver. 2.) to encourage the faith and hope of the other tribes descended from them, that though they

were not, strictly speaking, our Lord's ancestors; yet he was born a Saviour to them, as well as to those of the tribe of *Judah*. And for a like reason, *Zara* of *Thamar*, a twin-brother of *Phares*, is mentioned with him, (ver. 3.) though the birth-right fell to *Phares*, he being the first-born, Gen. xxxviii. 27,—30. And perhaps to shew that the *Babylonish* captivity made no alteration in the interest that the several families of the tribe

of

17 So all the generations from Abraham to David, are fourteen generations: and from David until the carrying away into Babylon, are fourteen generations: and from the carrying away into Babylon unto Christ, are fourteen generations.

18 Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost.

19 Then Joseph her husband being a just man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily.

17 According to this genealogy of the blessed Jesus, the descents are cast into † three fourteens, which ran through the three famous periods of the rising, the prosperous, and the declining state of the Jewish church and nation: The first fourteen were under the government of patriarchs, prophets, and judges, from Abraham to David; the second, under kings, from David to the Babylonish captivity; and the third, under captains and priests, from the captivity to the birth of Christ, including him as one of the last fourteen.

18 Now, as to the conception and birth of Jesus Christ, the following things are very remarkable. After his mother Mary, according to the custom of the Jews, was contracted with Joseph by solemn promises before witness, that, God willing, they would marry one another in proper time, she appeared to be with child; which, in fact, was by a miraculous operation of the Holy Ghost, before ever they were actually married, or came together as man and wife; but was after the contract, to save her character from reproach.

19 Hereupon Joseph, her espoused husband, not knowing how this came to pass, was greatly perplexed; for he was a holy good man, who durst not marry an adulteress, and yet was not willing to expose her to open shame and danger of being put to death*, whom he so tenderly loved, and always believed to be a virtuous young woman: He therefore thought

N O T E S.

of Judah had in our Lord, the brethren of Jechonias are mentioned with him.

We may likewise observe, that among the ancestors of our Saviour, there are only four women recorded. Two of these were Gentiles; Rabah, who was a Canaanite, and a harlot; and Ruth, who was a Moabite, (ver. 5.); to give an early intimation, that Christ's salvation should extend to the Gentiles; and that there could be no just objection to this, since Gentiles were among the ancestors from whom he sprang. The other two women taken notice of were Thamar, (ver. 3.) and Uriah's wife, (ver. 6.); who were both adulteresses, and seem to be particularly mentioned in Christ's pedigree, to shew how deep an humiliation he submitted to, and how near he came to the likeness of sinful flesh without being defiled by it. and to shew what riches of grace the chief of sinners may hope to obtain through faith in him, who derived his human nature from some that had been exceeding vile.

† In the foregoing list of names, one seems to be wanting to complete the third fourteen. In answer to this, Dr. Whitby has shewn at large, that by Jechonias (ver. 11.) is meant Jeboiakim, the first-born of Josias; and that the Jechonias mentioned (ver. 12.) was Jeboiakim's son, who begat Salathiel while he was in Babylon: And so this Jechonias being taken into the account of the last series, makes it exactly fourteen. But if any should not be fully satisfied with this solution, Dr. Lightfoot tells us, that it was a custom, yea almost an axiom, in the Jewish schools, to reduce things and numbers to the very same when they were near alike. And he recites several examples of it. See Whitby and Lightfoot's *Hor. Hebr.*

* Under the law of Moses, a virgin betrothed was called the wife of him to whom she was espoused; and was to be stoned to death, if she voluntarily lay with another man, Deut. xxii. 23, 24.

20 But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.

21 And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins.

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

23 Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which, being interpreted, is God with us).

24 Then Joseph being raised from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife:

25 And knew her not till she had

thought it best to break off the contract, in as silent a manner as possible, without giving his reason for it.

20 But whilst he was contriving this matter in his mind, a surprising and seasonable occurrence prevented him; for an angel of the Lord evidently appeared in a supernatural dream, (which was one way of God's revealing his mind to the ancients,) and spake to him after this manner: *Joseph*, thou descendant of *David* from whom the Messiah is to derive his birth, be no longer afraid to have *Mary* for thy married wife, nor to take her home to thine house; for she has not been guilty of adultery, as thou art apt to suspect, but the child she has conceived is begotten in her, not after a carnal manner, but by the immediate miraculous power of the Holy Ghost.

21 And when she has gone her full time, she shall be delivered of a son; and thou, as his legal father, shalt give him the name *Jesus*: For he shall be indeed the Saviour, who is to rise up in the family of *David*; and, according to his name, shall save his people, not in their sins, but shall deliver them from all their iniquities, by the sacrifice of himself, and by the power of his spirit that shall attend his word.

22 Now all that the Holy Ghost did herein, was designed to be, as it really was, an exact and literal accomplishment of that remarkable † prediction, which God spake by the mouth of the prophet *Isaiab*, (chap. vii. 14.) saying,

23 "Behold with admiration, faith, and joy! a virgin, one who never knew man, shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, whose name shall be called *Emmanuel*, which, in the *Hebrew* language, signifies *God with us*. This name shall express what he really is, *viz.* The Son of God, who, being in this wonderful way united with the Son of man, shall be in very truth both God and man, to appear in the world among men, and to act the part of a mediator of reconciliation between God and them."

24 Upon this vision and admonition of the angel, *Joseph* awoke out of sleep, and, being fully satisfied in his own mind that this was a revelation from God, he joyfully hastened to solemnize his marriage with *Mary*, and took her home as his wife, in testimony of his faith therein, and of his ready obedience to the divine command.

25 And so strict was his regard to what had been told him by the angel, that he cautiously abstained from

NOTE.

† The evangelist *Matthew*, accommodating his gospel to the *Jews*, alleges the Old Testament prophecies, and takes notice of their accomplishment in *Christ*, more frequently than any of the other evangelists.

had brought forth her first-born son; and he called his name Jesus.

from performing the marriage-duty toward her, according to the law (*Exod. xxi. 10.*) till she was delivered of her first-born Son, as the scripture styles the first male birth, whether the mother has afterwards any other child or not: And *Joseph*, according to the angel's order, called his name *Jesus*, who was in dignity, and in a spiritual sense, *the first-born among many brethren.*

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

How convincing is the evidence that our Jesus is the true Messiah, the Son of God, and the Son of Man, in whom the prophecies of the Old Testament, and the promises made to *Abraham* and *David*, were fulfilled; that as there were persons of all characters among his ancestors, so *Gentiles* as well as *Jews*, high and low, males and females, may look to him and be saved; and that there is salvation for the worst of sinners through faith in him! Blessed be God, the joyful day has shone upon our world, in which *to us a Child was born, and to us a Son was given, whose name is Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, and the Prince of Peace.* How miraculous was his conception by the immediate power of the Holy Ghost! how honourably testified by an express from heaven! and with what admirable wisdom was it conducted to a legitimate birth, in such a manner, as effectually took off all suspicion of human influence toward it, and all reproach to the virgin-mother and her Son.—How seasonably doth God appear for the direction of his people in their greatest trials! and what a lovely view does *Joseph's* temper and conduct give us of a good man, whose piety towards God, fidelity to his engagements with others, and tenderness of their reputation, should ever go hand in hand!

C H A P. II.

*The Wise-mens coming to worship Christ in his infancy, 1,—9.
Herod's rage against him, and the care God took of him, 10,—23.*

TEXT.

NOW when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea, in the days of Herod the King, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem,

2 Saying, Where is he that is born king of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him.

PARAPHRASE.

NOW soon after Christ was born in an obscure city of Judaea, called *Bethlehem*, in the days of *Herod the Great*, who at that time was king of *Judaea*; behold, certain men of wisdom and learning*, especially in their observations of the sun, moon, and stars, came to *Jerusalem*, from a country that lay east of *Judaea*,

2 And they inquired after the place where the infant was to be found, who, they were well satisfied in their own minds, was lately born to be king of the *Jews*: For while they were in their own country, they had seen † an extraordinary appearance of a star, beyond all they had ever seen before; and,

as

* The word *Magos* properly signifies *Magicians* in a bad sense, and so the scripture frequently uses it: But it was commonly taken, among the eastern nations, for any wise men whether priests or philosphers, and especially for astro-

nomers; and the persons here mentioned were probably *Arabians*.

† Whatever luminous body this was, it had the appearance of a star, and was formed and conducted by the divine power on this special occasion.

as it hung like a comet over *Judea*, they concluded it was the signal of a great king's being born in that land*. And under this apprehension they declared that they were come to seek him, and to pay their solemn homage to him.

3 When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.

3 When king *Herod* and the people of *Jerusalem* had heard the account that these wise-men gave of this matter, they all in general were amazed; and he more especially was exceedingly perplexed in mind about it, lest this new-born child should create troubles which at length might issue in the loss of his kingdom.

4 And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born.

4 And as *Herod* could not but know something of the general expectation among the *Jews*, that the Messiah would appear about that time. he called a council of all † the chief priests and scribes that he could get together, they being the interpreters of the law to the people, and inquired of them where the ancient prophecies said the Messiah should be born.

5 And they said unto him, In *Bethlehem* of *Judea*: for thus it is written by the prophet;

5 In answer to which, they readily told him it was to be in *Bethlehem* of *Judea*; and referred him to a passage of the prophet *Micah* (chap. v. 2.) to prove it, where it is written to this purpose:

6 And thou *Bethlehem* in the land of *Juda*, art not the least among the princes of *Juda*: for out of thee shall come a Governor that shall rule my people *Israel*.

6 "Even (και) thou *Bethlehem* in the land of *Judea*, (which was also called *Bethlehem-Ephratah*, either of which names plainly distinguished it from another *Bethlehem* in the tribe of *Zebulon*,) thou art by no means (ουδαιμως) the least in honour; tho' thou be least in riches and in numbers of people, among the cities that have given birth to the princes of *Judab*. (whose tribes were divided into thousands, each of which had a prince over them:) For out of thee shall come a Governor superior to all others, even Messiah the Prince; who, says God, (πριμανι) shall take care of, feed, and reign over my people *Israel*. as their Saviour and their King."

7 Then Herod, when he had privately called the wise-men, inquired of them diligently

7 *Herod*, having received this account from the chief priests and scribes. called the wise-men to him in a private manner, that the people might not take umbrage at it, as if he were afraid; and (ακριβως) he very

N O T E S.

* They were probably persuaded of this by a divine impression upon their minds, and by the general expectation at that time in their country, that such a king was quickly to be born in *Judea*, who would be ruler over all the earth: And they came to pay him homage, either in a civil way, as a temporal prince; or rather in a religious way, as the Messiah. according to the notions they might have about him.

† The chief priests were not only the high-priest, and the sagan his deputy;

but also the heads of the twenty-four sacerdotal families, 1 *Chron.* xxiv. 6. and 2 *Chron.* xxxvi. 14.; and it is probable, that any priests were so called who were members of the great sanhedrim: And the scribes of the people were their rabbies or doctors that explained the law to them, *Exra* vii. 6,—10. and *Matt.* vii. 29.; and perhaps such of them as were members of the sanhedrim, but were not of the sacerdotal order, were called scribes of the people, in distinction from those that were also priests.

gently what time the star appeared.

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

9 When they had heard the king, they departed, and lo, the star which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was;

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

11 And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.

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

13 And when they were departed,

very critically examined them about the exact time of the star's first appearing to them, that the better guess might thereby be made at the age of the child.

8 And when they had satisfied him in that point, he ordered them to go to *Bethlehem*. where the chief priests and scribes had said the Messiah should be born, and to search, with the utmost care, for the infant; and as soon as they should find him, to come back again and tell him of it, pretending that he wanted to go and worship him too, though he meant nothing less, but said this to conceal his fears and jealousies, and to cover his cruel designs.

9 When they had heard what the king had to say to them, they set out on their journey toward *Bethlehem*: And, behold, the same miraculous star, which they had seen in their own eastern country, appeared again, and moved on before them in the air (like the pillar of fire before the *Israelites* to direct their various journeyings,) till at length it came over the very house where Jesus was, and descended † pointing downward toward that house.

10 When the wise-men saw the star in this direction, they were filled with an exceeding joyful ecstasy at the thought that God had now certainly conducted them to the glorious Person they were seeking after.

11 And when they were come into the house, they saw the royal Infant with *Mary* his mother; and, being led into a further knowledge of him by divine suggestion, and by accounts that were then given them of the extraordinary circumstances of his conception and birth, they, according to the custom of the eastern nations, fell prostrate before him, and paid him their adorations; and then, opening the stores they had brought, made an offering of their richest treasures to him as their King, and the incarnate Saviour, such as gold, frankincense, and myrrh, and so *shewed forth the praises of the Lord*, (*Isa. lx. 6.*)

12 And being admonished, in an extraordinary dream, not to obey *Herod's* order in going back to tell him what they had seen, God thereby designing to prevent the murder of Jesus by his cruelty, they returned another way, and not by *Jerusalem*, into their own country.

13 And when they were gone, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared again in a dream to *Joseph*, as he

NOTE.

† This account intimates that the star directed them to the very house where our Lord was; but it is not easy to conceive how this could be, without its pointing downwards toward it, or descending low, and standing still, exactly over it.

ed, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word: for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him.

14 When he arose, he took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt:

15 And was there until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son.

16 Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise-men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently inquired of the wise-men.

17 Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying,

18 In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourn-

he had before, (chap. i. 20.) and ordered him to arise out of his sleep, and, taking the infant and its mother with him, to go with all speed into *Egypt*; and continue with them there, till he should have another divine order for removing from thence: For he told him that *Herod* would certainly endeavour the destruction of the young child, to rid himself of his own fears concerning him; and that therefore all proper precautions were to be taken for his preservation.

14 In obedience to this command, *Joseph* got up, and, notwithstanding the visible dangers, difficulties, and inconveniencies that might attend it, took the young child and his mother, secretly by night, that it might not be discovered whither he was going, and carried them into *Egypt*:

15 And there he abode with them till *Herod's* death, that the word, which the Lord had spoken by the prophet *Hosea*, (chap. xi. 1.) might be fulfilled a second time, saying, *Out of Egypt have I called my Son*; for God's only begotten eternal Son was now to be called out of *Egypt*, as the Antitype of *Israel* his adopted son, who had been called out from thence before.

16 When *Herod* had waited a good while for the return of the wise-men, and found that they were gone home another way, and so had deceived his expectations from them, he was terribly enraged; and having barbarously resolved to cut off this newborn Prince at any rate, he, to make sure of his death, sent a party of soldiers, and by their cruel hands massacred all the male children, that were not above two years old, in *Bethlehem*, and the villages round about; being assured in himself, by what the wise-men had told him, that this child had not yet attained that age.

17 This astonishing event was over-ruled by the providence of God, to fulfil a second time another prophecy, delivered by the prophet *Jeremiah*, (chap. xxxi. 15.) to this purpose:

18 "A voice was heard as far as *Rama**, which was situated near *Bethlehem*; lamentation, weeping, and great mourning was heard there; the descendants of *Rachel*, whose grave was also at that place, bitterly

NOTE.

* It is probable that this massacre of infants extended to the territories of *Rama*, which was in the tribe of *Benjamin*, Job. xviii. 21,—25; and so cut off some of *Rachel's* posterity.

mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not.

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

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

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

22 But when he heard that Archelaus did reign in Judea, in the room of his father Herod, he was afraid to go thither: notwithstanding, being warned of God in a dream, he turned aside into the parts of Galilee:

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

bitterly lamented the loss of their children, and refused to be comforted because they were dead."

19 But after Herod's decease, behold another divine admonition to Joseph in the usual way; the angel of the Lord again appeared to him in a dream in Egypt, where he continued till this time,

20 And ordered him to go back again with the young child and his mother to his own country, and reside among the Israelites there, because Herod and some of his most cruel instruments, who were bent upon taking away it's life, were now themselves dead.

21 Accordingly he cheerfully complied, without objecting against the difficulty or danger of the journey; and, in obedience to the angel's command, came back with the young child and his mother into the land of Israel.

22 But upon information that Archelaus succeeded his father Herod* in that part of his dominions which included Judea, he was afraid it would be too hazardous to settle in that province, under the government of a man of his fierce temper: But having another intimation from God in a dream, he went to live in Galilee, under the dominion of Herod Antipas where he, with Jesus, and his mother Mary, might dwell with more safety.

23 And in order to their settlement in that country, he came and took up his abode in one of its cities, called Nazareth; which was ordered by the providence of God, that what was spoken not merely by one, but by many of the prophets, concerning the Messiah, might be fulfilled in Jesus; as, that he should be Netzer, the Branch, according to the signification of the word Nazareth; and a Nazarite, most eminently holy and devoted to God from the womb, and so the great Antitype of all the legal Nazarites, and particularly of Samson, of whom it was said, (*Judg. xiii. 5.*) *The child shall be a Nazarite unto God from the womb*; and that he should be treated with the greatest infamy and reproach, when, because of his having been brought up at Nazareth, he was usually called, by way of contempt, the Nazarene.

RECOLLEC-

NOTE.

* Upon the death of Herod the Great, his kingdom was divided between Archelaus, Herod Antipas, and Philip, his sons; Archelaus had Judea, Idumea, and Samaria; Philip, Aulonitis, Trachonitis, Paneas, and Batanaea; and Herod Antipas, Galilee and Persea. *Frid. Connect. Vol. III. page 657.*

R E C O L L E C T I O N S.

How deeply was the dear Saviour abased, and how early exposed to sufferings, in being thus persecuted and harassed about in his tender infancy! And yet now highly was he honoured by a star formed on purpose to lead to him; by the long journey which the wise-men took to find him out, and pay their devotions to him; and by the repeated appearances of the angel of the Lord to give directions for his safety! O how should we rejoice in the better and more abiding light of the gospel, that leads us to Jesus! And how will the wise-men of the east, that came so far, and took so much pains to seek and worship him, rise up in judgment against them that will give themselves no trouble to inquire after him, and that slight and disregard him! With what cheerfulness should we present ourselves, and all that we have, to him! And how should we adore God's over-ruling Providence, that disappoints the devices of his most crafty, powerful, and cruel enemies, and turns them into means, or at least occasions, of fulfilling his own predictions and designs!

C H A P. III.

The life, doctrine, and baptism of John, 1,—12. And Jesus baptized by him, 13,—17.

TEXT.

IN those days came John the baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea,

2 And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

PARAPHRASE.

IN the days of Christ's living privately with Joseph and his mother, at Nazareth, before he entered into the thirtieth year of his age, and in the fifteenth year of Tiberius Cæsar, (Luke iii 1, 23.) John, who was styled the Baptist, because he was the first that came with a divine commission to baptize, appeared and preached in a part of the country of Judea, which was called the wilderness, on account of its having fewer cities, towns, villages, and inhabitants, than were in other parts of that province.

2 And the sum of his ministry was, "Bethink yourselves, and change your minds; (*μετανοεῖτε*) entertain other sentiments than ye have had about your sins, and your legal righteousnesses; lay aside your prejudices about the Messiah whom ye expect, and about the ground of your acceptance with God; and, with deep contrition, turn from your iniquities, and from your proud conceit of yourselves, and of your privileges, to that Jesus whom I am come to point out to you: For a new dispensation of grace by the

N O T E.

† Repentance, in case of sin, is a natural duty, the obligation to which necessarily results from the relation of the offending creature to God, as his creator, benefactor, and rightful sovereign; and it is dictated by the very light of nature, as a reasonable service: But the sinner's grand directions, motives, and encouragements to, and assistances for, a due performance of the duty, in a spi-

ritual and acceptable manner through Jesus Christ, proceed from gospel-grace: And therefore both John the Baptist and our Lord himself, chap. iv. 17. began their ministry, saying, *Repent; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.* The kingdom of heaven, and the kingdom of God, are used in the evangelists, as terms of the same import. And though sometimes they signify the heavenly state

the gospel, under the Messiah's kingdom, which comes from heaven, and leads to heaven, is just now ready to be revealed, and set up among you."

3 For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet *Isaias*, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

3 The reason why *John* began his ministry in this manner was, because he was that forerunner of our Lord, of whom *Isaiab* prophesied, saying, (chap. xl. 3.) "The voice of one that hereafter shall speak with earnestness to the people, as the Messiah's harbinger, in the wilderness, shall be this: Let my ministry concerning the necessity of repentance, and the grace of the gospel kingdom to encourage it, be acceptable to you, that ye may be ready to receive the Lord himself, who is coming after me; and may abandon the carnal security, lusts and passions, pride and prejudices, that wilfully oppose his way to your hearts."

4 And the same *John* had his raiment of camels hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his meat was locusts and wild honey.

4 And this *John* appeared in the garb of a prophet, just like *Elias*, in whole spirit and power he came; a hair-cloth was his covering, with a leathern belt to gird it about his loins; and his diet was of the meanest fare, such as locusts* and wild honey, which the wilderness abounded with: And so he was an example of mortified appetites toward this world, and of raised affections and hopes toward a better, as became a preacher of repentance, and of the kingdom of heaven.

5 Then went out to him Jerusalem and all Judea and all the region round about Jordan,

5 When it was known that he appeared and preached in this manner, the general expectation of the Messiah at that time brought vast multitudes of all ranks, degrees, and sexes, to hear him, from Jerusalem, and from all parts of Judea, and from every place in the country that lay round about Jordan, whether in the tribe of *Judah* or not.

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

6 And they were so far affected with his doctrine, that they made a public profession of repentance, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, both he and they, according to the custom of the country, going a little way into the water, either barefoot, or with sandals, for the greater convenience and expedition in baptizing them †.

7 But

NOTES.

of perfect blessedness, or the kingdom of glory; yet they most frequently denote the gospel-dispensation, inclusive of all its gracious institutions, privileges, and blessings, or the kingdom of grace, which is said to be of God, and of heaven, because its original is divine, its nature, design, and tendency, are spiritual and heavenly, and its true subjects are formed and trained up for heaven, till they are transplanted thither: And

therefore, at other times, these expressions seem to take in both the kingdom of grace and of glory. See *Whitby*.

* *Aspidæ*, rendered *locusts*, some suppose were a sort of large flying grasshoppers; but others think they were a certain kind of green herb that grew in the wilderness.

† I cannot think that such prodigious numbers as came to *John*, could be baptized in the way of immersing their whole

7 But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?

7 But when he perceived that many of the *Pharisees* and *Sadducees* came, and that some of them offered themselves to be baptized by him, he severely reprov'd them, saying, O ye hypocritical *Pharisees*, and irreligious *Sadducees**, who are the seed of the old serpent, and full of malignant enmity to all real goodness, one sort of you imagining that ye have religion enough already, and the other thinking that there is nothing in religion; who could have thought that either of you should come to my baptism, for the remission of sins, and escaping the wrath to come through a Redeemer? Who has brought you hither? And what has put you upon pretences of this kind? However, I now warn you to flee from the wrath that will certainly come upon all the impenitent and unbelieving.

8 Bring forth, therefore, fruits meet for repentance.

8 And as your coming hither is a practical profession of repentance, and of believing the doctrine I teach; bring forth fruits of righteousness, suitable to the nature, and evidential of the sincerity of repentance, or else my baptism will be of no advantage to any of you.

9 And think not to

9 And as to you *Pharisees* in particular, do not flatter

NOTES.

whole bodies under water: or that they were provided with change of raiment for it, which is nowhere intimated, nor seems to have been practicable for such vast multitudes; and yet, they could not be baptized naked, with modesty, nor in their wearing apparel, with safety. It seems therefore, to me, that the people stood in ranks, near to, or just within, the edge of the river: and John, passing along before them, cast water upon their heads or faces, with his hands, or some proper instrument, by which means, he might easily baptize many thousands in a day. And this way of pouring water upon them, most naturally signified Christ's baptizing them with the Holy Ghost, and with fire, which John spoke of, as prefigured by his baptizing with water, (ver. 11. and Mark i. 8. Luke iii. 16. John i. 33.) and which was eminently fulfilled, when the Holy Ghost sat upon the disciples in the appearance of cloven tongues, like fire: And this is expressly called baptizing them with the Holy Ghost, in opposition to John's baptizing with water; and is spoken of as the Holy Ghost's coming upon them and as God's pouring out his Spirit, and shedding him forth upon them, Acts i. 5. and ii. 3, 17, 18, 33. And with a direct reference hereunto, when the Holy

Ghost fell on Cornelius and his friends, Peter said *Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how he said, "John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost."* (Acts xi. 15, 16) The apostle Paul likewise, in a manifest allusion to baptism, speaks of God's saving us by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour. (Tit. iii. 5, 6.) Now, whether plunging the body into water, or pouring water upon it, was the likeliest emblem of this effusion of the Spirit, let the reader judge; especially since *Baptizo*, the word constantly used for baptizing, signifies any sort of washing, and often sprinkling; not being restrained to dipping, as its primitive (*Bapto*) is, but this last word is never used to express baptizing.

* The *Pharisees* were a superstitious sect among the Jews, that pretended to extraordinary holiness; but placed the chief of their religion in ritual observances, and in zeal for the traditions of the elders: And the *Sadducees* were the free-thinkers of the age, that denied the resurrection of the dead, and the existence of angels or human souls in a separate state and so sapped the foundation of all religion.

to say within yourselves. We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.

10 And now also the ax is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

11 I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me, is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire:

12 Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.

flatter yourselves, as ye are apt to do, with the thoughts of your being descendants from *Abraham*, and not sinners of the *Gentiles*, and that this will secure you from divine vengeance: For let me tell you, that God can easily raise up a seed to *Abraham*, who shall walk in the steps of his faith and obedience, by turning the very stones, that your eyes now behold, into such children; or by adopting these *Gentiles* into his family, (meaning the *Roman* soldiers that were then present with them;) and he will sooner do this than save any of you, if ye persist in your iniquities.

10 And things are now coming to a decisive point with you all: The last dispensation of grace, thro' the Messiah, is now approaching, and God is here—by trying you once more; but if now ye reject his offers of mercy, he will bear with you no longer: His vengeance, like the ax that is levelled at the root of a tree, is just ready to strike at you: Every one therefore among you that continues unfruitful under these last means of grace, shall soon be cut down as cumberers of the ground, and cast into everlasting burnings; and the whole church and nation of the *Jews*, if they persist in impenitence and unbelief, shall be utterly destroyed.

11 I am indeed come to baptize you with water, as a sign of what we may hope for, and of the repentance which ye are obliged to: But this will not suffice for your safety and happiness; it is only preparing the way for One, who is so much my superior, that I am not worthy to do the meanest offices for him, such as taking away his shoes, or carrying them after him in a journey. And when he comes, he shall pour upon you his Holy Spirit, who will make a visible appearance in the form of fire, (*Acts* ii. 3.) and whose operation will be enlightening, warming, powerful, and purifying, like that of fire.

12 And he shall thoroughly try mens spirits, purify his church, and separate the precious from the vile; as when a man winnows his corn with a fan or with a sieve, and cleanses it from the chaff: And then he, putting a value upon all sincere believers, as his treasure, will gather them to himself in heaven; not one of them shall be lost; but, rejecting every hypocrite and unbeliever, as light and vain, worthless and unprofitable, like chaff, he will cast them into hell, there to be consumed for ever*.

13 While

NOTE.

* This *unquenchable fire* may likewise relate to the unbelieving *Jews* being burnt to death at the destruction of *Jerusalem*; and to the bodies of the wicked being consumed by fire, at the general conflagration of the last day.

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

14 But John forbade him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?

15 And Jesus answering, said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him.

16 And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straight-way out of the water: and lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him:

13 While John was thus baptizing and preaching at Jordan, Jesus came to him from Galilee, and offered himself to be baptized by him:

14 But John, knowing by an immediate divine suggestion, that this was the person upon whom he should presently see the Holy Ghost descend as a signal that he was the Messiah, (John i. 33.) and being, at the same time, sensible of his own great unworthiness to baptize him, modestly declined it, saying, in the audience of the people, How surprising a condescension is this! Alas, I am a poor sinful wretch, that needs still further supplies of the gifts and graces of the Spirit, with which thou wilt baptize. How is it then that thou, who art altogether sinless, and needest no repentance, and who art the Author and Giver of all the blessings of the kingdom of heaven, shouldst desire to be baptized with water by me? I am amazed at it; and cannot tell how to think of going about it.

15 But (he) Jesus, in return, said to him, Whatever you may think of the matter, I insist upon it, that now, in my state of humiliation, and under the present dispensation, in which I am to be made manifest to Israel, you shall perform this office to me; and there are important reasons for it: For in this, as well as in all other points, it is proper and necessary for me to fill up my obedience to every divine institution and command, as the circumstances of things require. Upon John's hearing this, he submitted his own thoughts to the wisdom and will of Christ, and, without any further dispute, proceeded to baptize him.

16 And as soon as Jesus was baptized, he came up the rising ground from the river, (*αὐτὸν εὐθὺς ἀπὸ τοῦ ὕδατος*;) and behold, according to the signal that had before been given to John, (John i. 33.) there was a visible opening in the clouds of heaven in Christ's view, and on his account; and he, together with John the Baptist, (John i. 32.) saw the Spirit of God visibly descending in a corporal, bright appearance, of the manner of the hovering of a dove, (*ὡς περιστερᾶς*) and at length resting upon his head*.

17 And

N O T E.

* Many have supposed, that the Holy Ghost descended in the visible shape of a dove; but I rather think the allusion is not to the shape, but to the hovering of a dove, according to the paraphrase. See Hammond on the place; and Whitby on Luke iii. 22. who criti-

cally observes, that had it related to the shape or form, it should not have been (*ὡς περιστερᾶς*) as a dove, but (*ὡς περιστερᾶς*) as of a dove, as the likeness of fire is expressed, Acts ii. 3. "There appeared cloven tongues (*ὡς ἑνός*) as of fire."

17 And lo, a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

17 And what is further observable, is, that this appearance was attended with a most extraordinary and audible voice of God the Father from heaven, saying to Christ, in *John's* hearing, This is, by way of eminence, my only begotten Son †, in whom were my delights from everlasting; in whose person, as he is mine own likeness, every way excellent and amiable, and in whose mediation, as he is come to do my will, I have the utmost complacency; as I also have, on his account, in all that are united by faith to him, and beheld in him, I having made them accepted in the Beloved.

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

Behold the dreadful danger of all hypocrites and unfruitful hearers of the word, whatever their pretences or their external privileges may be; and the indispensable necessity of true repentance, arising from apprehensions of gospel-grace through Jesus Christ, and working unto a thorough change in heart and life, under the influence of the baptism of the Holy Ghost! happy souls that are partakers of this grace! God will take effectual care of them, and will receive them to himself in glory. But, O miserable wretches, that shall be found in their sins! Their covenant relation to *Abraham*, their baptism with water, and their professions, will not save them: God will abandon them to unquenchable flames; he will one day make an evident, important, and everlasting separation between the righteous and the wicked, how undistinguished soever they may now live together in the visible church, the members of which ought to be baptized, though, as in Christ's case, some of them may not be capable of answering all the ends for which that ordinance was instituted.—Behold the Sacred Three distinctly appearing in characters of personal and divine glory, and concurring in a design of salvation! How inconsiderable and unworthy are the best of men compared with Christ; and what exalted and endearing thoughts should we have of him, as the Son of God and Saviour of sinners, and as the Beloved of the Father, who makes us accepted in him!

C H A P. IV.

Christ's temptations, 1,—11. His beginning to preach, 12,—17. His calling some of his apostles, 18,—22. His curing diseases, and the people's resorting to him, 23,—25.

TEXT.

THEN was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness, to be tempted of the devil.

PARAPHRASE.

IMMEDIATELY after Jesus was baptized, and filled with the Holy Ghost, the Spirit moved him, by an inward suggestion, to go further into a more desolate part of the wilderness, that he might engage in a close combat with Satan, the chief of devils, and

N O T E.

† *Mark* and *Luke* report these words as directed to Christ himself, saying, *Thou art my beloved Son*. &c. and it seems as if this were the form of expression used on this occasion, in answer to Christ's prayer (*Luke* iii. 21.). But as it

was likewise designed to give satisfaction to *John*, that he might bear witness of it, I apprehend *Matthew* reports it as if it were said of Christ, in *John's* hearing.

and defeat him, before he entered upon his public ministry; thereby teaching his disciples and servants, at their entrance upon his ways and work, to expect great temptations; and giving them an example of overcoming the evil one by the word of God.

2 And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterwards an hungry.

2 Here, like *Moses* the giver, and *Elias* the restorer, of the law, (*Exod. xxxiv. 28.* and *1 Kings xix. 8.*) he continued without eating or drinking any thing for forty days and forty nights together; and was, in some way unknown to us, tempted of the devil. (*Luke iv. 2.*) During all that time, he was miraculously upheld without any uneasy appetite for food; but, at the end of those days, he, like other men, was hungry.

3 And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread.

3 Satan took this opportunity to come to him in some visible form, and accommodating his temptation to the circumstances Christ was then in, said to him, If, as has been published at your baptism, you be indeed the Son of God, let me see a proof of it, in your now doing something for your own relief: Command these stones in the wilderness, or some one of them, to be turned into bread, that you may at once shew your power, and eat and be satisfied.

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

4 But Jesus, knowing that his design herein was to put him upon a needless proof of his relation to God the Father, and upon distrusting his care, replied, in the words of scripture. (*Deut. viii. 3.*) the purport of which was, That the life of man is not sustained merely by bread, but by the will and command of God, and by his blessing upon whatever his providence shall appoint, and afford to support it.

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

5 When the devil found himself baffled in this temptation, he moved Christ to go along with him to *Jerusalem* *; who consenting, went; and when they were come to the top of the temple, he suffered himself to be placed on the upper part of one of its wings or battlements, (*ἄκρον*).

6 And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee,

6 And the devil having raised him to such a dangerous and formidable height, said, If you be the Son of God, throw yourself down to the ground; and see whether God will interpose to preserve you from mischief by the fall: For, since you pretend to make the scripture your rule, it is written, in a promise particularly of the Messiah, (*Psal. xci. 11, 12.*)

He

N O T E.

* It is too curious and frivolous to inquire whether our Lord went with Satan through the air, or upon the ground: But which-ever it was, there is no occasion to suppose that he so far put himself

into the power of the devil, as to go to any place without his own consent. Satan only led him, or took him along with him to *Jerusalem*, (*ἵνα*), as it is expressed, *Luke iv. 9.*

thee, and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.

7 Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.

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

9 And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.

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

11 Then the devil leaveth him, and behold, angels came and ministered unto him.

He shall give his angels charge over thee, and in their hands shall they bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone. Here is your warrant: Why then should you not give me this proof of that character? If you are indeed the Son of God, what should make you afraid?

7 But as Satan had craftily left out that part of the text which relates to Christ's being kept *in all his ways* to which God should call him; Jesus replied in the words of another scripture, (*Deut. vi. 16.*) where it is written, *Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God: * i. e.* Thou shalt be satisfied with proper and reasonable proofs of his fatherly care of thee; and shalt not, from a distrust of his power and goodness in the ordinary way of providence, wilfully or unnecessarily throw thyself into danger, to try whether God will work a miracle for thee or not.

8 When Satan was disappointed in the attempt, which he made under a shew of religion, he turned horribly impious; and, carrying Christ up to a very high mountain, represented to him all the states and kingdoms of this world, in their most glittering pomp and grandeur, as if they had really been before his eyes;

9 And at the same time made him an offer of all the honour, riches, power, and pleasure, that the whole world could afford, in case he would prostrate himself before him, and pay him religious worship, as many of the *Gentile* idolators had used to do.

10 Then Jesus turned short upon him with indignation and abhorrence, saying, O thou enemy of the Divine Majesty, begone; I can bear with you no longer: For what you now suggest is an attempt upon the imperial crown of heaven, and directly contrary to the eternal law of all religious worship, which confines it to God alone, as appears from what is written, (*Deut. vi. 13. and x. 20.*) the plain meaning of which is, *Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.*

11 The devil was now entirely vanquished; and, having no further hope of success, nor yet being able to resist Christ's word of command, quitted the field to the great Conqueror: And as soon as he had

left

N O T E.

* Some suppose, that Christ, in alleging this passage of scripture, intimated himself to be the *Lord God*; and that therefore it was insolent in Satan to

tempt him. But the sense given in the paraphrase seems to make the answer most suitable to the nature of the temptation.

left him, the holy angels † came to him, not to assist him in the conflict, for the battle was now over, but to congratulate his glorious victories, and to supply him with the refreshments of nature, that were needful after his great fatigue and long fasting.

12 Now when Jesus had heard that John was cast into prison, he departed into Galilee.

12 Some considerable time after these things, Jesus hearing that *John the Baptist* was thrown into prison, he, to avoid the fury of the *Pharisees*, withdrew to a great distance in the *Upper Galilee*, that there he might have an opportunity of continuing to preach the gospel, during *John's* confinement.

13 And leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the sea coast, in the borders of Zabulon and Nephthaim:

13 And quitting his abode at *Nazareth*, (which lay in the *Lower Galilee*, near the confines of *Iffachbar*,) where he had been brought up, and dwelt till his baptism, (*Mark* i. 9.) and where the people afterwards rejected him in his public ministry, and offered violence to him through their unbelief, (*Luke* iv. 29.) he went and took up his residence at *Capernaum*, a large city of the *Upper Galilee*, near the sea of *Tiberias*, (which is also called the sea of *Galilee*, and the lake of *Gennesaret*,) in the tribe of *Neptbali*; bordering upon that of *Zabulon*:

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

14 And he removed thither, that by his abode, and preaching, and working miracles there, the prophecy of *Isaiab* might be fulfilled, (chap. ix. 1, 2.) saying,

15 The land of Zabulon, and the land of Nephthaim, by the way of the sea beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles:

15, 16. The inhabitants of the country of *Zabulon*, and the country of *Neptbali*, seated by the sea beyond the river *Jordan*, even *Galilee* of the *Gentiles*, where they resorted for traffick, and were mixed with the *Jews*: This people, that sat in gross darkness and great distress, under the power of sin and Satan, have seen an excellent and important light by the Sun of Righteousness's rising upon them; and they that were in so extremely miserable and dangerous a case, and continued so long contented in it, that they might be said to sit in the very region and shadow of death, just upon the confines of eternal destruction; to these the light of the glorious gospel of the blessed God has appeared, shining more and more to the perfect day.

16 The people which sat in darkness, saw great light: and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death, light is sprung up.

17 From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

17 From the time of Christ's coming into these parts, he began to preach to the people in the same manner as *John the Baptist* had before, saying, The grace of the gospel is now brought near to you; and let this excite and encourage you to repent of your former evil thoughts and ways, and turn to

God

N O T E.

† This was probably in some visible appearances.

God from all your iniquities, (See the note on chap. iii. 2.)

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

19 And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.

20 And they straightway left their nets and followed him.

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

22 And they immediately left the ship and their father, and followed him.

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

18 And as he was walking near *Capernaum*, upon the shore of the sea of *Galilee*, he saw two fishermen, that were brethren, calling their net into the sea: One was *Simon*, who was afterwards called *Peter*; and the other was *Andrew*; men in low life, and of mean education, but industrious in their business.

19 And he said to them both, Give yourselves up to my authority, doctrine, and example, and I will put you into a more excellent calling, and employ you in a much more honourable work; for instead of catching fish with nets, I will make you the instruments of gathering souls to me by the gospel, and translating them from the power of Satan into my kingdom.

20 And such power went forth with his word to their hearts, that it immediately gained their consent; for in obedience to his call, they instantly left their fishing trade, and cleaving with full purpose of heart to him, surrendered themselves to his disposal and command.

21 Soon after this, as he was going from that place with these disciples, he met with another pair of brethren, who were also fishermen, and were not idle, but mending their nets in a boat with their father *Zebedee*; one was *James*, whom *Herod* afterwards killed with the sword, (*Acts* xii. 2.) and the other was *John*, who became both an apostle and sacred historian; and Jesus called these, just as he had the other two before, and for the same purpose, that he might employ them in the nobler services of his kingdom.

22 And he no sooner spoke to them, but they felt the extraordinary power of his grace upon their souls, which engaged them immediately to leave their secular trade, profits, and relations, and to follow him, that they might learn of him, and give themselves up to the work to which he called them.

23 And with these disciples Jesus travelled through all parts of *Galilee*, instructing the people publickly in their places of religious worship, and privately every where else, as opportunities offered; insisting, in all his discourses, on the things that relate to the kingdom of grace and glory; and confirming the divine authority, truth, and excellence of his doctrine, by merciful and miraculous cures of all sorts, even of the greatest and most dangerous diseases,

diseases, as well as of the lesser infirmities, that any people were afflicted with.

24 And his fame went throughout all Syria: and they brought unto him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases, and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatic, and those that had the palsy; and he healed them.

24 By this means his renown spread abroad through the neighbouring country of Syria: So that all who had any chronic and languishing, or acute and raging diseases, of what nature or kind soever; and all that were corporally possessed by devils*, and such as were distracted at certain changes of the moon, and paralytic persons whose distempers were reckoned among the incurable, were brought to him; and he, in the greatness of his divine power and compassion, freely and perfectly healed them in an instant: He only spake the word and it was done; just as, in the creation of this world, *God said, Let it be so, and it was so.*

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

25 And abundance of people, being moved by these wonderful appearances, crowded after him from all parts far and near, even from Galilee, and Decapolis, (a country which contained ten cities bordering upon Syria, and was chiefly inhabited by Gentiles.) and from Jerusalem and Judea, and from beyond Jordan, to see his miracles, and hear him preach; some out of curiosity, others out of envy, others to get cures, and others to learn of him for their own spiritual and saving benefit.

RECOLLECTIONS.

God alone is the object of all religious worship, and to them whose trust and dependence are fixt on him in the way of duty, his word and providence will afford every needful security and supply. How artfully would Satan turn us off from God, by perverting the scriptures, and setting before us the allurements of this world; and how powerful are his assaults! But how easily can the superior wisdom and power of our great Lord confound and overcome him! Christ's conquests are the ground of the believer's help and safety; and in his strength, and after his example,

N O T E.

* Let it be observed, once for all, that the possessed with devils cannot mean only persons afflicted with some strange disease; for they are here, and in other places, evidently distinguished from the diseased: And Christ's speaking on various occasions to these evil spirits, as distinct from the persons possessed by them, his commanding them, and asking them questions, and receiving answers from them, or not suffering them to speak; and several circumstances relating to the terrible preternatural effects they had upon the possessed, and to the manner of Christ's casting them out, and particularly their asking and obtaining leave to enter the herd of swine, and hurrying them headlong into the sea, can never be accounted for by any distemper whatsoever. And whereas, instances of such

possessions are not so commonly to be met with, before or since the days of our Saviour on earth: it seems to have been ordered, by a special providence, that they should be suffered to be more frequent then, that he, who came to destroy the works of the devil, might the more remarkably and visibly triumph over him: and that all the legions of hell might be put to the more open and dismaying shame, at a time when their power was at its highest, both in the souls and bodies of men; as also, that plain facts might be a sensible confutation of the Sadducean error, which denied the existence of angels or spirits, (*Acts xxiii. 8.*) and prevailed among the chief men of figure and learning in those days.

ample, we should use the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, and is divinely sufficient to defeat all the temptations of the evil one, and bring us off with victory and advantage. How wonderful were our Lord's works, and how glorious was his fame! With what eagerness did innumerable multitudes flock about him, though with different views, and many even from *Gentile* countries! And O what a blessed Saviour have we! The grace of his kingdom is the most engaging motive to true repentance: For he has brought life and immortality to light by the gospel, dispossessed Satan, and sheds the light of the glory of God in a dark world, and in the darkest souls; yea, he speaks to the very heart, that he may gain to himself a willing people in the day of his power; and when Christ calls, it is our duty, honour, and advantage, to leave all and follow him, whether it be in the service of the sanctuary, or in the faith and obedience of private life.

C H A P. V.

The former part of Christ's sermon on the mount. The blessings he pronounces, 1,—12. The duties he enjoins, 13,—20. And the mistakes he corrects, by his interpretation of the law, 21,—48.

TEXT.

AND seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain: and when he was set, his disciples came unto him.

2 And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying,

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

PARAPHRASE.

WHEN vast multitudes were brought together by the fame of Christ's miracles, his heart was moved with compassion to perishing souls, as well as to diseased bodies; and for the convenience of getting out of the press, and of being the better heard, he went up a hill that was near him in *Galilee*; and, sitting down after the manner of the *Jewish* doctors, his disciples drew nigh, and stood before him to hear his discourse.

2 Then, in the audience of the people, he lifted up his voice with great solemnity and earnestness, giving the following instructions, some of which were peculiar to his disciples, and others common to all. And, like the Saviour who was come to make his people happy, and to encourage their obedience, he began his sermon in pronouncing blessings upon them under various characters and circumstances, saying,

3 They are truly blessed, and I will make them so, who have low thoughts of themselves, are humbly sensible of their own ignorance, sinfulness, and insufficiency, and are desirous to be taught of God; whose hearts are likewise weaned from the riches, honours, and pleasures of this life, and are ready to part with all things here for the gospel's sake; and who, though they may be poor in this world, are not high-spirited and dissatisfied with the disposals of God's providence, but humbly submit to his will, and esteem heavenly blessings as the best of all treasures: These are already blessed, and shall be so

fo for ever; for they have a share and interest in all the riches and honours of the kingdom of grace here, and of the kingdom of glory hereafter.

4 Blessed are they that mourn? for they shall be comforted.

4 Blessed are they that are now mourning after a godly sort, with contrite hearts and broken spirits, under a sense of their sins, and of the miseries which they deservedly feel or are exposed to: For their wounded spirits shall be healed, and they that thus sow in tears, shall reap with joy; they shall in due season be revived with the comforts of the Holy Ghost, and shall enter at length into the everlasting joy of their Lord.

5 Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.

5 Blessed are they who, sensible of their own unworthiness, and of God's great goodness and pardoning grace, take every thing well at his hands, and quietly bow to his holy and sovereign will in all things, without murmuring and fretting; and who are affable, gentle, and patient to their fellow-creatures, hardly provoked, and easily appeased: These meek souls are happy; for they, by the blessing of Providence, shall have as much of this world as is best for them, and shall quietly enjoy it with the good will and friendship of God and man, and with the greatest tranquillity and satisfaction in their own minds.

6 Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.

6 Blessed are they who have a high value for, and deep concern about, the everlasting righteousness I am come to bring in, to justify them that believe in me, and about their being renewed in holiness after the image of God for all obedience to him; and who are as earnestly and heartily desirous of these things, as an hungry and thirsty man is of meat and drink, so that they cannot be satisfied without them: They shall have the desire of their souls; my righteousness shall answer for them, and my grace shall make them holy in heart and life; and all the blessings of the gospel shall be theirs.

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

7 Blessed are they who put on bowels of mercy, and upon truly pious and evangelical principles, are compassionate, and ready to deal tenderly with, and relieve the miserable; to forgive injuries, and forbear severities, when they have an advantage against any; to distribute to the necessities of the poor; to sympathize with and succour the afflicted; to pity the ignorant, and do what in them lies to convert sinners from the errors of their ways; and to comfort such as are of sorrowful hearts: For they are under the promise, and shall obtain mercy of God and man, answerable to their wants.

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

8 Blessed are they whose religion is pure and undefiled, whose hearts are purified by faith, whose

consciences are purged from guilt, whose tempers are formed for holiness and obedience, and who are cleansed from all allowed hypocrisy, pride, and sensuality : These are blessed indeed ; for God will manifest himself to them here, so as he doth not to the world ; and they shall have the beatific vision and enjoyment of him for ever.

8 Blessed are the peace-makers : for they shall be called the children of God.

9 Blessed are they who are of a peaceable disposition, who love and endeavour to maintain and promote peace, and to repair its breaches among their families, neighbourhood and acquaintance, and in all religious and civil societies, as far as they have opportunity, and can do it in consistence with truth and purity : These are blessed ; for this character proves them to be the children of God, that bear his likeness ; and they shall be owned as such, and enjoy all the privileges that belong to the adoption of sons.

10 Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness sake : for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

10 Blessed are they who with faith and patience undergo the severest persecutions for my sake and the gospel's, and for their conscientious adherence to, and profession of my truths and ways : For they are indeed my subjects, and shall have the comforts and blessings of my kingdom.

11 Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake.

11 As to you, my disciples, ye shall be truly blessed when ungodly men shall load you with reproaches, and persecute you even to imprisonment and death, and shall give themselves liberty to raise all manner of calumnies against you, with lies and falsehood, on my account, because ye keep a good conscience toward me ; as they particularly will those of you, whom I have chosen to preach my holy doctrine, in opposition to their lusts and prejudices.

12 Rejoice, and be exceeding glad ; for great is your reward in heaven : for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.

12 Do not be discouraged at it, but count it your glory, rejoice and triumph in it : For God will make you a rich amends ; and *your light affliction, which is but for a moment*, shall, by his gracious ordination and influence, *work for you a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory*. And do not think that God deals hardly with you in suffering these things to befall you in the way : For just in this manner the holy prophets, your predecessors of old, were called to cruel mockings, hardships, and sufferings, and bore them patiently ; but they are now got above them all, and are exalted with peculiar marks of honour in heaven.

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

13 Besides, it is proper for you to consider, that as salt is used for seasoning ; so ye, as teachers and examples to the world, are to diffuse the savour of my knowledge in doctrine and practice, wherever ye

go :

be falted? It is thenceforth good for nothing but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.

14 Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.

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

16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

17 Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.

go: If therefore, your hearts are seasoned with grace, your doctrines sound, and your lives exemplary, ye will be indeed blessings to the world, the means of purging out its corruptions in faith and manners, and of making great multitudes of converts acceptable to God, and useful to men. But if ye should disgrace your character, and degenerate into an unfaithful, cold, and carnal temper, corrupt notions, and licentious lives; what can ever make you good and profitable? There will be little or no hope of your recovery; but ye will become the most worthless and contemptible of all men, and be treated accordingly.

14 Ye are to make me known, and spread abroad the light of my gospel in a dark world, and, by instruction and example, to direct sinners into the way of salvation; and what ye say and do will be exposed to every one's observation, like a city that is built upon a hill, and cannot but be taken notice of by them that are near it.

15 And it is indeed for this purpose that I have called you to be my disciples and servants: For as men do not use to light a candle with a design to conceal it, by whelming it under a bushel, or shutting it up in an obscure place, that none may see it; but they set it in a candlestick, that it may give light to all the room where it is, and that the company may have the benefit of it;

16 So ye ought to take care that the light of your doctrine and conversation shine with conspicuous lustre and purity, in the view of all men, wherever ye are; that they, beholding them, may be brought under the influence of divine grace, to esteem, acknowledge, and admire the great excellence of real religion as displayed in you, and to embrace and practise it themselves, to the glory of your heavenly Father.

17 Do not imagine that I am come to abrogate the moral law, or to set aside the prophets, or teach any thing contrary to the design of the writings of the Old Testament. No; so far from this, that my great aim and work is to confirm them: I am come to establish the moral law as an everlasting rule of righteousness, to explain and enforce it, and to vindicate it from the false and injurious glosses that have been put upon it; I am likewise come to fulfil all righteousness, by a personal and universal obedience to it, and by submitting to the ordinances, and answering the types, of the ceremonial law, and to accomplish the ancient promises and prophecies:

30/6

In a word: I am come to fill up (*πληρῶσαι*) all the defects of the Old Testament dispensation.

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

18 For I, with the greatest solemnity, assure you, that no part of the typical ceremonies of the law shall be unfulfilled, and no obligation of the moral law shall be waved: But I will go through a course of exact obedience in every thing incumbent on me, as made under the law, to the end of my days upon earth: and will furnish my disciples with new motives and assistances to answer their natural and moral obligations through all ages, till time shall be no more.

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

19 Whoever therefore shall wilfully set aside and transgress any one, even of the least of these moral commands, as if they might be dispensed with, and shall encourage or teach others to do so likewise; he shall forfeit his character of being my disciple, and shall be looked upon as unworthy to be a subject, and much more an officer, in my kingdom: But, on the other hand, he that shall maintain the necessity of the law's being fulfilled, and shall have a conscientious respect to all God's commands, upon a principle of love to him, and of faith in me, and shall instruct and encourage others to do the same, shall be highly honoured among the chief of my subjects and servants.

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

20 For I tell you, that * unless ye be interested in the everlasting righteousness, which I, as the Messiah, am come to bring in by fulfilling the law, and which is every way perfect and superior to the righteousness † of the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*; and unless your personal righteousness be more excellent, spiritual, and extensive, in conformity to the moral law, than that which is found in those high pretenders to holiness, who are hypocritical and partial in their obedience, and trust in themselves that they are righteous; ye shall on no account whatsoever

bc

N O T E.

* As it was prophesied that the Messiah should *make reconciliation for iniquity, and bring in everlasting righteousness*, (Dan. ix. 24.); and our Saviour, in the two next foregoing verses but one, had spoke of his coming *to fulfil the law and the prophets*; I do not see why what he here says about the righteousness which exceeds that of the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*, may not refer back to all these verses, and so take in the righteousness of justification as well as of sanctification, to give a hint of what was afterwards to be more fully explained, about his being *the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believes*;

and the *righteousness of God being by faith of Jesus Christ unto all, and upon all them that believe*, Rom. iii. 22. and x. 4.

† The *Scribes* were the Jewish doctors that expounded the law; and were either judges in their sabbhedrims, or teachers in their schools, or in their synagogues: They are the same sort of men that at other times are called *lawyers*; and are frequently mentioned together with the *Pharisees*, because they were mostly of that sect, and professed like strictness with them in observing the law. *Priæcaux's Connest. Vol. II. p. 323.*

be admitted to the blessings of the kingdom of grace here, or of the kingdom of glory hereafter.

21 Ye have heard, that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill, shall be in danger of the judgment.

21 Now, to give you some specimens of these mens defects, chiefly relating to their interpretations and observances of the moral law, ye cannot but have heard, that in this law, as delivered by *Moses*, it was said to the people of old ||, *Thou shalt not murder*; and whoever is guilty of this crime *shall be adjudged and put to death*; (Exod. xx. 13. xxi. 12.): And ye hereby apprehend, that there is no guilt in any thing of this nature and tendency, except a wilful murder be actually committed.

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

22 But I say unto you, that, by the true intent of God's law. whosoever shall so much as indulge rash, wrathful, and causeless anger †. or a malicious revengeful temper in his own mind against another, though it be (*was*) ineffectual to his hurt; he, in the divine account, is guilty of murder in his heart, and so exposes himself to the righteous wrath and judgment of God, who has made the wages of sin to be death: And he that suffers his passion to rise still higher, and in the pride of his spirit shall break out into opprobrious language, and scornfully say to his brother, thou worthless, vain, empty fellow, contracts yet greater guilt, and is obnoxious to the censure of the *Jewish* Sanhedrim, as well as to the righteous judgment of God: But he that, under the dominion of sin, shall so far give himself up to his wicked passions, as bitterly to censure and revile his brother with respect to his spiritual and eternal

N O T E.

† *Τὸς ἀγαπᾷς*, in the dative case. See *Whitby*.

‡ Our Lord here does not condemn all sorts of anger; but only that which is causeless and revengeful: For anger is a natural passion of human nature; and Christ himself, on just occasions, was angry; and the order given to us about it, is, *to be angry and sin not*, (Ephes. iv. 26.) Nor does our Saviour here condemn just and charitable reproof, as expressing the vanity and folly of others, and designed for their good: For he himself styled the *Pharisees*, yea, and his own disciples, on urgent occasions, *Fools*, (Mat. xxiii. 17. and *Luke* xxiv. 25.); and the apostles used the terms, *Vain man*, *Thou fool*, and *O foolish Galatians*: (Jam. ii. 20. 1 Cor. xv. 36. and Gal. iii. 1.) But we should have a strict guard upon our tempers, and be very cautious of using any such sort of words, and much more of a wrathful censorious spirit, opprobrious language, and peremptory passing judgment upon a man's

state before God.—*Raca*, in the *Jewish* language of that age, which was composed of *Hebrew*, *Syriac*, and *Chaldee*, expressed the utmost contempt, as if a person were to be spit at. And in describing the punishment of all these crimes, there seems to be an allusion to the three courts of judicature among the *Jews*, and the various degrees of penalties inflicted by them: One court consisted of three judges in every village, where there were not an hundred and twenty persons; and these sat upon inferior causes: The second consisted of twenty-three, who sat in the gates of their cities, and judged the common criminal causes. And the third consisted of seventy-two, six out of every tribe; or, as others say, of seventy and their president; these sat only at *Jerusalem*, and judged causes of the greatest weight, both of a civil and ecclesiastical nature. See *Weems's Christian Synagogue*, pag. 176, &c. and *Seld. de Synedr. Lib. II. cap. 4, 5, 10.*

nal state. and call him a profane reprobate wretch, a fire brand of hell, and the like, as if he were such a fool as says in his heart *There is no God*, sins more grievously still, and shall himself be in danger of that hell-fire to which he damns or condemns his brother.

23 Therefore, if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee;

23 Since, therefore, God forbids rash, revengeful, and causeless anger, and evil speaking, as well as actual murder; if you are about to offer * any gift or sacrifice, or perform any act of religious worship, and recollect that you have given just cause of offence by a breach of this law, do not think to atone for it by your offering, on one hand; nor yet despair of obtaining mercy for the forgiveness of it, on the other;

24 Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.

24 But, persisting in your design of paying the solemn homage to God, like one that leaves his gift before the altar instead of taking it away with him, go and seek reconciliation with the brother whom you have offended, by humbling yourself to him, asking his pardon, and satisfying him for any wrong that you may have done him; and then return to offer your gift, as becomes one who is encouraged to hope that he shall also obtain forgiveness of God.

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

25, 26. When, therefore, at any time, you have committed a fault against your Christian brother, be as speedy as possible to get the breach made up again, especially considering that God is hereby offended too. For as common prudence, to prevent extremities, would put a man upon doing his utmost for an amicable timely agreement with his adversary, who is about to bring him before a civil magistrate, lest in the issue of the trial the judge should pass sentence against him, and order an officer to carry him to jail, after which there would be no hope of an accommodation; so it is your highest wisdom, interest, and duty, to seek peace and reconciliation with God, as well as with your offended brother, without delay, while you are in the way of mercy, and before it be too late, lest you should be cut off by death, and forced to appear at the awful bar of the great Judge of all in your sins: For I assure you that then you must suffer the severest punishment in the prison of hell, from whence there can be no release till you have fully satisfied all the demands of divine justice, which you will never be able to do.

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

27 Again,

NOTE.

* This is applicable to prayers, as well as other religious services, though expressed in ceremonial language, with a reference to the altar.

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

27 Again, ye have heard that it was said in the law to the people of old, *Thou shalt not commit adultery*, (Exod. xx. 14.); and ye suppose that this relates only to a person's actually lying with a woman who is not his wife.

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

28 But I tell you, That, according to the genuine purport of this law, whosoever shall look upon any woman with unchaste desires after her, and contrivances how to accomplish them; in the first of these cases, lust has conceived in his mind; and in the second, it is finished in his will: And so, in the judgment of God, he is guilty of adultery in his heart, though he has been restrained from, or has not had opportunity to commit the fact.

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

29, 30 If this, or any other sin, be ever so dear to you; if you think it ever so pleasant or advantageous, and through long custom and habit should find it as hard and self-denying to part with it, as it would be to pluck out a right-eye, or cut off a right-hand, that had offended or been an occasion of sinning; yet, as it would be an offence to God, and would be defiling and dangerous to yourself, and expose you to his just and everlasting wrath, to love, harbour, or practise it; it is surely much better for you to part with it, though you should suffer the greatest uneasiness and temporal loss by so doing, than that the whole body, together with your soul, should be cast into hell, there to be tormented with inexpressible pain all over for ever: If you cannot bear the uneasiness of crucifying the flesh with its affections and lusts how will you bear the torture of everlasting burnings?

30 And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee; for it is profitable for thee, that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell.

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

31 It has likewise been said, That in case any man shall dissolve the marriage-relation to his wife, on what he takes to be a just occasion, he shall give her a bill of divorce, that she may have it in her hand to shew, as circumstances require, (*Deut.* xxiv. 1.)

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

32 But I say unto you, God did not *command* a divorce, as the *Pharisees* would understand it, (*chap.* xix. 7.) nor was it according to his design in the original institution of marriage; but he only permitted it to your fathers for preventing greater evils, which, through the perverseness of their hearts, they were strongly addicted to: And as I am come to reduce God's laws to their primitive standard, I declare that henceforth whosoever shall divorce his wife for any other cause, * than that of

N O T E.

* Fornication is a breach of chastity in the single, and adultery in the married

state:

fornication before marriage, and of adultery after it, which in its own nature breaks the matrimonial bond, shall be chargeable with the guilt of the adultery that is committed both by her and the man who afterwards marries her: For she is, in God's account, still the wife of him that divorced her; and it is unlawful for her to be married to any other whilst her former husband is living.

33 Again, ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths.

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

35 Nor by the earth, for it is his footstool: neither by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great king.

33 Again, ye have heard that it was said to the people of old, You shall not be guilty of perjury in swearing falsely by the name of God, which would be to profane it, (*Levit. xix. 12.*); but that, when you are come under the obligation of an oath, you shall look upon it as taken in the sight and presence of that God who is the avenger of falsehood, and shall perform it as to the Lord, (*Numb. xxx. 2.*); if it be a promissory oath, you shall stand to it without changing, though it should afterwards appear to be to your own hurt in your temporal concerns, (*Psal. xv. 4.*)

34 But the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* having taught you to think, that in common conversation ye may swear several sorts of oaths without any scruple, and without looking upon yourselves to be bound by them; as, particularly, that you may swear by the heavens, by the earth, by *Jerusalem*, and by your own heads*, innocently enough, provided the name of God be not invoked in those oaths: I say unto you, do not swear in your ordinary discourse at all; no, not by any of these things, which is virtually swearing by God himself, because they are related to him in a more general, or more peculiar manner, as the great God and governor of all. Do not swear by heaven; for that is the throne of God's glory:

35 Nor by the earth; for that is his footstool, it is his property, and under his government: Neither swear by *Jerusalem*; for that is the city of God, peculiarly related to him as its great King, and sanctified

N O T E S.

state: But I have taken both into the paraphrase, because the argument for a divorce holds stronger, if this crime is found to be committed after, than before marriage, and is only brought to light after it.

* These particular forms of swearing were usual among the *Jews* in their common conversation; but they did not look upon these sorts of oaths to be binding, as appears from several of their ancient writers. *Vid. Whitby in loc.* And what our Lord says on this occasion, equally condemns the too customary forms

of swearing in common discourse among some in our days; such as, *by my soul, by my life, by my troth, by my faith, by George, by all that is good and great,* and the like: But it by no means forbids solemn oaths in a judicial way, which are designed for confirmation, to put an end to all strife, (*Ileb. vi. 16.*); though, alas! through the unnecessary frequency and severe impositions, and through light thoughts of these kinds of oaths, as well as through profane cursing and swearing in common conversation, our land grievously mourns.

sanctified by the temple, which was built for his special residence, and was consecrated by him, and to him.

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

36 Nor shall you swear by your own head, which is more his than yours: For he made, furnishes, and preserves it; whereas you have no power over it, nor over the natural life of which it is the fountain; it is therefore at his disposal, and not yours; nor are you able to procure even so trivial an alteration in it, as to make any of its hairs † grow white before their time; or, when they become grey through age, to make them black again.

37 But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these, cometh of evil.

37 But let your speech, in common conversation, be only affirming or denying in plain terms, without ambiguity; or at most with repeated expressions of this sort, when the importance of things, and the evidence of one's being in good earnest, may require it: For whatever goes farther than these, to gain credit to what you say in the common affairs of life, is of the devil, (*ex του πονηρου*) or proceeds from a bad habit, or from some evil principle or passion that ought to be suppressed, or from a distrust of yourselves, as if ye were not to be believed, or of them that ye speak to, as if they were unreasonably incredulous.

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

38 Ye have furthermore heard, that in retributions of justice, an eye shall go for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth, which has been beat out by an offender, (*Exod. xxi. 24.*) so that, by the law of retaliation, losses and injuries shall be punished in kind; and this, which related only to the magistrates' power for maintaining public justice in case the plaintiff insisted upon and would admit of no other satisfaction, is understood by your *scribes* as if private persons might justly indulge a malicious temper, and take their revenge, either in a law-suit or otherwise, as opportunities offer.

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

39 But I say unto you, Do not study to avenge yourselves by rendering evil for evil; and if a vindication of your characters or properties be necessary, let it be done consistently with the law of charity: Do not resist evil, by returning the same in kind, when it would be cruel to insist upon it; and, in lesser matters, bear even repeated affronts and injuries with patience, and pass them by rather than retaliate; as for instance, if any man give you a slap on the face, rather venture his doing it again, than return

N O T E.

† Here seems to be a reference to the black hair of the eastern nations, and to their growing grey in old age.

return blow for blow, or right yourself in any way of revenge.

40 And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also.

40 Nay, if any man be litigious and would go to law with you to trick you out of your coat, however hard this may seem, yet it is in itself a thing of small value; and you should rather let him take as much more, than with a contentious and revengeful temper to stand a vexatious law-suit with him.

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

41 And if any one that has got an advantage over you, would oblige you, without right and reason, to keep him company for a mile together; rather go with him twice as far, than furiously quarrel with him, and oppose force to force.

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

42 And that you may, as much as possible, promote the welfare of others, be ready, according to your ability, to relieve the necessities of such as apply to you for help; and if they desire you to lend them any thing that they greatly want the use of, do not deny them, in case you can let them have it without the hazard of a loss too great for your own circumstances to bear; or if you cannot conveniently grant their request, yet deal tenderly with them, and do not turn away in a huff.

43 Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy.

43 Once more, ye have heard that it has been said in the law of God, *Thou shalt love thy neighbour*, (Lev. xix. 18.); and that your interpreters of this law restrain the word *neighbour* to their kindred and friends; and have added, that it is lawful to hate our enemies, by which they mean all who are not of their own relations, country, and religion.

44 But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you:

44 But though ye ought not to think well of, much less to delight in, the treacherous and injurious designs and sinful practices of your enemies; yet I say unto you, Bear all good-will to their persons, as they are partakers of the same human nature with yourselves; wish a blessing upon them, for their real and everlasting happiness; and speak well of every thing that is commendable in them, who wish a curse and damnation to you, and unrighteously reproach you: Take all opportunities of doing every office of beneficence and kindness to them, who discover the greatest enmity against you; and earnestly pray for their conversion and salvation, who maliciously traduce and persecute you.

45 That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven; for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.

45 In this way ye will both be, and appear to be, children of your heavenly Father's likeness: For he bestows the kindly influences, comforts, and benefits of the shining sun, and of seasonable fruitful rains, on the wicked as well as on the righteous; on them that are enemies to him, as well as on them that love him; and ye cannot by a contrary way of acting,

46 For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same?

47 And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so?

48 Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.

acting, prove yourselves to be his genuine offspring.
46 For if your love be entirely confined to your friends that are affectionate and kind to you, what extraordinary excellence is there in this? what is there distinguishing in it for your honour as Christians? is this any thing more than even persons of the worst and meanest characters, such as publicans, think themselves obliged in common gratitude to do?

47 And if ye are kind and friendly only to those of your own sect, kindred, or religion, what great matter is this? do not all mankind, and even such as ye count the most vile, infamous, and injurious among them, think themselves bound, by the common ties of nature and society, to do the same?

48 Let therefore your principles and behaviour go vastly beyond all this, that ye may rise to the highest resemblance possible of your heavenly Father in his goodness, as well as in all his other moral perfections, who is good to all, and whose tender mercies are over all his works.

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

How excellent is the genius and design of Christ's gospel, which is calculated to raise our hopes of the truest happiness, and so to support us under all trials, and allure us unto cheerful obedience! They are blessed indeed whom he blesses, whatever they may suffer for his sake. See how the dear Saviour begins with opening his mouth in blessings of rich variety to his disciples under their numerous sorrows, persecutions and reproaches, fears and dangers, to animate and encourage their holy desires, faith and hope, meekness and patience, humility, love and peace, self-denial, hope and joy! And O how great shall their honour and felicity be at last to their utmost satisfaction, in the full enjoyment of God, and of his glorious kingdom! What leading hints did our blessed Lord give of gospel-grace, which after his death and resurrection were to be discovered with clearer evidence, and more at large! How perfect was his obedience; and with what wisdom and authority has he drawn out the beauties and obligations of that law, which is the rule of duty, in all its spirituality, exactness, and wide extent! What a becoming reverence of God, and of his great and awful name; what chastity and purity, and mortification of all sin; what a happy dominion over our appetites and passions; what a sacred guard upon our speech and behaviour; what forbearance under injuries; and what a diffusive beneficence to mankind, and imitation of our heavenly Father, does it enjoin, that God in all things may be glorified. But how unworthy are they of the name of servants or disciples of Christ, that relax the obligation, or encourage a disregard to the least of God's commands! And what will become of them for ever, if death and judgment seize them in opposition to all corruptions of men! How concerned should ministers and Christians be to spread the favour of the knowledge of Christ in all places, and to act up to their characters and engagements with all integrity, and without reserve! How honourable would this be to him and themselves; and what a blessing would it make them to the church and the world! And yet, alas! in how many things do we all offend, and come short of the glory of God! How should this humble us, and put us upon desiring truth in the inward parts, and on believing in him with the heart unto righteousness, who has perfectly fulfilled the law for the justification of every one that believeth!

C H A P. VI.

The continuation of Christ's sermon about alms-deeds, prayer, and fasting, 1,—18. And the preference of heavenly to earthly treasure, 19,—34.

TEXT.

TAKE heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven.

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

3 But when thou dost alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doth:

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

PARAPHRASE.

AS the corrupt glosses which the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* have put upon the law are carefully to be guarded against, so are their hypocritical and vain-glorious practices in religion. In the first place, be very careful that ye do not perform any of your good deeds, and particularly works of charity and liberality to the poor, in an ostentatious manner, on purpose to be observed and applauded by your fellow-creatures: For if ye do them to this end, they cannot be called acts of piety toward God your heavenly Father, nor will be regarded by him as such, either in providential returns of the blessings of this life, or in the gracious recompense that is to be made at the resurrection of the just.

2 Whenever, therefore, you are about to do an act of charity, be not like the hypocritical *Pharisees*, who study to do it in as public a manner as if they were to call the people together by sound of trumpet to be eye-witnesses of it; and who take their opportunities for it in sight of the greatest concourse of people, as in the synagogues and public streets, that they may be admired by them and have their praises. I tell you of a truth, as this is all the reward they aim at, in having this they have their all: A poor reward! and they shall have no better.

3, 4 But on the other hand, study to do your acts of charity in a private manner, that they may be observed as little as possible; hide them even from the applauses of your own mind, that you may not have high thoughts of yourself for them; or imagine that there is any merit in them; and hide them from the observation of others, even of your most intimate acquaintance, that they may not feed your vain glory: Let them be no further known, than you sincerely apprehend may sometimes be needful for the glory of God, and setting a good example to others: And your heavenly Father, who knows the secrets of all hearts, and the most concealed actions of life, will graciously observe and accept these genuine fruits of faith and love, and will take the work of rewarding you in

to his own hand; he will appear for you, and make you shine in a better character than the *Pharisees* in this world; and will bring all to light, and publicly own and honour you as his child, before men and angels in the day of judgment.

5 And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, they have their reward.

5 And as to the duty of private or solitary prayer, wherein you have personally to do with God only, take heed of being like the hypocritical *Pharisees*,—who chuse the most improper and public places of resort for their private devotions; sometimes affecting to offer up their secret prayers in the synagogues, while they ought to be joining in the solemn addresses of the whole assembly; and at others presenting themselves to every one's view in the most open and frequented places abroad, such as where two streets meet at a corner-house, that they may be observed and admired by men, as if they were the highest favourites with God. I tell you of a truth, this is the reward they seek, and this is all that they shall have.

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

6 On the contrary, when you go to offer up private prayers to God, let them be private indeed: Retire into some room, apart from company; and, when you have shut yourself up, to prevent others breaking in upon you, pour out your heart to God as your father; not with a voice loud enough to be heard by any that might stand without to listen, much less on purpose to make others hear you; but with mental conceptions, or with a low pronunciation, knowing that the God you are speaking to is near at hand, and can as easily hear the softest whisper as the loudest noise; and he, who is fully acquainted with the most secret desires and petitions of your heart, will return such answers to your prayers, as shall openly witness that he heard and accepted them.

7 But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking.

7 But whenever ye pray, whether it be alone or in social worship, though sometimes, in the great fervency of your spirits, ye may with good propriety and emphasis repeat some important and affecting expressions; and, as occasions offer, and ye find assistances from above, may be more enlarged in your requests and pleadings, and spend more time than at others; yet take special heed of empty, formal, weak and superstitious tautologies, and of multiplying words to no good purpose, (*μη βαττολογησθε*;) as the idolatrous *Gentiles* do in worshipping their gods: For they abound in vain repetitions; and sometimes, like *Baal's* priests. (1 *King*. xviii. 26.) lengthen them out from morning till noon, imagining that many words are needful to make their deities

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ties understand them, or to work up their passions, that they may hear and answer them.

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

8 Take heed, therefore, that no such absurd sentiments of the true God enter into your minds; and that ye do not treat him as if, like the heathens, ye thought he did not understand your requests, or were unwilling to answer them: For your heavenly Father, who loves you, and takes pleasure in blessing you, is thoroughly acquainted with all your wants and desires, even before ye express them to him.

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

9 That therefore ye may avoid vain repetitions, and pray only for needful things, reduce your supplications and pleas to what may be included in the following heads, which I am going to mention for your special direction; or let your prayers be to this effect. O most high and glorious God! thou art the creator and preserver, owner and benefactor, of all men, and in a special manner the father of them that believe: Thy throne is established in the heavens, where thou dwellest amidst the exalted adorations and praises of saints and angels; and thou hast made thyself known under these characters to us, that our hearts and affections may mount up to thee in heaven, and that we may think of, and speak to thee, with all the awful solemnity and reverence, humility and self-abasement, holy trust and confidence, that become sinful nothing creatures in their approaches to such a God and Father: O let thy infinite perfections be gloriously exalted in the eyes of all intelligent creatures, especially of the human race, that they may admire and adore, praise and bleis thee, suitable to the various discoveries thou makest of thyself to them in thy works, and in thy word, that thou mayest be owned and honoured in their hearts, speech, and behaviour, as their chief good, and highest end.

10 Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.

10 Let thy kingdom, even the Messiah's, which we are looking for, and in which thou wilt be most illustriously glorified, come amongst us in all its light and power, spirituality, purity and glory, to the utter ruin of the kingdom of sin and Satan; let his gospel be preached far and wide, and be heartily embraced by all nations, that his throne may be set up in their souls, who in the day of his power may be a willing people unto him; and let us and them grow in light, love and peace, in faith, comfort, hope and holiness, under the blessed influences of thy Spirit, in the kingdom of grace here, till we shall triumph together in the kingdom of glory hereafter. And O grant that we, and all who profess

fels Christ's name, may have such rich supplies of grace to enlighten our minds, incline our hearts, and strengthen our executive powers, as shall enable us to yield most unfeigned, cheerful, and universal obedience to thy commands at all times, and to approve of, and comply with, thy providential will in all things, in the nearest imitation possible of the spirits of just men made perfect, and of the sinless angels in heaven.

11 Give us this day our daily bread.

11 And as to what concerns our present condition in the house of our pilgrimage, we humbly beseech thee to grant us, together with the rest of thy children, and others of our fellow creatures, a daily supply of food, and such other good things as thou seest are most needful and convenient for us, in subservience to thy glory and our own everlasting happiness, during our abode in this mortal life †.

12 And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.

12 And that our iniquities may not separate between thee and us, and hinder these, or any other good things from us, we earnestly beg that thou wouldst graciously pardon our great and numerous sins of omission and commission, in heart and life, which have forfeited all enjoyments, and brought us under a debt of punishment to thy injured law and justice: And as thy thoughts and ways of mercy are as much above ours as the heavens are above the earth, we are encouraged to hope for this forgiveness from thee; because thou hast made it our duty, and thy grace has inclined our hearts, to forgive the offences and injuries which others have committed against us.

13 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

13 And that we may not still further sin against thee, we humbly intreat that thou wouldst keep us out of the way of such trials as might prove too hard for us; or if at any time temptation lies before us, grant us help against and victory over it, that we may not be entangled and ensnared by circumstances of prosperity or adversity, or by any allurements or terrors of this world: Deliver us likewise from the power of Satan, that evil one, from the corrupt inclinations of our own hearts, from all practices of iniquity, and from the troubles and sufferings that sin in ourselves or others might bring upon us; and at last raise us up to that blessed state, where we shall be entirely free from all temptation, sin and sorrow, for ever: For universal dominion, almighty power, and every thing that is great and glorious, belong unchangeably without beginning or end to

N O T E.

† *Bread* is put for all sorts of provision: and *daily bread* (*ἐπιούσιον*) may signify either the food that is needful for the present day, or from day to day as long as we live.

to thee; thou hast an undoubted claim to them; and it is our earnest desire, that we, with all thine, as in duty bound, may everlastingly celebrate their praises. Amen. So let all this be; and so we humbly hope it shall be, in answer to what we have been praying for †.

14 For, if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you:

14 It is after this manner that your petitions are to be offered up to God; and here ye have one thing in particular, which ye never heard of before, but is matter of great necessity and importance, *viz.* That ye are to beg of God to forgive your offences, even as ye should and do forgive the offences of others against you: For if God has made this your duty, it shews, *there is forgiveness with him*

N O T E.

† This may justly be esteemed an excellent model of the petitionary part of prayer, together with such pleas to enforce it, as are taken from God's infinite and exalted perfections, from his universal dominion, and from his kind dispositions and benefactions, as a heavenly Father, to whom belong the kingdom, power, and glory, for ever; and all this is admirably and most peculiarly suited to the then present dispensation, which was introductory to the Messiah's kingdom, that was soon to break out in illustrious light and grace, to the overthrow of all the powers of sin and Satan: And as these petitions seem to have been *introductory* to the then approaching dispensation, in which Christ's person, mediation, and benefits, were to be clearly manifested by the gospel, and all blessings were to be explicitly asked in his name; so it was too soon as yet for him to give directions to his disciples about expressly mentioning his name in their prayers, as he afterwards did, when he came to settle the manner of evangelical worship. It therefore seems very evident, that this plan of prayer cannot be looked upon as completely suited to gospel-days: And I would humbly propose it to consideration, whether, instead of the paraphrase I have given upon it in conformity to the concurring judgment of all the expositors I have seen, the following short sketch may not express its chief and more immediate sense, consonant to the circumstances of the time and dispensation in which it was delivered, as well as to the occasion of Christ's directing to a proper method for preventing vain repetitions and a multitude of words in prayer.

“O Father of thy people *Israel*, who art not confined to any temple or place upon earth, but hast thy habitation by

“way of eminence in heaven, let thy name now be sanctified in a more glorious manner than it ever has been in ages past: Let the kingdom of the Messiah, which we are looking for, be set up without delay amongst us; and under its light, grace, and power, let thy will be done with all sincerity, cheerfulness, and universality on earth, as it is in heaven. In the perilous times that will attend the erecting of this kingdom, give us a daily supply of such good things as shall be needful for the body; and forgive our sins, which make us unworthy of this and every other mercy, and which might justly obstruct thy setting up this kingdom amongst us, or might exclude us from its blessings: Forgive these in like manner as, under this new dispensation, we are especially called, and hope to be inclined, heartily to forgive others offences against us. And let no temptations of Satan, or of this present world, ever prevail to keep us out of this kingdom, or to make us act contrary to its obligations, and deprive our souls of its blessings: But deliver us from the evil one, that great enemy, who will do all he can to prevent the Messiah's interest taking place in ourselves, or in the world: Deliver us likewise from the evil lusts of our own hearts that would oppose it, and from the terrors of this evil world that would discourage our embracing it. And we humbly present these petitions, O heavenly Father, to thee, in hopes of being heard and answered, because it is thy kingdom that we desire may be exalted, and thy power is able to establish it, and thou wilt have the glory of it. Amen so let it be uncontrollably and for ever.”

him that he may be feared, (Psal. cxxx. 4.) ; and if ye have obtained so much mercy from him, as to have this disposition wrought in your own hearts towards them that offend you, this is a comfortable evidence of the efficacy of his grace in you, and may warrantably encourage your expectations that he will also bestow forgiveness upon you, according to his promise, that *with the merciful he will shew himself merciful.* (Psal. xviii. 25.)

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

15 But if your own hearts are implacable, and disinclined to forgive others, ye in vain expect that God should be merciful in forgiving your much greater provocations: Let no such man deceive himself; for while this is his indulged and prevailing temper, all his prayers, for the pardon of his own sins, are a contradiction to the design of my gospel, a mockery of God, and an abomination to him.

16 Moreover, when ye fast, be not as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance; for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, they have their reward.

16 There is likewise another hypocritical practice, which I must caution you against: When at any time ye keep a private fast, on a religious account, be not like the ostentatious and dissembling *Pharisees*, who take pains to make people know which are their fasting days; and put on outward appearances of sorrow, instead of being truly humbled before God, by inwardly afflicting their souls: They chuse to go abroad, though the chief work of those days lies at home; and they affect melancholy, mournful, and dejected looks, dirty faces, and negligent slovenly airs, that they may be cried up for wonderfully pious and mortified men, on account of their often setting apart days for solemn humiliation and extraordinary devotion: I tell you of a truth, this is the reward they seek, and this is all that they shall have.

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

17, 18 But when you would keep a private fast, do not make any remarkable alteration in your countenance, dress, and public behaviour; nor affect any shew of humiliation and fasting, for others to take notice of it; but conceal it as much as may be from men: And though you are to abstain from the delights of nature, and its usual repairs, that you may thereby exercise self-denial, and be the fitter for the other duties you are then called to; such as great searchings of heart before the Lord, ingenuous confession of sin, deep contrition and humiliation for it, serious meditation and solemn prayer; yet let all this lie between God and your own souls alone, while no other eye sees you, and your heavenly Father, who is intimately acquainted with all your most secret transactions with him will

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

publicly

publicly own and bless you in this world, and in that which is to come.

19 Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal.

19 One great means of preserving you from all this hypocrisy is, to take heed of too highly esteeming and being carried away with the honours and advantages of this world : Let not therefore your chief solicitude and pains be laid out in getting and hoarding up earthly treasures, which are of a decaying nature, like the richest garments that are consumed by moths ; and like silver and gold, which are eat up with canker and rust, and are continually a temptation to thieves to break in upon you, and rob you of them ; and are exposed to numberless other hazards.

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

20 But, above all things else, esteem, and let your chief solicitude and pains be laid out in a pursuit after heavenly treasures ; such as the favour of God, and the graces of his spirit here, and a complete enjoyment of him hereafter, which are subject to none of these uncertainties, losses, and decays :

21 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

21 For that which ye reckon upon as your chief treasure, will command your thoughts and affections, your aims and pursuits ; and so ye will be either earthly or heavenly minded, and all your happiness will be either mean and perishing, or great and everlasting, according as earthly or heavenly things are the chief good in your account.

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

22 A true spiritual judgment to discern things that differ, is of vast importance in this case ; for as the eye guides the body, so the judgment directs the will and affections. As therefore, if the eye be clear and free from vitiating humours, that would give it a wrong view of objects round about it, the whole body will be regularly conducted to perform the various offices of life ; so if, the heart being weaned from this world, your mind hath a right and clear discerning of the excellency of spiritual things, all the other faculties of the soul will be well directed in their pursuits after them.

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

23 But as, on the other hand, if the eye be blind, or tinged with any vitiating humour, the whole body will be in the dark, or directed very wrong ; so if, through an inordinate affection to this world, your understanding is blind to spiritual things, or makes a corrupt or wrong judgment about their truth and excellence, all the other faculties of the soul will be misguided and perverted by it, to your own unspeakable loss and perdition.

24 No man can serve two masters : for

24 No man can, at one and the same time, heartily and truly serve two masters of contrary tempers, demands,

for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

demands, and interests; for he will in his own inclination; and mult of necessity in the nature of things, disrelish and neglect the service of one of them, whilst he chuses and cleaves to the service of the other: This is the case with respect to God, and the treasures* of this world, which, in direct opposition to each other, demand that the soul, with all its powers, be entirely devoted to themselves respectively; and if ye herein give the preference to worldly things, your hearts are not right with God, and cannot possibly love and serve him, who will not admit of any rival, much less of any supreme, or superior to himself.

25 Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?

25 Therefore I say unto you, Do not rend and cut your hearts with care; (*μη μεριμνατε*) nor be anxiously, uneasily, and distrustfully solicitous, even about the necessaries and conveniences of this present life, such as meat and drink, and raiment for the body; much less be so about its superfluities, dainties, and fine apparel, as if your happiness were bound up in such sort of things as these; but in the way of dutiful diligence, to which the providence of God calls you, depend with quiet and undivided hearts upon him, for a supply of such things as, in his infinite wisdom, he sees are best for you: And in case his providence, by sickness or otherwile, disables you from following any secular business to get your bread; or calls you off from it, that ye may spend your time and labour in his service, as ministers in my kingdom; still calmly commit yourselves by faith to him for all the temporal supplies that are requisite for the body: For what reason can there be to doubt that he, who at first was the Author of your life and being, without your own care or concern about them, or any way contributing towards them, will not afford you such things, in the way of his providence, as are needful for their maintenance and preservation, as long as he designs to continue their existence? he who has done the greater, shall not he do the less?

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

26 Consider the various ranks of creatures that are below you: And as to *food*, observe how the birds live and are provided for, merely by the kind hand of God: For they neither provide for themselves, by preparing their own meat, or heaping up stores against a day of want; and yet your heavenly Father preserves and supplies them with necessary and convenient provisions. And do not ye think, that

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ye,

NOTE.

* *Mammon* is a *Syriac* word, signifying riches, gains, or treasures, which are the idols of carnal hearts in opposition to the true God.

ye, my disciples and my ministring servants, are creatures of a more excellent make, and greater consideration in the world, than they; and that your heavenly Father loves you better, and makes a higher account of you, than them? why then should ye suspect that his providence will not take good care to feed you with food convenient for you?

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

27 Besides, all your anxious, carking, distracting, and distrustful cares can be of no advantage to you; for, after all, none of you can possibly, by any contrivances of your own, or by any means within the power of your hands, add the least measure to the stature of your bodies, or to the length of your age (*επι την ηλικιαν*). All these things, with whatsoever else concerns your body and life, entirely depend upon the providence of that God, who, without any care of yours, at first gave them. Why then should ye not still rely upon his all-governing management to nourish and preserve them?

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

28 And as to *cloathing*, why should ye be solicitously concerned, or over-thoughtful about that? Think of the flowers of the field: However exposed they are to many dangers that surround them abroad, from the air, and from men and beasts; yet, under a divine care, they grow up in all their beauties, without any thought in themselves, or any pains to get and put on their various rich adornings.

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

29 And yet I tell you, that even that greatest and most splendid king, *Solomon* himself, in the midst of all his delicacy, pomp, and grandeur, was in no comparison so fine as one lily or tulip; so inimitably superior are the beauties of God's works of nature to those of all the works of art.

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

30 If, therefore, God so curiously decks these flowers, which are indeed but poor vegetables, that may be called the grass of the field, and that are designed but for a very short continuance; one day flourishing in the field, and the next consumed in heating the oven; what room have ye to distrust his fatherly care in providing suitable apparel for you, who are sent into the world for nobler purposes, and are the objects of his special providence? Surely your faith is exceeding low indeed, if ye cannot rely upon him for so small a thing as this: And as your bodies must ere long be consumed in the grave, it is shameful unbelief to distrust him for so little a while as ye have to live upon earth.

31 Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or what shall we drink? or where-

31 Be not, therefore, anxiously and distrustfully solicitous at any time about worldly things, troubling yourselves with thoughts about what ye shall do for meat, drink, and clothes; or in what manner,

wherewithal shall we be clothed?

32 (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.

33 But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.

34 Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself; sufficient unto the day

manner, and with what sort of provisions and apparel, ye shall be supplied:

32 For these are the poor, low, mean things, that the heathen, who know not God and his government of the world, and have no trust in him, nor assuring prospects of a better life, are perpetually teasing themselves about, and hunting after, as their all; but this is utterly unworthy of, and beneath you, my disciples, who know better, and have nobler hopes, under the light and grace of divine revelation. It is a shame for you, who have the promises of this life, as well as of that which is to come, and profess to trust God with your souls, not to trust him with your bodies too; for your heavenly Father is thoroughly acquainted with all your wants, and with the proper methods of relieving them. Do not, therefore, so far dishonour his fatherly love and care, as to suppose that he will not give you what he knows is needful for you, relating to this present state and world, as well as the next; and do not distress yourselves with a care, that is so needless for you, and so easy to him.

33 But let it be your first and principal concern to mind the things that pertain to the glory of God, and the salvation of your own souls, as set before you in my gospel: Seek without delay, and with the utmost earnestness, before all things else, the rich advantages of the kingdom of grace and of glory, and the righteousness which belongs to that kingdom; both the righteousness of faith, which I am sent of God to bring in by my obedience and sufferings unto death, and the righteousness of personal holiness and obedience in heart and life, which I am come to enjoin upon my disciples, and to propagate in them by a work of regeneration and sanctification: Begin every day with seeking these, by the aids and assistances of my Spirit, and lay hold on every opportunity for it; be sure that ye take up with nothing short of a saving knowledge, experience, and enjoyment of them: And as for all the necessaries and comforts of this life, so far as God sees them best for you, he will certainly add them by way of overplus.

34 Upon the whole, therefore, be content with such things as ye have; and, going on in the way of present duty, take heed of anticipating troubles by unbelieving fears, and distracting cares about time to come; for God, whose mercies are new every morning, (Lam. iii. 23.) and who has promised, that, as your days, so your strength shall be, (Deut. xxxiii. 25.) can easily prevent the evils ye fear, or enable

day is the evil thereof. enable you to bear them, and carry you through them with rich advantage : To-morrow's miseries will bring along with them to-morrow's mercies ; and it will be time enough to be distressed with future wants and trials, when they unavoidably come to be present, and could not be prevented by any prudent foresight : The troubles of the current day are enough to exercise all the strength and grace of that day ; and, therefore, it is not only needless and foolish, but injurious and unwarrantable, to add the imaginary evils of the morrow, to the real difficulties that already attend you.

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

A shew of piety is all mere pretence and mockery, and does not deserve to be called religion ; much less can it be evangelical, and acceptable to God, unless the heart be in it with governing aims, not at our own reputation and worldly interests, but at his glory. In every thing our requests should be made known to God, as a Father, according to his direction and will ; not with vain repetitions, as if we were to be heard for much speaking ; but with earnest pertinent addresses, under a sense of duty, and of his being able and ready to answer us. And what need have we to look inwards and upwards, that our hearts may be right with God under the influence of his Spirit ; that our principles, motives, and views, may be sincere and spiritual, in our fastings, prayers, alms-deeds, and all religious duties and services, as being always under his eye ; and that we may be approved of him, and accepted in his sight, through Jesus Christ, however we may stand in the opinion of men ! Alas, what a poor reward is the vanishing breath of popular fame, compared with the love and favour of God, and the honour that comes from him ! And yet this is all the advantage that hypocrites will get by their religion. And what is all this pitiful, perishing, and uncertain world, compared with the great, solemn, and eternal realities of the heavenly inheritance ! And yet, how fond are we naturally apt to be of things here below ; how eager in our contrivances and labours, hopes and fears, withes and cares, about them ; and how indolent and unmoved about the things of God and glory ! but that which commands our hearts, is the treasure we chuse.—A little of earthly things is really enough to answer the wants of animal nature : How moderate then should we be in our appetites, desires, and cares, about food and raiment, and the good things of this life ! how contented with such a share of them as God orders us ! and how satisfactorily may his children trust in him, that they shall never want any thing which he knows is best for them ! He that takes care of birds and flowers, will never neglect them, who are so much higher in his account. It is sinful and heathenish to distrust him, and all our carking care about the body is unprofitable and vain. But we must have spiritual and heavenly blessings in abundance, to satisfy the cravings of an immortal soul : Here then is a loud call to be earnest and early in our inquiries and pursuits ; and here is room enough for growing desires, cares, and pains, in God's way, to amass together as much as possible of these sure and incorruptible treasures ; and he that can be contented with but little of these, is like to have none at all. O with what superior impression should Christ, and the righteousness and blessings of his kingdom of grace and glory, command the believer's faith and hope, love and joy !

C H A P.

C H A P. VII.

The conclusion of Christ's sermon about rash censures, importunate prayer, the difficulty of getting to heaven, and the danger of false teachers, 1,—20. The application of the sermon, and the effects it had upon the bearers, 21,—29.

TEXT.

JUDGE not, that ye be not judged.

PARAPHRASE.

TAKE heed that ye be not unmerciful and severe in censuring others, and indulging unreasonable jealousies about them; and never venture upon peremptorily judging of their eternal state, as if ye were the arbiters of life and death, lest they be as severe against you, and especially lest ye provoke the righteous God to pass judgment without mercy upon you.

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

2 For in the same manner that ye deal with others in judging them, whether it be with rigour, or with charity, ye must expect to be dealt with by men, and especially by God in the great day of account.

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

3 And how unreasonable, unbecoming, and unrighteous is it, for any of you to be ready to spy every little fault, and aggravate it with severity, in your brother; and at the same time (as is usual with censorious persons) to take no notice of, or to excuse, extenuate, and indulge, much greater crimes in yourselves †?

4 Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and behold, a beam is in thine own eye?

4 Or with what face, and to what good purpose, would you offer to condemn, correct, or reprove your brother for lesser sins? or indeed how can you see to do it, with due discerning, while your own heart and life are corrupted, and your own judgment is blinded, with much more heinous crimes?

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

5 What is this but the grossest hypocrisy, under a pretence of zeal against sin? If, therefore, you would attempt any thing of this kind, with judgment and conscience, with decency and authority, and to good purpose; in the first place begin at home, and reform what is amiss in yourself, and then you will be well qualified to set about the reformation of others.

6 Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they

6 And yet, even then, it is to be managed with prudence and discretion: The best counsels and reproofs are not to be unseasonably thrown away upon hardened, profane, and incorrigible sinners; who, instead

NOTE.

† Dr. Lightfoot tells us that this was a known proverb among the Jews; the *mote* signifying a small sin, and the *beam* a great one.

they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you.

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

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

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

10 Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent?

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

instead of taking them well, or being the better for them, would be enraged by them, and turn upon you with reproaches, scorn, and fury, like snarling dogs, that are unworthy of, and defy all attempts to sweeten them; and, like filthy and surly swine, who would be as much offended at flinging a pearl before them, as if it were a stone thrown at them, would trample it under foot with indignation and contempt, and would run at you to tear you in pieces; and they, after all, would still continue to be like a dog, that returns to his own vomit again, and like a sow to her wallowing in the mire.

7 But that ye may be enabled to put the instructions I have been giving into practice, do not set about these duties in your own strength, but with a constant dependence on divine grace. Be instant in prayer, with faith and fervour; ask wisdom and assistance of God, as well as all the other blessings ye need, and he will grant them; seek them in the way of duty, and in the use of all appointed means of grace, and ye shall surely obtain them; knock importunately and repeatedly at the door of mercy for them, and God will open it to your relief.

8 For whosoever thus prays with faith and fervour, and wrestles with importunity and perseverance in prayer, for what is agreeable to the will of God, shall not pray in vain: He asks, and has; he seeks, and finds; he knocks, and the door of mercy opens to him; whilst he is yet speaking, his heavenly Father hears him; and all the blessings of the promises are made his own; he has an interest in them, and shall be partaker of them, in God's way and time, as far as is fit and needful for him here, till all shall be perfected hereafter.

9 Is there even among yourselves, any man so morose and ill-natured as to deny the petition of his own child when he begs what is proper and necessary for him; or to put him off with some other thing that would be as useless, as if he were to give him a stone instead of a piece of bread?

10 Or, were his son to persist in his importunity, would he do any thing so injurious as to give him a serpent to wound and destroy him, instead of a fish to feed and nourish him?

11 If therefore men, who are depraved, perverse, and froward creatures, have nevertheless so much natural affection for their children, as to be ready to grant them such things as they know are good for them, how much more will your heavenly Father, who has put all the compassion into the hearts of parents, that is found in them toward their offspring,

good things to them that ask him?

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

13 Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction; and many there be which go in thereat;

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

15 Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.

spring, and whose tender mercies are infinite, freely bestow upon his own children such things as his unerring wisdom sees are really good for them, when they, relying on his care and conduct, faithfulness and grace, earnestly beg them of him.

12 If then God is so gracious as infinitely to exceed the expectations of kindness which ye might reasonably hope for from the most affectionate and tender earthly parent; and if ye, under his influence, would act up to the various particular instructions that have been given you; see that in every thing your dealings with others be just in the same manner, and with the same upright, kind, and compassionate temper, as ye reasonably would expect from them toward yourselves, were they in your circumstances, and ye in theirs: For this is the sum of all that is contained in the law and the prophets, concerning the duty ye owe to your neighbour.

13 And, as ever you would be holy and happy, according to the design of my kingdom, ye must enter in at the strait gate of regeneration, faith, and repentance, however self-humbling, and self-denying it may be: For the entrance into, and progress in the way of sin and self-seeking, that leads to everlasting misery and ruin, is wide and open; it is agreeable to the corrupt inclinations and indulgences, pride and hypocrisy, that mankind are naturally fond of, and puts little or no check or restraint upon them: And there are great multitudes that go into, and go on in this way, to their dreadful and eternal perdition.

14 But the entrance into my kingdom, by the new birth, is painful and difficult; and the way of true religion and holiness, the end of which is everlasting life, is a way of restraint, being hedged in by God's law; and a way of affliction, (*πολλήμονος ὁδός*) beset with many tribulations, as with a hedge of thorns: It is rough and disagreeable to flesh and sense, and to the pride of human nature; and there are but few that care to press into it, and go on with perseverance.

15 Take heed of false teachers who preach any thing contrary to this doctrine, and pretend to lead you in an easier and wider path to eternal happiness: They put on specious appearances, wear a distinguishing garb, and make outside shews of sanctity, meekness, and concern for your good, which carry the likeness of my prophets, and of the qualities of sheep; but they have indeed the temper and design of rapacious wolves; they are under the

dominion

dominion of their own lusts, and seek to pervert and make a prey of you, to their own carnal ends, and to your eternal destruction.

16 Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?

16 But as ye may discern one tree from another by the fruit it bears; so ye may distinguish these from my faithful servants, by the evil tendency and influence of their doctrine; and by the pride, covetousness, or sensuality of their lives and conversations. For as thorns cannot produce grapes, or thistles figs; but they, and all other trees, bear such sorts of fruit as are answerable to their nature and kind:

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

17 Even so every good man, whose principles are right, and whose heart is changed and sanctified by the grace of God, brings forth fruits of righteousness and holiness in spiritual, useful designs and actions; and every unregenerate man, whose principles are wrong, and whose heart is under the dominion of sin, brings forth fruits of unrighteousness and iniquity in evil intentions and works.

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

18 The good man cannot carry on designs and practices of wickedness, either in a private or public character, it is contrary to his renewed nature so to do; and the unregenerate man cannot carry on designs and practices of true religion and holiness, he has no principles capable of producing them.

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

19 How fair soever peoples professions and appearances may be; yet if their principles are unground, and their lives immoral; if their doctrines do not tend to holiness, and their conversation be not answerably good; they, like barren trees, that only cumber the ground, shall in the righteous judgment of God be cut down by death, and cast into everlasting burnings.

20 Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.

20 By these different fruits, therefore, of sinful and holy principles, dispositions, and actions, ye may distinguish false teachers and pretenders to religion from my servants and true disciples; and by these ye may know their different ends.

21 Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven: but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.

21 For it is not every one who makes an outward profession of religion; no, nor who in words owns me for his Lord and Master, and calls upon my name with a seeming zeal and fervour; much less is it any one who does these things only in a cold and formal manner, that shall enter into my kingdom of grace and glory: But they shall be admitted thither who are brought heartily to embrace and comply with the will of my heavenly Father, by believing in me whom he has sent, and by yielding unfeigned obedience to his commands.

22 Many

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

22 Many will flatter themselves with vain hopes; and, when their fears begin to rise in the awful days of death and judgment, will betake themselves to false refuges, and with horror and surprize will plead in an appeal to me, saying, Lord, have we not preached the gospel under thy commission? and have we not had even the faith of miracles to cast out devils, and to do many other great and marvellous works in thy name? wilt thou not therefore now receive and own us for thy disciples, and bestow upon us the reward of eternal life which we expected?

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

23 But (*καὶ*) I will reject all their vain pleas, as utterly insufficient, saying in a judicial way to them, I all along knew you to be secret hypocrites, while ye were professing and preaching in my name, and doing the miraculous works which I ordered to be wrought by your hands, not for your own sakes, but for the confirmation of my gospel and the good of others; and therefore I never esteemed or † approved of you as my true disciples and servants; nor will I now own and accept you as such: I now banish you from my blessed and glorious presence, to everlasting misery and despair, O all ye wilful transgressors.

24 Therefore, whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock:

24, 25 Since therefore something more than a bare profession and external privileges is necessary to salvation, whoever hears, and seriously considers, embraces by faith and love, and acts according to the doctrines I have been delivering, he may be compared to a thoughtful, prudent, and skilful man, who, in prospect of danger, builds his house upon a rock, that it may be secure, and whose expectations are answered in the event; for when storms, and rains, and floods, come to beat ever so furiously upon that house, it stands fast, because its foundation is immovable: So he who receives and observes my instructions, builds upon a firm and solid bottom that will never fail him; I will be like an eternal rock underneath him, and his hope in me shall never make him ashamed; for whatever temptations and persecutions, doubts and fears and dangers, may assault him, in life or death, he shall not miscarry, but shall stand in judgment at last, because he is founded upon the Rock of ages.

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

26 And every one that heareth these

26, 27 On the other hand, whoever hears my instructions, but disregards them, and never puts them

N O T E.

† As our blessed Lord could not be ignorant of their characters, this is a plain instance of *knowledge* being put for approbation; as it likewise is in *Psalms* i. 6. and *1 Cor.* viii. 3. Accordingly (*ὅτι γινώσκω*) *I know not*, is rendered *I allow not*, *Rom.* vii. 15.

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

27 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house: and it fell, and great was the fall of it.

28 And it came to pass when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine:

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

them into practice, may very properly be compared to an inconsiderate careless man, who builds his house upon a loose and sandy foundation; for when storms and rains beat upon the superstructure, it is easily overturned and utterly destroyed, as having no good bottom to keep it, from sinking and falling in its own ruins: So the mere, empty, hypocritical professor of religion, has nothing to support or secure him in an hour of temptation and danger, much less in the day of death and judgment; but must inevitably perish, and that with great aggravation of his sin and folly, and to his dreadful disappointment for ever.

28 When Jesus had concluded this sermon. the common people that heard him were filled with wonder and admiration at the excellence of his discourse, though without any saving effect upon many of them.

29 For the nature of his doctrine, and the manner of his delivering it, were such, that he appeared, even to them, to speak with surprising majesty and authority, and with an evidence of truth and importance which could not be contradicted; and not with the trifling formality, and according to the uncertain traditions, of their *Rabbies*.

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

All our religion should begin at home; and instead of being uncharitably severe in censuring others, we should be carefully looking into our own hearts and ways, observing and condemning all that is amiss in ourselves, and labouring by divine grace to reform it: Without this, what will all our pretended zeal, professions of Christ's name, gospel-privileges, prayers, and either preaching or hearing of the word, come to? And what a dreadful disappointment will many formalists in religion meet with at the last day! Our corrupt hearts must be changed by renewing grace, before we can be truly holy in our lives; and our principles must be right before our practices can be so. The best way therefore of knowing persons and doctrines, is by their fruits, according as they are agreeable to the word of God or not.—How should we dread the thoughts of following the multitude to do evil, lest we follow them into hell; or of building our hopes of happiness on insecure grounds, lest they fail us to our final destruction! And how earnest should we be in our applications to a throne of grace, that we may go along with the happy few to everlasting life, or may be wite unto salvation! Blessed be God for the high assurances we have, that the humble, importunate prayer of faith shall not be in vain; that our heavenly Father will, in the riches of his mercy, hear and answer us, and freely bestow the best of blessings upon us; and that by a faith that is productive of real holiness, we shall rest on a sure foundation, weather every storm, and get safe to glory. But, O how concerned should we be, not only to hear and admire the doctrines of Christ, but to be savingly acquainted with them!

C H A P. VIII.

Christ's cleansing a leper, 1,—4. Healing a palsy and fever, 5,—18. Discoursing with two persons about following him, 19,—22. Stillling a tempest, 23,—27. And casting out devils, 28,—34.

TEXT.

WHEN he was come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed him.

2 And behold, there came a leper and worshipped him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.

3 And Jesus put forth his hand, and touched him, saying, I will; be thou clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed.

4 And Jesus saith unto him, See thou tell no man; but go thy way, shew thyself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them.

PARAPHRASE.

WHEN Jesus had made an end of his sermon, and came down from the mount where he preached it, vast multitudes of people went after him.

2 And as he preached to them, so he frequently took opportunities of confirming his doctrine by miracles: Among these, we have a remarkable instance of one wrought on a man over-run with a leprosy, which the *Jews* used to look upon as an unclean distemper that was inflicted by the immediate hand of God, in token of his displeasure, and could not be cured by human art, (*2 Kings v. 7.*) This leprous person came to Jesus; and, throwing himself at his feet for mercy, begged that he would take pity on him, saying, Lord, I verily believe that, if thou pleasest, thou art able to cleanse me from this otherwise incurable disease.

3 And he no sooner applied to Christ with this faith, but he effectually answered it; and, touching him with his hand, said, with the majesty and authority of a God, I am as ready as thy faith can be; *I will*; what thou askest is granted; I say unto thee, Be thou clean: And so powerful were his words, that the man was in that very instant cleansed of his leprosy: He spake, and it was done; he said, Let it be so, and it was so.

4 Hereupon Jesus, as was customary with him, charged the man that he should not immediately divulge the miracle to any one, thereby designing to avoid all appearances of ostentation, and all unnecessary occasions of provoking the envy and rage of the *Pharisees*: But he bid him go directly and submit himself to the examination of the priest, who, by divine appointment, (*Lev. xiii. 2, &c.*) was to judge of lepers and of their cleansing; and upon the priest's pronouncing him to be clean, Jesus farther enjoined him to offer the sacrifice which, in such cases, was required by the law of *Moses*, (*Lev. xiv. 4, &c.*): And he ordered him to do all this, that it might be a legal proof to the *Jews* of the truth of the miracle, of his own divine power who had

had wrought it, and of his regard to *Moses's* law; and that it might be a witness against them, if, after this, they should reject him.

5 And when Jesus was entered into Capernaum, there came unto him a centurion, beseeching him,

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

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

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

9. For I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me: and I say to this man, Go, and he goeth: and to another, Come, and he cometh: and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it.

10 When Jesus heard it, he marvelled, and said to them

5, 6 And when Jesus returned back to *Capernaum*, where he now dwelt, (chap. iv. 13.) there came a † centurion, that is, a captain over an hundred of the *Roman* soldiers, to entreat him on the behalf of a servant, for whom he was greatly concerned, saying, Lord a servant of mine lies at my house dangerously sick of a palsy, in very great distress, and past relief from physicians; I humbly beseech thee to shew thy power and compassion in healing him.

7 And Jesus, designing to make this man's faith still more manifest, and thereby to reprove the obstinate infidelity of the *Jews*, immediately declared his willingness to go to his servant, and restore his health.

8 The centurion hereupon answered, saying, Lord, this is too great an honour for me, who am a *Gentile*, and a great sinner; I am utterly unworthy that thou shouldst so far condescend as to come into my house; neither is there any need that thou shouldst do this, in order to the cure, which I humbly beseech thee to work: I believe that thou canst heal at a distance, as well as where thou art present; and if thou wilt please only to command it, I am satisfied my servant shall be recovered from his sickness: Thy saying it, I know, will be thy doing it.

9 For such a poor creature as I, who am only a little inferior officer, can order the soldiers under me to go, and come, and do this or that, as I please; and they immediately obey me: How much more canst thou, who hast sovereign power over all distempers, command off this from my servant, wherever thou art, and whenever thou wilt.

10 When Jesus heard this answer, though he could not be surprised at it as if he had not foreseen it; for he both wrought the faith that discovered itself in so wonderful a manner, and knew what was in all men; yet he publicly expressed himself

N O T E.

† It appears from *Luke* vii. that the centurion in his great humility thought himself unworthy to come to Christ; and therefore did not at first come himself, but sent others whom he looked upon to be more worthy; and as these were his proxies, and spake the words he ordered them, some suppose that they,

according to the language of the *Jews*, were reputed as the man himself, and he was said to do that, which he did by them: But it seems probable that at last, as Christ drew nearer, the centurion himself came, and spake in this manner to him.

them that followed, Verily, I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no not in Israel.

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

12 But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

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

14 And when Jesus

himself with an air of great admiration at it, to intimate that it was exceeding rare and excellent, and to make it the more taken notice of, saying to the disciples, and others that were with him, This is a noble instance of strong and humble faith indeed! truly, I have not hitherto met with any thing like it, no, not among those that I have healed of the children of *Abraham* themselves, to whom pertain the covenants and the promises, and who have had the advantage of sitting under my ministry, and seeing more effects of my power than this man ever was acquainted with.

11 And I assuredly tell you, that this is only a pledge of what shall be hereafter: For many of the *Gentiles* shall come from all parts of the world, at the greatest distance from each other, even from the rising of the sun to the going down of the same; and shall be admitted into the covenant made with *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*, to inherit the blessings of the kingdom of grace here, and to be received to a state of rest and honour, and delightful entertainment with them, in the kingdom of glory hereafter.

12 But, on the other hand, many of the natural seed of *Abraham*, who glory in their privileges, and are visibly in covenant with God, shall, for their obstinacy and unbelief, be cut off from their federal relation to him, and excluded, like out-cast *Gentiles*, from the privileges and blessings of the gospel kingdom here; and shall be banished from the kingdom of glory hereafter, to that hideous darkness that is without †, where they must dwell who are shut out of heaven; and there they shall bitterly lament, with the utmost rage, horror, and despair, to think what blessedness they have sinned away, and what miseries they have brought upon themselves.

13 And when he had spoken thus to them that were with him, he turned to the centurion, and said, Your petition is granted; go back to your house, and be assured that, according to your faith, I have spoken the word, and your servant is restored. And so the event proved; for at that very time it was found that he was miraculously healed.

14 After this, Jesus withdrew from the multitude, and went into the house where *Peter* dwelt, his

N O T E.

† Some think that here is an allusion they that were not admitted among the to marriage-feasts among the *Jews*, who guests, were shut out in the dark, and used to have them at night in a room deprived of: all the delights of the adorned with abundance of lights; and entertainment.

Jesus was come into Peter's house, he saw his wife's mother laid and sick of a fever.

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

16 When the even was come, they brought unto him many that were possessed with devils: and he cast out the spirits with his word, and healed all that were sick;

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

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

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

his wife's mother living with him; and there he saw her lying on the bed, sick of a fever.

15 And his compassion being moved, he took her by the hand, not to feel the pulse, as physicians use to do, but to raise her up, (*Mark i. 31.*) or to give the signal of his healing her: And his touch was as effectual in this case, as his word was in others; for the fever immediately went off, and her strength was entirely restored at once; so that she instantly got up, and went about the business of the family, to provide for and serve their welcome guest, as a demonstration of the surprising miracle Christ had wrought upon her, and as a testimony of her love and gratitude to him.

16 This being on the Sabbath-day, (*Mark i. 21,—31.*) as soon as evening came on, and the Sabbath † was ended, the people came to him, and brought with them abundance of sick persons, and such as were possessed with devils, that he might relieve them: And so great was his mercy towards them, and his power for their help, that barely by speaking a word, like the sovereign Lord of all, he dispossessed the evil spirits, and healed the diseases of all that came to him for cure, how bad soever their condition had been;

17 That *Isaias's* prophecy of the Messiah, saying, (*chap liii. 4.*) *He has borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows*, might be fulfilled in him, not only by his *bearing our sins in his own body on the tree*, (*1 Pet. ii. 24.*) and so suffering for them in our room and stead; but likewise by his sympathizing with us, under our sorrows, and healing us of those diseases that were the fruit of sin, and so taking it away, with all its dreadful consequences.

18 At another time, (*Mark iv. 35.*) when great multitudes were gathered together, and crowded about our Saviour, more out of curiosity, and from secular views, than any design of receiving spiritual benefit, he ordered his disciples, whom he had chosen to be apostles, to get a boat, and carry him over to the other side of the sea of *Galilee*.

19 And while they were preparing for it, a certain doctor of the law, who, according to the notions of that day about the Messiah, thought he would soon appear with great power and grandeur, to set up a

temporal

N O T E.

† The *Jesus* sabbath was from the evening or sun-setting of the day before, to the evening or sun-setting of that day, *Lev. xviii. 32.* And as the *Pharisees* objected against, and they themselves

scrupled carrying about their sick on the sabbath-day; so as soon as the evening or sun-setting had put an end to it, they brought their diseased to Christ to be healed.

temporal kingdom in the world, said unto him, Master, I am resolved to be thy disciple, and, where-
ver thou goest, to go along with thee.

20 And Jesus
saith unto him,
The foxes have
holes, and the
birds of the air
have nests; but
the Son of man
hath not where to
lay his head.

20 But Jesus, knowing his heart, answered him, Alas! your expectations of worldly advantage by following me will meet with a great disappointment: For even the foxes have their holes of retreat for rest and safety, and the birds of the air have their nests to lodge in, and cherish their young; but I, who am truly a man, and appear under the character of the promised Messiah as the Son of man, (*Dan. vii. 13.*) have no settled place of abode, nor any house of my own, wherein to lodge myself, much less to entertain my followers; and though at this very time I want to lie down and take my rest, being wearied with the fatigues of the day, I have no convenient place for it †.

21 And another
of his disciples said
unto him, Lord,
suffer me first to go
and bury my fa-
ther.

21 Another, who was one of his disciples at large, upon his calling him to the ministry, desired to be excused for a while, (*Luke ix. 59. 60*) saying, Lord, only let me first go home, and take care of || my father's funeral, and settle the affairs of my family, and then I will be at your service.

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

22 But how lawful and commendable soever his attending to these things might be in itself; yet, as his motion about it was unseasonable, and discovered a backwardness of mind to follow Christ, and an undue hankering after earthly concerns, our Lord looked upon this delay as a denial, and said, I will admit of no excuse: Give yourself up to me and my work *now*; and leave it to them, who are dead in trespasses and sins, to bury their relations that are corporally dead, without hindering yourself in the more important affairs to which I call you. (See the note on *Luke ix. 60.*)

23 And when
he was entered in-
to a ship, his disci-
ples followed him.

23 By this time the disciples had got a boat ready, and our Lord went into it, they, as usual, accompanying him.

24 And behold,
there arose a great
tempest in the sea,
in-

24 And as they were crossing the sea towards the country of the *Gadarens*, (*ver. 28.*) it is very remarkable, that, though Christ was with them, there arose

NOTES.

† As our blessed Lord had before been much fatigued by his preaching, and by the crowds of people that came to him to be healed, he may be supposed to have referred in general to his mean circumstances, and in particular to his being tired, and wanting to lie down to sleep, when he spake of *having no place where to lay his head*; accord-

ingly, as soon as he went into the ship, he lay down with his head on a pillow, and fell asleep, *ver. 24.* compared with *Mark iv. 38.*

|| Whether his father was aged, or dangerously sick, or already dead, is variously conjectured; and so it is uncertain for how long he desired to be excused.

inasmuch that the ship was covered with the waves: but he was asleep.

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

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

27 But the men marvelled, saying, What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him?

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

arose on a sudden a terrible storm of wind, and the billows raged and swelled, and tossed the boat about, so that it was almost filled with water, and seemed just ready to sink: But Jesus himself was at that time asleep, for the refreshment of his weary body, and the trial of their faith.

25 Then (και) his disciples, being in great surprise and terror, immediately ran to him, and waked him, crying out, with a mixture of faith and fear, and with great vehemence, Lord, arise for our help; we are in the utmost danger of being cast away, and, unless thou hast mercy upon us, are all lost men, and must unavoidably perish.

26 And he answered them, Why are ye, who have seen so much of my power and tender care, afraid of any mischief whilst I am with you? What, do ye imagine that because I was asleep, I could not save you? did this shake your trust in me? or what just reason could there be for fear, O ye doubting trembling believers? surely your faith is very low. And having thus gently reprov'd them, he got up and rebuked the storm, like the God of nature, who *gathers the wind in his fists, and binds the floods from overflowing*, (Prov. xxx. 4. Job xxviii. 11.); and immediately there was a perfect calm.

27 At this, they that were with him in the boat were astonished, saying, What a surprising person is this, (ποταπος ιστιν ουτος,) who, in such a sovereign way, by his own authority, commands the wind and the sea, and they so suddenly and so absolutely obey the voice of his word! surely he must be more than a man; he must be likewise that God, whose property it is to *still the noise of the sea, and make the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still*, (Psal. lxxv. 7. and cvii. 29.)

28 When he had passed over the sea of Galilee, and was landed in the country of the Gergesenes, which included the region of the Gadarens, (see the note on Luke viii. 26.) and was inhabited by Gentiles as well as Jews, there met him two men possessed with devils, who, for the greater terror to themselves and others, were usually made to rove about in lonely places, and in caverns of rocks and mountains, among the sepulchres of the dead †; and were so exceeding strong, and furious, and mischievous, by the power of the devils in them, that there

N O T E.

† The tombs in those days were usually in desert places distant from towns; and were often made in the sides of caves and dens in the rocks and mountains.

there was no dealing with them, and every one was afraid to go that way upon their account.

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

29 And as soon as they saw our Lord, the devils that possessed them, being by this time convinced of his divine power, and terrified at the thought of it, cried out, with dread and horror, Jesus, we know that thou art indeed the Son of God, and that we are no match for thee; and as we have no interest in thee, we desire to have nothing to do with thee; let us alone to range about at pleasure, and do our will: We own, indeed, that we are now like persons in chains, and are reserved to more miserable tortures, which we despair of escaping at the great day: But as at present we are prisoners at large, what means thy following us even into an heathen country? art thou come to retrench our liberty here, as well as among the *Jews*, and to increase our torment, or to shut us up in hell before the day appointed for the final judgment? (See the note on *Mark* v. 6.)

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

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

32 And he said unto them, Go. And when they were come out, they went into the herd of swine: and behold, the whole herd of swine ran violently down

30, 31 And as a great herd of swine were then grazing in a distant field; so the devils earnestly intreated, that, if he would not suffer them to keep possession of these men, he would permit them to enter into that herd; being fully assured in themselves, that they could neither stay where they were, nor go where they would, without his permission.

32 And he, for wise and holy ends, suffered them to go; just as God had formerly done in *Job's* case, when *Satan* desired to afflict him, (*Job* i. 12. and ii. 6.): And upon their coming out of the men, whom they could no longer possess, they being at liberty, entered of their own accord into the whole herd; and such was their surprising power in them, that the swine all immediately ran-
I 2
fully

NOTES.

† Our Lord here gave an opportunity for the most sensible proof that could be, against the *Sadducees*, of the existence of evil spirits; as also of their formidable power over animals as well as men, and of his own superior, absolute and uncontrollable authority over them. And if the swine were kept by the *Jews*, their destruction by the devils was a righteous rebuke upon them, perhaps for eating swines' flesh, directly contrary to God's law; or at least for bordering upon the breach of that law, by putting themselves into the way of temptation to transgress it, and that in contradiction

to their own constitutions after the days of *Antiochus*, which severely forbid so much as their keeping swine. *Vid. Spencer, de Legib. Hebr. Lib. I. Cap. V. Sect. 14.* Or if they were kept by the *Gentiles*, who were worshippers of devils, it carried strong conviction to them of their folly and madness in worshipping such impure and malicious spirits, who, had Christ permitted them, would as willingly have destroyed them as their swine. But whoever were their owners, Christ hereby put them on a trial whether they had more regard to them than him. See also the note on *Mark* v. 6.

a steep place into the sea, and perished in the waters.

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

34 And behold, the whole city came out to meet Jesus; and when they saw him, they besought him that he would depart out of their coasts.

fury down a precipice into the sea, and there were drowned.

33 Then (δὲ) the keepers of the herd, being filled with terror and amazement, hattered with all speed into the city ||, and reported the whole of what they knew about the sudden possession and destruction of all the swine by the devils, and about the leave they had obtained of Christ for it, after he had entirely dispossessed them of the two men, and restored these demoniacs to as calm and sober a use of their reason, and to as regular a behaviour, as ever before.

34 And upon these amazing tidings, either curiosity, or fear and vexation, carried great multitudes out of the city to see Jesus; and their carnal hearts were so much disturbed at the loss of the swine, that as soon as they saw him, so far were they from begging his presence, grace, and favour, for their spiritual benefit; or from being affected with his wonderful mercy to the miserable demoniacs, and thereupon bringing their sick to him to heal them, that they were afraid of him, and earnestly entreated him to quit their country without delay, lest they should suffer some further loss.

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

How high and how low did Christ appear in the days of his flesh, like the Son of God, and the Son of man! He behaved like the God of nature and of grace, in commanding dæmons, devils, winds, and waves, and giving indications thereby, that he was come to save his people from spiritual, as well as temporal evils. But O astonishing humiliation and self-denial for our sakes! How low and poor was he, with regard to the accommodations of this present life! and how fatigued with labour, and in want of sleep to refresh him!—All that we hear of him, will turn as a testimony for, or against us: The devils believe him to be the Son of God; what will become of them that deny him? The devils believe and tremble; what will all our faith come to, if it do not work by love? Ah self-deceiving souls, that aim at secular advantages by their following Christ; or take up with external privileges, and a mere profession of religion! They shall be excluded the joys of heaven, and thrust into all the darkness and horror of hell. And ah foolish and ungrateful creatures, that form excuses to keep them off from his service, and that prefer their swine, their sordid gains and traffic, to him! How worthy is he of our faith and love, adoration and obedience! And what a prevailing interest with him has a humble faith, though we are unworthy! In all our sorrows, fears and dangers, we may hereby fly to him, as able and willing to save, and shall not meet with a disappointment: He will help even *Gentile* believers in the way; will give them *Abraham's* blessing, and glorify them with him at the end—Who that knows his name would not trust in him? The weakest in faith has Christ for his friend, and should not be afraid: and strong believers shall receive tokens of his highest pleasure in them. Whilst he is with and for us, Satan shall have no power over us, nor shall any evil harm us; but woe to us, if he depart from us.

N O T E.

|| This was most probably *Gadara*.

C H A P. IX.

Christ's healing a palsy, 1,—8. Calling Matthew, and eating with publicans and sinners, 9,—13. His defence of his disciples for not fasting, 14,—17. Curing the bloody flux, and raising Jairus's daughter from the dead, 18,—26. Restoring two blind men to sight, 27,—31. Casting out a devil, 32,—34. And his preaching and compassion to the people, 35,—38.

TEXT.

AND he entered into a ship, and passed over, and came into his own city.

2 And behold, they brought to him a man lick of the palsy, lying on a bed: and Jesus seeing their faith, said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, be of good cheer, thy sins be forgiven thee.

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

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

5 For whether is easier to say, Thy

PARAPHRASE.

THE *Gergesenes* having desired Christ to leave their coast, alas for them! he took them at their word, and went back again into the boat; and crossing over the sea of *Galiilee*, returned to *Capernaum*, the city where he usually dwelt.

2 And it is worthy of notice, that even in his own city, where prophets usually have the least honour, he met with a signal instance of faith: For there was a man so enfeebled with the palsy, that he could not possibly get to him without being carried; but was brought, with great difficulty, through crowds of people on a bed, (*Mark ii. 4.*): And Jesus, observing the faith of the sick man, as well as of his friends that brought him, said, Son, (*Θεός,*) be confident of my mercy, and rejoice; for I discharge thee from the guilt of thy sins*.

3 And behold how ready the *Jewish* doctors were to be offended at him! Some of them, upon hearing these words, thought in their own minds, 'This man, taking upon him to forgive sins, is guilty of downright blasphemy; he hereby assumes a power to himself, that belongs to God only.'

4 Then (*καί*) Jesus, knowing the most secret murmurings of their hearts, expostulated with them, saying, Why do ye reason so perversely and injuriously in your own minds against me, as if I were a blasphemer? These are all envious and sinful thoughts.

5 For let me propose this fair question to you: Is it not as easy to remove the cause, as the effect? or

NOTE.

* As on occasion of Christ's healing diseases, a hint was given before (*chap. viii. 17.*) of pardoning grace through him, that the prophecy of *Isaiah* might be fulfilled, saying, *Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses*; so here he more openly asserted his power to forgive sins, as well as to take away their penal effects: And this is evidently to be understood of a proper forgiveness by his

own authority; for it is distinguished from his healing the palsy, and is saying more than any of the apostles ever pretended to in their miraculous cures, which they never called their forgiving of sins: And had Christ only pronounced that God had forgiven this man, the scribes could have had no pretence to accuse him of blasphemy. See the note on *Luke vi. 23.*

Thy sins be forgiven thee? or to lay, Arise and walk?

6 But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then saith he to the sick of the palsy.) Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house.

7 And he arose, and departed to his house.

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

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

10 And it came to pass, as Jesus sat at meat in the house, behold, many publicans and sinners came and sat down with him and his disciples.

or to forgive sins, as to take off their punishment by my own power and authority? One of these is no more difficult than the other; and he that has authority in himself to do one, can as easily do the other.

6 But I chose to express my divine power in this manner, to lead your thoughts to the principal design of my coming into the world: And that ye may see that I, who am truly a man, and the Messiah, have indeed authority in myself, even now whilst I am on earth, to forgive sins, I will immediately take off this effect of sin, in such a manner, as is equally impossible to any but God. Then, turning to the man sick of the palsy, he said, with an air of absolute sovereignty, without any signs of address to God, Arise this instant; and, as a demonstration of perfect recovery, take up your bed, and carry it home.

7 And he no sooner spake, but it was done. The man immediately got up, and was so perfectly restored to his strength, and to the use of his limbs, that he took up his bed in the sight of all the multitude, and carried it away.

8 And (δὲ) though the common people did not see the whole of Christ's glory therein; yet they were awfully astonished (*θαυμάσαντες*) at what he had said and done, and could not but own the finger of God in it, and give glory to him for conferring such a wonderful authority upon any man whatsoever.

9 After this, Jesus went out of Capernaum again; and, as he was walking near the sea of Galilee, he saw a man whose name was Matthew (the writer of this gospel) sitting at his office in the custom-house, to receive the toll or tribute-money; and though he was, by his station, a man of ill repute, Christ prevented him with his grace, saying, Follow me: And so efficacious were these words, that he immediately quitted his employment, his gains, and his prospects of further preferment, and followed him.

10 Then this convert's bowels yearning toward his sinful companions, that they might be acquainted with Jesus too, he invited them, together with him and his disciples, to an entertainment at his house, (*Luke v. 29.*) And so amazing were the condescension and grace of Christ, that when he and his disciples sat down to eat, he suffered many tax-gatherers, (who were generally men of infamous character, and of all others the most odious to the Jews,) and many other notorious sinners, to sit down with them.

11 When

11 And when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto his disciples, Why eateth your master with publicans and sinners?

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

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

14 Then came to him the disciples of John, saying, Why do we and the Pharisees fast oft, but thy disciples fast not?

11 When the proud, self-righteous, and superstitious *Pharisees* saw this, their eye was evil because his was good: But not daring to debate the matter with Jesus, they thought themselves a match for his disciples, and so quarrelled with them, saying, How can your master, who sets up for an extraordinary prophet, vindicate his conversing so freely with tax-gatherers, and the vilest of men? or how can he do it without being defiled?

12 But Jesus over-hearing them, took up the cause, and answered for himself and his disciples, saying, They who, like you, have an high opinion of their own righteousness; as if they were, in a moral sense, whole and sound already, will not think a spiritual physician to be of any use to them; and there is little room for hope of doing any good with them: But they who, like these publicans, have no such vain conceit of their own excellencies, are readily brought to a conviction that they are sinners, and will prize the Physician of souls, who will find work to do among them; and it is in that quality, and not as their companion, that I converse with them: Why then should ye be offended at this, especially since ye yourselves acknowledge that they need healing?

13 But before ye pretend to cavil on this head, consider and learn the meaning of what the prophet says, (*Hof. vi. 6.*) *I desire mercy, and not (or rather than) sacrifice*; which intimates, that acts of compassion to others, and especially to their souls, in turning them from the error of their ways, and saving them from death, are more pleasing in the sight of God, even than an observation of his own positive institutions, and much more than of the superstitious constructions that men have put upon them. Apply this to the present case, and it will thoroughly justify my conduct: For the design of my coming into the world could not be to reform such persons as are already righteous; nor is success to be expected among those that think themselves to be so: But I am come to bring them to true repentance who are the greatest of sinners, and who see their sin and danger, and their need of righteousness and grace.

14 Then came to him some disciples of *John the Baptist*, that had been used to frequent fastings under the austerities of his discipline, and laid a great stress upon it: And they, partly from the uneasiness of their own minds, and partly from the artful management of the *Pharisees*, who wanted to sow the seeds of discord between Christ and them, asked

him,

him, Why his disciples did not keep fasts, while they and the *Pharisees* set apart so many days for that purpose? (See the note on *Mark* ii. 18)

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

15 Jesus replied, I am the bridegroom of the church, as your master himself testified concerning me. (*John* iii. 29.); and my disciples are the children of the bride-chamber, or the guests of the marriage-feast, who are to rejoice with me: What an absurdity, then, would it be for these, my wedding-guests to be sad in my presence, and to go into abstemious severities on festival days? It must needs be very unseemly for them to fast, so long as I, the bridegroom, am with them; but in a little time I shall be taken from them, and they will be exposed to many hardships and dangers; and then they will have great occasions for mourning and fasting.

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

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

16, 17 But for them to fast now, would be as improper as to make use of a piece of new strong cloth * to patch up a hole in an old rotten garment, which would be very disagreeable, and when it comes to be strained, would occasion a worse rent than before: Or it would be as unfit and injurious, as to put new spirituous wine into old, worn, and decaying leathern bottles, which is the ready way for the bottles to burst, and the wine to be lost: But prudence would direct every one to put new wine into new and strong bottles, for the safety of both. (See the note on *Mark* ii. 22.) So religious fastings are to be proportioned to the circumstances of things, on proper seasons and occasions; otherwise they lose all their beauty and advantage, and do more harm than good: And severities of this kind would be as unsuitable to the present state of my disciples, who are now called to rejoice at the voice of the bridegroom, as the holy freedom and spiritual delights of the gospel-dispensation are to the legal spirit of the *Pharisees*, and of *John's* disciples.

18 While he spake these things unto them, behold,

18 Whilst our blessed Lord was speaking these things, behold an agreeable interruption by an uncommon case! A certain ruler of the synagogue † believed

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* Παιος ἄργυρος, signifies cloth that has not been dressed or fulled; and is a fit emblem of persons that are not used or called to severities. And αἰσι το δα-ρουα αυτου ετο του ματιου may be rendered, He takes from the garment that which filled it up; and this equally agrees to the design of the similitude, as it inti-

mates, that when he, who put the new cloth to the old garment, sees what a botch it makes, he tears it out again.

† There were, at least sometimes, several rulers of one synagogue, as in this at *Capernaum*, *Mark* v. 22.; in that at *Antioch*, *Acts* xiii. 15.; and in that at *Corinth*, chap. xviii. 8, 17.: And yet there

hold, there came a certain ruler and worshipped him, saying, My daughter is even now dead: but come and lay thy hand upon her, and she shall live.

19 And Jesus arose and followed him, and so did his disciples.

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

21 For she said within herself, If I may but touch his garment, I shall be whole.

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

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

believed in him, came and worshipped him, and poured out his request to him, saying, I left my daughter at home in her last extremities, and cannot but fear that, by this time, she is dead; but such is my confidence in thy power, that I verily believe, if thou wilt but please to come, and lay thy hand upon her, as thou hast upon other sick people, she shall certainly live, even though it should be found that she is now quite dead.

19 And Jesus, to shew his abundant willingness to answer faith's dependencies upon him, immediately got up, left his company; and went with him; his disciples and the multitude following, to see what he would do, (*Mark v. 24.*)

20, 21 And as he was going along, he met with another remarkable instance of faith; and that was of a woman, who had been much afflicted for twelve years together with a preternatural effusion of blood, for which she could get no cure, though she had impoverished herself by trying means to obtain it. Her modesty retrained her from making any public application to Christ for relief; but so strong was her faith in him, that she verily believed, if she could but touch his clothes, she should certainly be healed: Accordingly she came privately behind him, and touched the hem of his garment; and was immediately cured.

22 But as she could not conceal herself from Christ, whose voluntary influence had healed her, he turned himself about, and, seeing her, put a public honour upon her faith, and spoke comfortably to her, saying, Daughter, thou art welcome to a cure; be not afraid, but take courage; thou hast honoured me, and I will honour thee; I approve of thy faith, and have accepted and answered it; and therefore I, in whom thou hast believed, have perfectly healed thee, and will own thee for mine: So from that time she was thoroughly restored to health.

23 When Jesus had wrought this cure, he proceeded to the ruler's house; and, as soon as he went in, found the family all in confusion; the musicians were playing their doleful tunes, according to the custom of those days; and the neighbours, friends, and relations, were lamenting over the young

N O T E.

there seems to have been but one, who Dr *Lightfoot* speaks of him as different by, way of eminence, the ruler, or minister of the congregation, Vol. I. p. 612.

young woman, and preparing for her funeral, because she was dead.

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

24 He seeing this, and desiring to raise her to life again, said to the people, What are ye all a-doing? and why do ye grieve at this rate? Make way, that I may come to her; for this is but a short sleep; she is not so dead as to need these preparations for her funeral; ye shall presently see her wake again: But, being all sure that she was dead, they perfectly derided him, and scornfully laughed at him, for what he said.

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

25 Then he ordered all these scorers to be put out of the room; that they might not have the honour and the pleasure of seeing his glory, in the amazing manner of his raising the dead; and when they were gone, he went into the room, with the parents of the deceased, and some of his disciples, to be his witnesses, and took the young damsel by the hand, as we use to do when we would awaken and raise up one that is only asleep; and she immediately got up in perfect health:

26 And the same hereof went abroad into all that land.

26 And this was such an exceeding great and unquestionable miracle, it having been so very evident to many before that she was really dead, that it became a common subject of admiration and discourse in all the country round about.

27 And when Jesus departed thence, two blind men followed him, crying, and saying, Thou son of David, have mercy on us.

27 Now as Jesus was going away from this place, two blind men followed him, crying out, unitedly, and with great importunity, after him, saying, O thou son of *David*, thou Saviour of *Israel*, we beseech thee to have compassion upon us in our distress.

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

28 And as, to avoid ostentation and envy, and to stir up their faith and importunity the more, he did not take any notice of them in the public street; so they followed him with earnest supplication to the house whither he was going: And there, for the further trial, exercise, and discovery of their faith, he said to them, do ye indeed believe me to be that Saviour of *Israel*; who have power to open the eyes of the blind, and in particular to restore you to your sight? They answered, Yes, Lord, we verily believe thou art, and that thou canst give us our sight if thou pleasest.

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

29 Then he, whose understanding is infinite, knowing in himself that they did indeed believe in him, touched their eyes, as the signal that he would heal them; and, by his divine power, touched them into light, saying, It is done, according to your faith.

30 And their eyes were opened, and Jesus straightly charged them, saying, See that no man know it.

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

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

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

34 But the Pharisees said, He casteth out the devils through the prince of the devils.

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

30 Hereupon they were immediately restored to sight; and that he might not so much as seem to aim at self-applause, nor provoke the envy of the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* to take him off before his time, nor give an occasion to the people to put him upon assuming temporal dominion, as a king, according to their corrupt notions of the Messiah, he laid a strict charge upon these men not to divulge his having cured them.

31 But they were so affected with the miracle which he had wrought upon them, that they could not tell how to hold their peace: And, in the heat of their zeal, too little regarding his solemn injunction, they, instead of complying with it, proclaimed his honour in all the country round about.

32 As soon as they were gone, another remarkable object offered to Christ's compassion: There were some that brought to him a certain man struck dumb by the power of the devil, who had taken possession of him.

33 And Jesus casting out the devil, the dumb man immediately spoke: And the people were amazed, saying, Such great and various miracles of every kind were never seen before, even in the land of *Israel*; the things themselves, and his manner of performing them by his own power, are incomparably beyond all that was ever done by *Moses* himself, or any of the ancient prophets.

34 But the *Pharisees* were highly provoked at these miracles, and at the people's being so affected with them; and, not being able to deny them, they immediately suggested that he was a magician, and not a prophet of the Lord; and that it was not by any divine power, but by the power of the chief of devils, and by a confederacy with him, that he cast out inferior devils †

35 And as Jesus did these wonderful works in his own city, *Capernaum*; so he likewise travelled through all the populous towns and obscure villages of *Galilee* round about, opening the scriptures concerning himself in all their synagogues, or places of public worship, wherever he came; acquainting the people yet more and more with the gospel of his grace, relating to the nature and design of his kingdom; and confirming his doctrine by miraculous cures of every kind of distempers and maladies a-

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N O T E.

† What Christ said now to this horrid blasphemy we are not told; but at another time we shall find he clearly refuted it to their utmost confusion, chap. xiii. 25, &c.

36 But when he saw the multitudes he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd.

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

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

mong them; none came amiss to him, he readily, and with equal ease and authority, healed them all.

36 But as he passed on from place to place, and saw the vast crowds that daily attended his ministry, his pity was moved toward them, to think how poorly they were provided with skilful and faithful teachers, that might be capable of instructing them, and of shewing a tender concern for the good of their souls; how weary they were of the poor, infipid, uselefs, and burdensome doctrines of the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*; and how they pined for want of spiritual food, and were misled, and exposed to danger in their eternal concerns, like lost sheep wandering abroad without a shepherd to guide or take care of them.

37 Thereupon he said to his disciples, Here is much work to be done, many souls to be gathered in to me; and their crowding with eager desire after good preaching, is like a large field of corn ripe for the harvest; But alas! there is a want of hands to gather it in; there are very few that are fit and willing to exert themselves, like painful labourers, in this service.

38 Be ye therefore earnest in your prayers to the Lord, to whom this harvest belongs †, that he would furnish out many labourers, who shall be skilled in the word of righteousness; that he would spirit them for preaching the gospel; and that, notwithstanding all discouragement and opposition, from within and from without, he would incline their hearts, and enable them to labour with all faithfulness and diligence in his work, and would crown it with success.

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

What a divine Saviour is ours, who knows our secret thoughts, forgives our sins, heals our souls, and speaks them into obedience to his call; who unstops the ears of the deaf, opens the eyes of the blind, looses the tongue of the dumb, heals all manner of diseases, casts out devils, and raises the dead, with all the sovereignty, wisdom and grace, the majesty and authority, of a God! Nothing is too hard, nothing too great and good, for him to do; and the greatest of sinners are not out of the reach of his mercy: He is willing to come near them, that he may instruct and save them; and high and low, rich and poor, are alike welcome to him; none that put their trust in him ever were, or ever shall be, rejected by him. The weakest faith shall not go without a blessing; and the stronger our faith is, the more it honours Christ, and shall be honoured by him. How merciful is his kindness to the distressed! and yet, alas! how many are there that only wonder at it; and how many that are prejudiced against it, and shall never have the pleasure of beholding his glory! But his true disciples are his witnesses; they believe and experience it, they know and embrace it. And how affectionate is his love to them! He suits their duties to their circumstances; his presence with them is their joy and

N O T E.

† The Lord of the harvest may be fitly understood to mean Christ himself, who, we find in the beginning of the next chapter, sent out labourers into his harvest.

and their glory; and he answers for them, and takes their part, when they are not able to defend themselves. And O how tender is his pity to lost and perishing sinners! His eye is upon his sheep, while they are straying about in the wilderness; he sends his word by his servants, to find them out and bring them in, and would have us help them with our prayers. Here is a great and dear Physician for souls sick of sin; and whatever are our spiritual diseases, or our spiritual thralldom, our blindness, impotence, or captivity, under the power of sin and Satan, faith in him will derive a cure for all.

C H A P. X.

Christ's commission and instructions to the twelve apostles, concerning their services and sufferings, 1,—39. And the blessedness of those that receive them, 40,—42.

TEXT.

AND when he had called unto him his twelve disciples, he gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness, and all manner of disease.

2 Now the names of the twelve apostles are these: The first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother,

3 Philip, and Bartholomew, Thomas, and Matthew the publican, James the son of Alphaeus, and Lebbeus, whose surname was Thaddeus;

4 Simon the Canaanite; and Judas

PARAPHRASE.

OUR blessed Lord no sooner put his disciples upon prayer, but he shewed his readiness to answer it; and having called together twelve of them, according to the number of the tribes of *Israel*, and their chiefs, he sent them out to preach the gospel: And, for the confirmation of its divine original, and of their commission to publish it, he conferred upon them authority over devils, that, by faith in his name, they might overthrow the kingdom of those impure and defiling spirits, and in a miraculous manner cast them out of possessed persons, and heal all sorts of diseases, none excepted.

2 Now the names of the twelve, whom he chose to be his apostles, or special messengers for preaching the gospel were these, who are mentioned two by two, because they were sent out by pairs, (*Mark* vi. 7.) First, there were *Simon*, whom our Lord had named *Peter*, (*John* i. 42.), and *Andrew* his brother: The next were *James*, and his brother *John*, the sons of *Zebedee*, whom Jesus called *Bonerges*, that is, *Sons of thunder*, (*Mark* iii. 17.)

3 The next were *Philip of Bethsaida*, and *Bartholomew*: The next *Thomas*, surnamed *Didymus*; and *Matthew* the Publican, who was also called *Levi*, (*Luke* v. 27.) The next, † *James*, the son of *Alphaeus*, who was called *James the Less*, (*Mark* xv. 40.); and *Lebbeus*, who was surnamed *Thaddeus*, and was also called *Judas*, the brother of *James*, (*Luke* vi. 16.)

4 And last of all were *Simon* || the *Canaanite*, who was likewise called *Simon Zelotes*, (*Luke* vi.

15.);

NOTE.

† *James* the brother of *John* was he the epistle that bears his name; and *Judas* of the epistle of *Jude*.

xiii. 2.) *James the Less* was the writer of || Some suppose he was called the *Canaanite*,

Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed him.

5 These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not :

6 But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

7 And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand.

8 Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils : freely ye have received, freely give.

9 Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass, in your purses,

10 Nor scrip for your journey, neither two coats, nei-

15.) ; and Judas Iscariot, who proved the traitor, (Luke vi. 16.)

5 These twelve Jesus sent forth with authority to preach the gospel; and, at this his first mission, gave them the following charge : Do not offend the *Jews*, or take away the privilege of their birth-right, by going, as yet, into any *Gentile* country, nor into any *Samaritan* city, to preach the gospel among either of those sorts of people.

6 But go, and make the first overtures of mercy to the wandering and perishing sheep of the house of *Israel*, in the holy land, who are a people visibly in covenant with God, and some of whom I must bring back to him.

7 And, as ye go preaching to them, say, The Messiah's kingdom, a glorious dispensation of grace and salvation through him, is just now ready to be set up, and is brought nigh to you by the gospel. Let this be the grand subject of your ministrations; enlarge upon this, and apply it in all your discourses to them.

8 And to confirm this doctrine, that they may know it to be from heaven, and to be sent with a merciful design to them, make use of my name; and, by faith therein, heal the sick, cleanse lepers, raise the dead, and cast out devils, as opportunities and occasions offer: And as ye have freely received this commission, and these powers, from me, without your own cost; so ye shall not make a gain of them, but do all these things without demanding a reward, and thereby shew that my gospel, and the blessings of my kingdom, are all gifts of free grace.

9 And as to what may be necessary for your subsistence in your journeyings, and in your work, the hearts of some of those, to whom I send you, shall be inclined to supply you with it; therefore, live by faith on God's providence for daily refreshment, make no provision of gold or silver, or any other money in your † purse, to procure it.

10 Neither trouble yourselves with a bag to carry food from place to place, nor with any other cloaths, shoes, or staves, than those that ye commonly

N O T E.

naanite, from *Cana* of *Galilee*; but as *Cana* signifies to be zealously affected, others think that this name is of the same meaning with *Zelotes*. And as to *Iscariot*, the learned are not agreed about the reason of this name's being given to *Judas* the traitor: But that which seems as probable as any is, that it was given him after his death, it being derived

from *Iscara*, which signifies *strangling*. Vid. *Lightf. Hor. Hebr.*

† *Zawn* properly signifies a *girdle*; but is likewise used for a *purse*, because it was customary among the ancients either to fasten their purses to the girdle, or to have them in the hollow of the girdle itself.

neither shoes, nor yet staves: (for the workman is worthy of his meat.)

11 And unto whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, inquire who in it is worthy; and there abide till ye go thence.

12 And when ye come into an house, salute it:

13 And if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it; but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you.

14 And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words; when ye depart out of that house, or city, shake off the dust of your feet.

monly wear and use: These are sufficient for the short journey on which I now send you; and whatsoever else shall prove needful, while ye are employed in spiritual work and labour for the good of souls, shall be cheerfully provided for you, as it is fit they should; for the labourer has a reasonable claim to || all proper supplies.

11 And when you first go into any city, town, or village, in which ye are strangers, inquire where ye may find persons of the greatest probity and serious religion, that may be most likely to listen to my gospel, to embrace it, and encourage you in preaching it; and take up your abode at their house, accepting what entertainment they give you; and there continue, without shifting your quarters, till ye remove from that neighbourhood to another.

12 And at your first entrance into any house, address yourselves to the family in a civil, courteous, and religious manner, like persons heartily concerned for its happiness in every respect, and especially for its spiritual welfare. saying, Peace be unto all under this roof; and beg the blessing of God upon them.

13 And if it prove to be a religious family, ready to receive you, (as ye will soon see by the way of their taking your first salutation) preach, and pray over, my gospel of peace to them, with an expectation that its blessings shall come upon them, or that I will send salvation to that house: But if they behave themselves rudely, and treat you ill, do not cast your pearl before swine, by exposing my gospel to their contempt. And as to your prayer for them, of which they render themselves so unworthy, though it may be lost to them, it shall not be so to you, but shall return with a double blessing on your own heads.

14 And if you should meet with any house in particular, or any whole city in general, that shall obstinately refuse to entertain you, as my servants, or to embrace the doctrine with which I send you: When you go out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet against them, as a token of your abhorrence of their infidelity, and hardness of heart, and of your having no more to do with them; and as an intimation that God will, in his righteous judgment, shake them off from his care and favour for wilfully opposing and rejecting the endearing methods of his grace. (See the note on *Luke ix. 5.*)

15 I

NOTE.

|| Meat is here put for all necessaries of life.

15 Verily, I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah, in the day of judgment, than for that city.

16 Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves:

17 But beware of men: for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues.

18 And ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles.

15 I tell you assuredly, that in the great day of account, the punishment of the people of such a city shall be still more insupportably dreadful than that of the ancient inhabitants of *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*; who, though they were exceeding wicked, and would not hearken to. but abused, the angels that were sent to them; yet never rejected the Son of God, and his immediate messengers; nor sinned against so much light and grace, and wonderful works, and such excellent, engaging, and well-attested means of salvation, as these will be found to have done.

16 † Behold what a world ye are going into with my gospel of peace! The longer ye are employed in preaching, the more ye will find of its wickedness. I send you, like sheep, meek, harmless, and unable to defend yourselves, among men that are furious and implacable in their tempers and designs, like ravenous wolves, against you. I tell you of this before-hand for your caution: Be ye therefore like serpents for wisdom and prudence, that ye may not give any causeless provocations, nor heedlessly expose yourselves to danger; and be ye inoffensive, sincere, and meek, (*αειπατοι*.) like doves, that ye may win upon some, and turn away the wrath of others:

17 But after all, expect nothing better than persecutions from the hands of wicked men; and do not trust yourselves with them: For how prudently and inoffensively soever ye may behave; yet, through their enmity to me and my cause, they will treat you as evil-doers, will bring you into their civil courts, and prosecute you as criminals there; and such will be their furious zeal against you, that in their synagogues ||, or places of public worship, they will strip you naked, and lay you under the lash, to torment and expose you to open shame, as profane persons, and enemies to the law.

18 And besides all this, ye shall be brought before heathen magistrates, before rulers and kings, to be still more capitally punished on account of your profession of my name, and preaching my gospel: In all this ye shall be my witnesses, and your sufferings

NOTE.

† Most of the troubles mentioned in the following verses were not to befall the apostles till after they should receive their second mission, which was into all the world, to preach the gospel to every creature; but at their first setting out in the service of Christ, he gives them a faithful hint of all the trials and sufferings they were to expect for his name's

sake, and of the supports and assistances they should have under them, through the whole discharge of their office. *Vid. Miscel. Sacr. Vol. II. p. 6. &c.*

|| The *Jews* held their courts of judicature, about both civil and ecclesiastical affairs, in their synagogues. See *Lightfoot*, Vol. I. p. 302.

ings for my sake shall be a public testimony to the truth of my doctrine, and to the inexcusable guilt and just confusion both of *Jews* and *Gentiles* that reject it.

19 But, when they deliver you up, taken without thought how or what ye shall speak, for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak.

19 But do not be discouraged at any of their terrors: I, who send you, will stand by and own you; and when ye may be apprehended, in order to be carried before councils, rulers, and kings, do not be anxiously careful, or trouble yourselves with thoughts before hand, how ye shall manage, or what ye shall say in your own defence; for at the very time that ye shall be arraigned before your enemies, under the heaviest charges, whatever is proper for you to say in vindication of my gospel, and of your own characters, shall be immediately suggested to you.

20 For it is not ye that speak, but the spirit of your Father which speaketh in you.

20 For ye shall not be left unto yourselves to make the apology that may be necessary on those occasions; but the spirit of your heavenly Father, who loves and takes care of you, will inspire you with such wisdom and courage, and with such propriety and readiness of thought and expression, as none of your adversaries shall be able to gainsay; so that your pleas shall be nothing less than his spirit's speaking in, and by you.

21 And the brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child and the children shall rise up against their parents, and cause them to be put to death.

21 And for your further trial, ye will meet with the most unnatural and cruel persecutions, for my sake, from your nearest kindred; so that even brethren, parents, and children, in the heat of their mad zeal, will break through all the bonds of nature and affection to distress and destroy one another. to betray their dearest relatives into the hands of the civil power, and to accuse and witness against them with inveteracy. even to death.

22 And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end, shall be saved.

22 Yea, and the generality of mankind, the whole world that lies in wickedness, whether they be strangers, or intimate friends and acquaintance, will shew a malignant, enraged, and irreconcilable spirit against you for my sake and the gospel's: But whatever hardships, defamations, imprisonments, tortures, or deaths, any of you shall suffer on religious accounts, know for your encouragement, that whosoever shall bear them with faith, and patience, and perseverance to the end of his days, shall obtain everlasting life.

23. But when they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another: for verily I say unto you, Ye shall not have gone over the cities

23 However, when persecution is raised against you in one town or city, if ye have opportunity, make your escape to another, where ye may more safely enjoy the liberty of your consciences, and of preaching my gospel: For I solemnly assure you, that before (*τελειωθη*) ye shall have finished your journey and testimony through all the towns and cities

cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come.

of *Israel*, the kingdom of the Messiah shall appear in great glory; first in the plentiful effusion of his Spirit for the propagation of the gospel, and afterwards in the destruction of the *Jewish* nation for their infidelity.

24 The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord.

24 And though ye shall meet with all manner of tribulations for my name's sake, do not wonder or stumble at them; for they are no more than I myself, who am your Lord and Master, do and shall undergo before you: And surely the disciple should not expect to fare better than his master, or the servant than his lord, considering how much better and superior he is every way to them, and that all he suffers is really for their sakes.

25 It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord: if they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household?

25 It is sufficient, and as much as with justice or modesty can be desired, that the disciple be not worse used than his master, or the servant than his lord: Since, therefore, mine enemies have not stuck to reproach me, the holy One of *Israel*, and the Lord over mine own house, with the odious and blasphemous title of the chief of devils; and since they treat me, as if I were the most wicked and detestable of all wretches, that ought to be persecuted even to the death; how much more is it to be expected, that they should stigmatize you with the worst reproaches they can think of, because ye belong to me; especially considering that ye are, indeed, but poor, little, contemptible creatures, and are incident to many imprudences and sinful infirmities, that may give them an advantage against you?

26 Fear them not therefore: for there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; and hid, that shall not be known.

26 Since, therefore, it is so reasonable to expect that ye, as my disciples and servants, should be partakers of my sufferings; and since all will end so well, when ye shall come to be partakers of my glory, do not be terrified by your adversaries, or discouraged in your way and work: For the doctrine which ye profess and preach, and your integrity therein, shall be openly manifested, to my own and your honour, in the progress and success of my gospel here, and more especially in the great revealing day, which will set every thing in a true light hereafter.

27 What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light: and what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the benches.

27 With this expectation and hope, be faithful to your trust; and whatsoever I say unto you in private between ourselves, in order to its being communicated to others, that do ye preach publicly, and with plainness of speech; and whatsoever ye learn from me, as from a friend, who freely imparts his

his most important secrets, or as from † your master, whispering into the ears of his disciples what he would have them speak aloud, that do ye proclaim abroad in the most open manner.

23 And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

28 And let not any thing, that the worst and most powerful of men can do against you, terrify or disturb your minds, slacken your holy resolution and zeal, or ensnare you into cowardice and sin: For the utmost that their rage and malice can reach to, is only to take away the life of the body, which would quickly die of itself; but they cannot hurt, much less destroy, the life of the soul, which is of a different nature from the body, and does not perish with it. Though they may deprive the body, for a season, of all vital influence from the soul, they cannot deprive the soul itself of its vital powers, or put an end to its sensation, thought, and action, which are the life that naturally belongs to it: And though they may separate the soul from the body, they cannot separate it from the enjoyment of God and blessedness, which is properly the perfection and glory of its life; nor can they hinder the body's reviving in a better state at the resurrection of the just. But it is, above all things else, your duty and interest to have an holy awe of God, and to be afraid of offending him, and provoking his wrath, who, if he should prove your enemy for your unfaithfulness, time-serving, and disobedience, is able to plunge both soul and body into everlasting destruction in hell.

29 Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father.

29 And even as to the concerns of the body, and its present life, the worst of your enemies can go no further than God sees fit to suffer them; for his providence interests itself in, and over-rules, all affairs relating to this world, as well as the next: Ye know the sparrows are such little, inconsiderable birds, that two of them are valued at no more among you, than the small price of || a farthing; and yet not one of them falls to the ground, by a natural or violent death, without the providential permission and disposal of God your Father, whose kingdom ruleth over all.

30 But the very hairs of your head are all numbered.

30 But ye may be sure, that his special providence is still more watchful and tender over you, as

L 2

his

N O T E S.

† Two customs among the Jews seem to be alluded to in this verse. Their doctors used to whisper into the ear of a disciple what he was to pronounce aloud to others; and as their houses were and flat roofed, and had battlements on the tops, they sometimes preached to the people from thence. The Jews' farthing, like ours, was a very small piece of money: but its exact value is not certainly known.

his dear children, and his servants employed in the most important work; even the smallest circumstances relating to you are taken cognizance of by him; he so accurately surveys and observes them, as to take an account of every hair of your heads, none of which can fall without his missing it; and not one of them can perish or any the least imaginable mischief come upon you, without his knowledge and will.

31 Fear ye not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows.

31 Be not, therefore, afraid of what men, who are all under the government of God, can do unto you: For ye are incomparably of greater worth, in your heavenly Father's esteem, than a multitude of sparrows; and, therefore, may depend upon his protection and safeguard in the way of duty, as long as he sees best for you, or as he has any work to do by you.

32 Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven.

32 This, then, is the true state of your case for time and eternity: And whosoever, in the face of all opposition and danger from men, shall publicly honour me, by professing his faith in me, and owning my gospel and my ways, him will I publicly honour, by owning him with all demonstrations of my love, in recitals of his faith and faithfulness in the presence of my heavenly Father, and of the whole world of angels and men, to his eternal joy.

33 But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.

33 But whosoever, out of fear or shame, shall disclaim, renounce, or act inconsistently with his profession of my name, in the presence of men, him will I likewise publicly disown, and abandon with abhorrence, as none of mine, in the presence of my Father, and of all the world, to his everlasting confusion.

34 Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword.

34 Do not imagine, that the design of my coming is to spread outward prosperity and peace here below, according to the present *Jewish* expectations from the Messiah: No, my direct views are spiritual, and heavenly: And though, as far as my gospel is embraced, it will promote the best of peace within, and will dispose my disciples to behave in a peaceable friendly manner toward one another, and toward all men; yet, through the corruption of nature, among enemies to its purity and power, it will prove an occasion of severe opposition and tribulation to my disciples on the earth.

35 For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the

35, 36 For the occasional event of my coming into the world will be fierce contentions about me, and my holy truths and ways, amongst the nearest earthly friends and relations: So that sons and fathers, daughters and mothers, daughters-in-

law

the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.

36 And a man's foes shall be they of his own household.

37 He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me, is not worthy of me.

38 And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me.

39 He that findeth his life, shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake, shall find it.

40 He that receiveth you, receiveth me; and he that receiveth me, receiveth him that sent me.

law and mothers-in-law, will be at the utmost variance with each other; and even the children and servants of a man's own family, who depend upon him, and are provided for and supported by him, will turn the bitterest enemies against him.

37 This will be indeed a cutting trial: But when things come to such a crisis, that a man must either break with his nearest and dearest friends and relations after the flesh, or break with me; he that prefers the favour and friendship of his father, mother, son, or daughter, to me, and will not part with temporal endearments for his religion and conscience, cannot be accounted, nor is worthy to be owned, as one of my real disciples; nor shall he be the partaker of the spiritual and eternal blessings that belong to such.

38 And whoever he be, that cannot submit to the sufferings of persecution, even to death itself, and bear them patiently, like one that carries his own cross for my sake, when he is called to it, that he may follow my example, doctrines, and institutions, he really prefers his own ease and safety in this world, to his interest in me; and cannot be justly deemed, nor shall be owned, as a true disciple, that heartily loves me, and that shall be glorified with me.

39 The whole matter, therefore, is reduced to this single point. He who, through the fear of man, preserves his life at the expence of his religion, conscience, and regard to me, shall lose the true ends, and the best comforts of life, shall sometimes be cut off from the land of the living, ere he is aware. by some other means here, and shall certainly fall short of eternal life hereafter: But he who steadfastly adheres to me, though it should cost him his temporal comforts, or even life itself, in this world, shall certainly obtain the true ends of living, and an everlasting life of all blessedness in soul and body in the world to come.

40 Go forth, then, in my name, and upon my errand, without fear of your enemies. And for your further comfort and honour, as well as for the encouragement of all that shall believe in me through your word, I tell you, that he who entertains and shews kindness to you, and receives the gospel ye preach, shall be esteemed as shewing kindness to me, and as receiving me; and he who thus receiveth me, shall be esteemed as receiving my Father himself, by whose commission I am come under the character of a Saviour: All shall be taken

taken as done to him and myself; and we will regard it accordingly.

41 He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet, shall receive a prophet's reward; and he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man, shall receive a righteous man's reward.

41 He who, by faith, receives the gospel, and entertains and shews an affectionate kindness to one of my prophets or ministers, merely as such, without any worldly, personal, private, or party considerations to move him to it, shall have an abundant blessing through his ministry and prayers, and shall receive a proportionable share with him in his reward of grace: And he who loves and entertains a good and holy man, merely on account of his religious character, shall be blessed in answer to his prayers, and shall bear a part with him in his eternal reward.

42 And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones, a cup of cold water only, in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, He shall in no wise lose his reward.

42 And whoever he be that, in like manner, from a principle of faith and love, shall give the least needful assistance or refreshment, though it be but a cup of cold water, to one of the weakest and meanest of my disciples, merely because he believes in me, and bears my image, I solemnly assure you, his work of labour and love shall by no means be lost; but, in God's way and time, he shall receive a rich and gracious reward.

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

How gloriously confirmed is the gospel of Christ by the various signs and wonders that were wrought by those who first preached it! This gospel is to be published to all, and it shall not be in vain; but by the blessing of Christ, be savingly received by some. What an encouragement is this to those that preach, and those that hear it! And how careful should we be to give it due entertainment! If we reject it, it is to our own more terrible perdition, than the worst of heathens will suffer, that never heard it; but if we embrace it, it is to our own salvation and eternal glory. Though the ministers of this gospel are not to seek great things in this world for, or by, their ministrations; yet their great Lord and Master has made it the duty, and will incline the hearts, of his people to provide for them: And as it is their exceeding joy to be owned and honoured by him, and made his instruments of gathering in lost sheep; so the least Christian affection or kindness shewn to any of his faithful servants or disciples, because they are such, shall be graciously accepted; and he will own it, as if it were done personally to himself. Ah, what are the dearest friends and comforts of life, if put in the least competition with Christ! And why should any reproaches or troubles we may meet with for his sake, be a discouragement to us; since he has undergone them before us, will take care of us in the way, and publicly own and recommend us to his Father at the end! Needlessly to expose ourselves to sufferings, on Christ's account, is indeed unwarrantable and imprudent; but to neglect any known duty, or commit any known sin, to avoid them, is apostacy: It is fearing men, who cannot kill our immortal spirits together with our mortal bodies, nor affect our truest interests; it is fearing them more than the great God, who will dreadfully resent it, and can destroy both soul and body for ever in hell. But, whatever we are called to lose or suffer for Christ and his cause, we shall never lose by him, while with faith and patience, with meekness and holy courage, we commit ourselves to him that judgeth righteousness, and has all our affairs under his eye and government: For he that endures to the end, shall be saved.

C H A P. XI.

Christ's discourse with John the Baptist's messengers, 1,—6. His testimony to him, 7,—15. His reproofs for rejecting both John and himself, 16,—24. His thanksgiving for the revelation of the gospel to some, and his invitation of sinners to himself, 25,—30.

TEXT.

AND it came to pass, when Jesus had made an end of commanding his twelve disciples, he departed thence to teach and to preach in their cities.

2 Now when John had heard in the prison the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples,

3 And said unto him, Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?

4 Jesus answered and said unto them, Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see :

5 The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them.

PARAPHRASE.

WHEN Jesus had finished his charge to the twelve apostles, and sent them out with his commission to preach the gospel at different places, he went into other parts, in order to his personally instructing the people, and confirming his doctrine with miracles, in several of their cities, where he met with many hearers.

2 Now when John, whom Herod had cast into prison, received an account of the many wonderful works that Jesus wrought, he ordered two of his disciples to go to him, more for their satisfaction than his own ; though the long confinement that he himself was in, and the low figure Christ made in the world among men of learning and note, were great trials of his own faith about him.

3 And they came to ask him whether he were (ο εξουσιος) the promised and expected Messiah that was to come for the redemption of Israel ? or whether they were to look for any other to appear in that character besides him ?

4 In answer to this. Jesus, working several miracles in their presence. (Luke vii. 21.), ordered them to go back again, and tell John what they had heard with their own ears, and seen with their own eyes, to prove that he was indeed the Christ, according to ancient prophecies concerning the nature of the miracles he was to work. and the sort of people he was to find most success amongst, (Isa. xxxv. 5, 6. and lxi. 1.)

5 Tell him, says he, particularly from me, that by the effectual working of my power, the blind receive their sight, cripples walk like other men, leprous persons are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised to life, and the poor of this world, and the poor in spirit, whom the scribes and Pharisees despise. (εωγγελιζονται) are evangelized ; they have the glad tidings of salvation preached to them, receive the gospel, and are wrought upon thereby.

6 And

6 And blessed is he whosoever shall not be offended in me.

7 And as they departed, Jesus began to say unto the multitudes concerning John, What went ye out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken with the wind?

8 But what went ye out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment? Behold, they that wear soft clothing, are in kings houses.

9 But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? yea, I say unto you, and more than a prophet.

10 For this is he of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy

6 And he, and he only, is truly blessed, who, on the foot of such evidence as this, is so well satisfied about my person and office, that no prejudices against me, on any account whatsoever, (*σκανδαλισθη*) shall so dishearten him, as to make him stumble and fall, or reject and disown me.

7 And when *John's* disciples were gone back with this answer, (see the note on *Luke vii 24.*), Jesus took that opportunity to expostulate with the people, and to give an honourable testimony concerning him, saying, When *John* preached in the wilderness, and great multitudes of you ran to his ministry and baptism, what did you go thither for? or what did ye expect to meet with there? Did ye crowd at such a rate to hear a man as wavering in his doctrine as a reed that is tossed to and fro with every wind? He was no such giddy person; but steadily persisted in one and the same testimony concerning me. Or were ye like children, that will run abroad merely to see the shaking of a reed? Surely ye must have had some higher design than this.

8 But what was the design? or what did ye look for? Did ye expect to see some fine and gay person, arrayed with pompous and rich apparel, made of the most soft and delicate materials, to gratify your curiosity; or some flattering courtier, to soothe you up with fair speeches? There was no room for you to think of finding such an one preaching in the wilderness; for people of those appearances and characters are rather to be expected at the palaces of kings.

9 But what was it then that carried you in such throngs to the desert? Was it the hope of seeing a prophet sent from God, and of hearing what he had to say to you? This is what ye certainly thought of: And I tell you it was indeed a prophet that ye saw and heard, and one greater than all the prophets that went before him; for he spake of me as just ready to appear among you: Yea, he was more than a prophet, who only tells things to come; for he pointed me out unto you, as the Messiah already come; and called you to believe in me, and receive the gospel, which I now preach to you.

10 For he was that very person of whom God spake as my forerunner, in the prophet *Malachi*, (chap. iii. 1.), saying, *Behold I send my messenger, whose special office it is, like an harbinger, to go just before thee; and who, by his ministry and baptism,*

thy way before thee.

11 Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women, there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding, he that is least in the kingdom of heaven, is greater than he.

12 And from the days of John the Baptist, until now, the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.

13 For all the prophets, and the law, prophesied until John.

14 And if ye will receive it, this is Elias which was for to come.

tism, shall † give notice of thy coming, and call the people to believe in thee.

11 I solemnly assure you, that of all the children of men before, there never appeared any prophet superior, no, nor equal to *John the Baptist*, with respect to the clear discoveries God made of the Messiah to him, and his direct preaching and pointing him out to others: And yet the meanest gospel-minister in my kingdom, which, as he told you, I am come to set up in the world, shall excel *John* himself; his office is still more honourable, and he shall have still brighter discoveries of me, and shall be able to preach more of my obedience and sufferings, grace and glory, and of the spiritual nature and design of my kingdom, than *John*: Yea, the least true believer in the gospel-church shall have further light into these things, than he.

12 *John the Baptist* alarmed the people with representations of their guilt and danger, and told them of my appearing to take away their sins, (*John* i. 29.): And from the beginning of his ministry onward to this day, there have been mighty stirrings among them: Great multitudes are crowding to hear the gospel, and many of them are seeking after salvation with as much earnestness and vehemence as if they were storming a town; yea, publicans, and the worst of sinners, whom the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* look upon as intruders, that have no right to the blessings of the Messiah's kingdom, even these are pressing, with eager desire, after its holy and gracious doctrines, and take its blessings, as it were by force, away from those that despise and envy them.

13 For all the prophets, and the ceremonial law, represented my coming, and the blessings of my kingdom, as future and distant things, till *John* arose, who spake of them as already introduced, and as just coming on in all their glory; and so they are now regarded and treated like things present, which use to make the strongest impression.

14 And if ye can bear to hear the truth, and find in your hearts to believe it, I tell you plainly, that

N O T E.

† In *Malachi*, God the Father, speaking to the church concerning Christ's forerunner, says, *He shall prepare the way before me*, or before my face: But here it is quoted in the form of his speaking to Christ; and so it is my messenger

before *thy face*, who shall prepare *thy way before thee*: Which makes the same way to be called Christ's way here, and God's way there; and shews that he is one God with the Father. See *Pocock* on *Mat.* iii. 1.

that this *John* is the very person prophesied of, as the Messiah's forerunner, under the character of *Elias*; in as much as he came, in the spirit and power of that famous prophet, to prepare the way for my appearing immediately after him.

15 He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

16 But whereunto shall I liken this generation? It is like unto children sitting in the markets, and calling unto their fellows,

17 And saying, We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned unto you, and ye have not lamented.

18 For *John* came neither eating nor drinking; and they say, He hath a devil.

19 The Son of man came eating and drinking; and they say, Behold a man gluttonous, and a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners: but wisdom is justified of her children.

15 Whoever is capable of hearing, and desirous of being instructed, let him seriously consider the truth and importance of what I say.

16, 17 But as to the generality of people, and especially the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*, in this perverse and cavilling age, what parable can be thought of that shall set them out as they deserve? They are so captious and untractable, as to be just like a parcel of morose and sullen children, whom their companions would get to play with them in the market, or other public places; but whatever they do to please and engage them, whether it be by mimicking a wedding, or the like, with music and dancing, or a funeral, with mournful songs, and other signs of sorrow, they are so ill-natured and obstinate as not to be prevailed upon to join with them: Even so the people of this day will not be engaged by any manner of address that is made to them; but set themselves against both my forerunner and me, as if we were to be no more regarded than children, that only act a part.

18 For *John the Baptist* came to preach to them, and recommend his doctrine of humiliation and repentance, by a severe, solitary, and abstemious life, with fasting and self-denial; and they, instead of mourning with him for their sins, perversely said of him, He is an unfociable melancholy man, possessed of the devil.

19 On the other hand, I, the Messiah, am come to preach to them glad tidings of great joy, and commend my doctrine by a free and friendly way of conversation, using the innocent refreshments of nature, treating all sorts of persons with affability, and condescending to converse with the worst of sinners for their spiritual good; and immediately they as perversely cry out, See what a glutton and tippler this is, a boon companion for the vilest and most luxurious men! But after all that malice and envy can suggest, the wisdom of God in the doctrines we preach, together with the wisdom of both these methods of publishing and recommending it, and the wisdom of receiving it; yea, and the Messiah himself, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge; are fully approved of, witnessed to, and vindicated in the thoughts of them who

who know me and the grace of God in truth, and even by the greatest of sinners, who, being brought to believe in me, are made wise to salvation, and receive power to become the sons of God. (See the note on *Luke vii. 35.*)

20 Then began he to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not.

20 On this occasion, Jesus entered upon a discourse, wherein he sharply reprov'd and threaten'd the people of those cities for their wilful obstinacy and perverseness, among whom he had wrought the greatest number of signal miracles to confirm his mission and doctrine, because they still persisted in their impenitence and hardness of heart.

21 Wo unto thee, Chorazin! wo unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.

21 And particularly he denounced the wrath of God against some cities by name, for their infidelity, saying, Wo to you, the inhabitants of † *Chorazin* and *Bethsaida!* for if the same miracles, and other means of conviction, which ye have enjoyed, had been bestowed even on that wicked people of *Tyre* and *Sidon*, against whom dreadful destruction was denounced by the prophets. (*Isa. xxiii.* and *Ezek. xxvi.* and *xxvii.* and *xxviii.*) there is ground to believe that they, like the *Ninevites*, would, in much less time than has been afforded to you, have turned from their evil ways, and, in token of their repentance, have covered themselves with sackcloth and ashes, to prevent the ruin that came upon them.

22 But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you.

22 But, as ye have sinned against greater light and mercies, and greater means of conviction than they; I assure you the punishment of the profligate heathens of *Tyre* and *Sidon* shall not be so heavy and severe as yours, in the day of God's righteous judgment.

23 And thou Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell; for if the mighty works which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day.

23 And as for thee, O *Capernaum*, who art a great and flourishing city, and hast been honoured with my chief residence, preaching, and miracles; and so hast been carried up, as it were, in outward privileges, to the very gates of heaven: Thou, for thy horriole abuse of them, shalt be stripped of all; thou shalt be brought to utter desolation, and thy people shall be thrown down to the lowest hell: For if the wonderful things that your inhabitants have been favoured with, had been done among the *Sodomites* themselves, there is the greater moral reason to apprehend, that, vile as they were, they might have been brought to such a reformation and repentance,

as

N O T E.

† *Chorazin* and *Bethsaida* were towns, or cities in *Galilee*, not far from *Capernaum*. And what Christ says about other peoples repenting sooner than these, seems

to be spoken by him as a man, upon the judgment of high probability, according to the appearances of things.

as would have prevented their destruction by immediate vengeance from heaven; and that their city might have continued to this very day

24 But I say unto you, that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee.

25 At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.

26 Even so, Father; for it is seemed good in thy sight.

27 All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son but the Father: neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.

28 Come unto me, all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

24 But, as the aggravations of your iniquities are so much greater than theirs, because ye have obstinately sinned against more evident, endearing, and repeated means of light and grace, I assure you the punishment, even of the people of *Sodom* itself, shall not be so great in the final judgment as yours.

25 As soon as Jesus had spoke these awful things against the people of those cities, he, with relation thereunto, comforted himself with the thoughts that there were, nevertheless, some who were acquainted with the gospel, to their own salvation; and said, I thank thee, my Father, who art the sovereign proprietor and disposer of all blessings in heaven and earth, that while thou hast not been pleased to discover the good things of the gospel, so as to render them effectual, to men of character for learning and worldly policy, it has pleased thee to make them savingly known to others of low figure for natural parts, sagacity, and human accomplishments.

26 Even in this manner, O Father, thou dispensest the riches of thy mercy, and I heartily approve of and acquiesce in it; for so thy wise and holy pleasure sees best to order it, that thou mayest appear like a sovereign in bestowing thy free favours, and mayest the more evidently secure to thyself the entire glory of them all.

27 According to this design of grace, our Lord further added, All persons and things, relating to salvation, are committed by my Father to me, as Mediator. that they may be under my uncontrollable management and dispose; and we thoroughly understand one another, like persons that have a mutual consciousness of each other's designs. None knows who or what the Son is, and what is the trust committed to him, but the Father; neither does any one know who or what the Father is, and what are his counsels and will relating to this trust, but the Son, and they to whom he, by his word and spirit, shall discover them.

28 Then turning to the people, he said, Whosoever, therefore, among you is weary of sin, and ready to sink under an affecting sense of its guilt and power, or is weary of the burdensome rites and ceremonies of the law, and impositions of the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*; and whosoever of you is tired with vainly seeking after pardon and acceptance with God, and peace to your own souls, by the works of the

the law; † come by faith to me for salvation, depending entirely on me for every spiritual blessing that ye need, and I will give you effectual relief.

29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

29 Submit cheerfully to that yoke of obedience, which I, to set you an example, as well as to answer still higher ends, have taken upon myself; and yield yourselves up to me, as my disciples; to be taught and governed by me; for I am gracious, gentle, and condescending; and under my instruction and influence ye shall find retirement and satisfaction to your souls.

30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

30 For my service is perfect freedom, and my commands are not grievous; but all my ways are ways of pleasantness, and all my paths peace, and I will lay no more burdens upon my disciples than they shall be enabled to bear.

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

Christ will honour them that honour him; but they that lightly esteem him shall be despised. A humble, though doubting faith, shall be satisfied; but wilful obstinacy shall be confounded. How dreadful and dangerous is it to sin against gospel-light and grace, to reject all means of conviction, to stumble at Christ, to be prejudiced against him, and to cast reproaches upon him and his servants. He will pour righteous contempt upon such sinners, he will one day call them to a strict account for all their impenitence, and abuses of the means of grace; and heavier vengeance shall fall on them, than on the most notorious sinners that never heard of the gospel. But how happy and encouraging is it, to see souls pressing in good earnest after Christ and salvation! How sovereign and distinguishing is the grace that gives such a happy turn to their minds and hearts, whilst others are left to perish in the way of their own chusing! How does our blessed Lord rejoice over them! What fulness of power has he in his hands to save them! And how kind and compassionate is he to such of them as are weary, wounded, and troubled in spirit! How tenderly does he invite them to himself! how sweetly encourage their faith in him: how fully assure them of all salvation in their coming to him! and how pleasant will he make his service, and how easy his cross, unto them, till they shall receive the crown of glory, that fades not away!

N O T E.

† This *coming to Christ*, must needs signify more than a bare corporal or local coming to hear him preach; for thus the persons he spoke to were already come to him, and innumerable multitudes came in that manner without any saving advantage to themselves: But our Lord speaks of such coming, as should certainly issue in a spiritual rest, which he would give and they should find to their souls, (ver. 29.) Accordingly, to

explain his meaning in this phrase, he at other times used it as exactly of the same import with *believing in him*, promiscuously putting one for the other, again and again, *John* vi. 35, 36, 37, 40, 44, 45, 47, 64, 65. and vii. 37, 38, 39. And after he was gone to heaven, the apostle used these phrases of *coming to him*, and *believing on him*, as equivalent terms, *1 Pet.* ii. 3, 4, 6, 7.

C H A P.

C H A P. XII.

Christ vindicates his disciples plucking and eating corn, and his own healing a withered hand, on the Sabbath-day, 1,—21. His healing a possessed man that was dumb and blind, and answering the blasphemous cavils of the Scribes and Pharisees against it, 22,—37. His reply to their demand of a sign from heaven, 38,—45. And his great affection to his disciples, 46,—50.

TEXT.

AT that time Jesus went on the Sabbath-day, through the corn; and his disciples were an hungred and began to pluck the ears of corn, and to eat.

2 But when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto him, Behold, thy disciples do that which is not lawful to do upon the Sabbath-day.

3 But he said unto them, Have ye not read what David did when he was an hungred, and they that were with him;

4 How he entered into the house of God, and did eat the shew-bread, which was not lawful for him to eat, neither for them which were with him, but only for the priests?

5 Or have ye not read in the law, how that on the

PARAPHRASE.

ON a certain Sabbath about this time, (*Luke vi. 1.* see the note there,) Jesus was passing to or from some synagogue, with his disciples, through a corn-field; and they being hungry, took the liberty, which the law allowed them, (*Deut. xxiii. 25.*) to pluck some of the ears; and rubbing out the corn with their hands, began to eat it.

2 But as soon as the malicious cavilling *Pharisees* observed this, they were offended at it, not as an act of any injustice, but as a violation of the Sabbath, according to their traditions; and they said to Jesus, See what a sinful liberty your disciples take in breaking the Sabbath, and you suffer them to do it without reproof.

3, 4 But he answered them, What room is there for objecting against this as a violation of the Sabbath, since the law of nature requires that hunger be satisfied; and there are instances on record, which shew, that ritual circumstances, and much more your strained interpretations of them, are not to interfere with necessary works? Have ye never read the account of what *David* and his company did, when they were hungry? (*1 Sam. xxi. 6.*) Do not ye know that he went to the priest in the tabernacle, (see the note on *Mark ii. 26.*) and took of the consecrated shew-bread, which was most holy to *Aaron and his sons*? (*Lev. xxiv. 9.*) And though, in ordinary cases, and without necessity, it was not lawful for any but the priests to eat of that, hallowed bread; yet *David*, and they that were with him, eat of it to refresh themselves, and were not to blame; nor have ye ever condemned them for it. Why, then, do ye find fault with my disciples for doing so small a thing, as plucking and eating a few ears of corn, to satisfy their hunger on the Sabbath-day?

5 Or have ye not read what the law of *Moses* itself enjoins, with respect to some servile works on the Sabbath-days, as particularly that then the priests

the Sabbath-days the priests in the temple profane the Sabbath, and are blameless?

6 But I say unto you, that in this place is *one* greater than the temple.

7 But if ye had known what this meaneth, I will have mercy and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless.

8 For the Son of man is Lord even of the Sabbath-day.

priests are very busy in killing, slaying, and doing all things requisite about the sacrifices in the temple, which, by your way of arguing, is profaning the Sabbath, and in other cases would be so? and yet they were not chargeable with any fault; nor do ye pretend to blame them for it.

6 Now (3s) if their being employed in temple-service, justified those servile labours on the Sabbath-days; my disciples attendance on me, and my service, will much more justify them in this lesser labour, which is necessary to their support. And I tell you that I, whose work they are hereby the more capable of performing on this Sabbath, am much greater in dignity and holiness than the temple, as all the fulness of the Godhead, and the sanctifying Spirit, without measure, dwell in me.

7 But furthermore, as to the first of these instances, if the law of charity vindicated *David* and his followers, so it does my disciples: And had ye but truly understood and considered the meaning of what God says, (*Hof.* vi. 6.) about his preferring acts of mercy to ceremonial observances, when they interfere with one another, ye would not have been so ready to reproach and censure my disciples, as guilty of any crime, by satisfying their hunger in this way, rather than strictly observing your ceremonious and rigorous traditions about the Sabbath, beyond what God himself has commanded.

8 And, as to the other instance of the priests servile labour, if the command of God, who has a right to order what works he pleases to be done on the Sabbath, acquitted them from the charge of breaking it; so my disciples plucking and eating a little corn in my presence, and by my allowance, is a sufficient vindication of them: For the Messiah has a divine right, as Lord of the Sabbath, to order what he judges most proper to be done, in subservience to his honour, and to his disciples good, relating to the Sabbath-day †.

9 Christ

N O T E.

† Christ is that Lord of the Sabbath, who instituted it at first in the state of innocency, and renewed the institution at mount *Sinai*; and therefore must have an original right in himself to make what circumstantial alterations he pleases about it: And as, agreeable to the nature and design of the gospel-dispensation, he has only changed it from the seventh to the first day of the week, and has only allowed of works of necessity and mercy,

and such as relate to religious services, to be done on the Sabbath-day, all other obligations of a Sabbath remain in force: and if he did not design the continuance of a Sabbath under the gospel-state, it can hardly be supposed that he would have taken so much care to explain and settle the law concerning it, as he does here, and in the following verses, and at other times.

9 And when he was departed thence, he went into their synagogue.

10 And behold, there was a man which had his hand withered: and they asked him, saying, is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath-days? that they might accuse him.

11 And he said unto them, What man shall there be among you, that shall have one sheep, and if it fall into a pit on the Sabbath-day, will he not lay hold on it, and lift it out.

12 How much then is a man better than a sheep? wherefore it is lawful to do well on the Sabbath-days.

13 Then saith he to the man, Stretch forth thine hand: and he stretched it forth; and it was restored whole, like as the other.

14 Then the Pharisees went out, and held a council against him, how they might destroy him.

15 But when Jesus knew it, he withdrew himself from

9 Christ having thus confuted the *Pharisees*, went his way; and on another Sabbath, (*Luke vi. 6.*) he, according to his custom, repaired to one of their synagogues.

10 And observe, a remarkable occasion offered for his further asserting, and confirming by a miracle, the doctrine he had taught in the fields concerning the Sabbath. There was a man in the synagogue, whose right hand was withered shrunk, and dried up. so that it was entirely useless: And as he was a poor miserable object ||. the *Pharisees* suspected that Christ would cure him, and therefore asked him, Whether he thought it lawful to heal any one on a Sabbath-day? that if he should say it was, they might accuse him of breaking the Sabbath, and pretend that he deserved to die for it; or if he should be silent, or should say it was not lawful, they might accuse him of inconsistency, because of what he had said in the fields.

11 But (ð) Jesus knowing their design. said unto them, Suppose any of you had but one sheep, and it should fall into a pit, or into any other danger of suffering great mischief, or of losing its life for want of help; which of you would not do what ye could to get it out, though it were on the Sabbath-day?

12 Of how much more value then is a man, and his use of a hand, that is necessary to his livelihood and comfort, than a mere animal? If, therefore, it is lawful to shew mercy to a sheep, it must certainly be an act of much greater charity to relieve a poor helpless man; and it cannot but be warrantable to do such an act of goodness and compassion on the Sabbath-day.

13 Thereupon he, with sovereign authority, commanded the man to stretch out his hand; and such healing power went forth with the word, that its strength and vigour were immediately restored, so that it was as perfectly sound and well as the other.

14 Though this was so evident and merciful a miracle, and done without any labour, by only speaking a word; yet the *Pharisees* were so enraged at Christ for it, that they consulted together how they might proceed against him to take away his life.

15 But Jesus, knowing their malicious contrivances, and that it was not yet time for him to suffer himself

N O T E.

|| He probably used to get his bread by the labour of his hands. See the note on *Luke vi. 6.*

from thence: and great multitudes followed him, and he healed them all,

16 And charged them that they should not make him known:

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

18 Behold, my servant whom I have chosen, my beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased: I will put my spirit upon him, and he shall shew judgment to the Gentiles.

19 He shall not strive, nor cry: neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets.

20 A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send forth judgment unto victory.

21 And in his name shall the Gentiles trust.

22 Then was brought unto him one possessed with a devil, blind and dumb: and he healed him, in-
much

himself to fall into their hands, retired from them; and great multitudes, understanding whither he was gone, went after him, and he healed as many of them as were sick of any diseases.

16 And that he might not still further unseasonably provoke the rage and envy of the *Pharisees*, but might go on peaceably with his work, he commanded the people not to tell his enemies of these miracles, nor to acquaint them where he was.

17 And this he did, that the prophecy of *Isaiab* might be fulfilled, where God the Father says to the church, (*Isa. xlii. 1.*)

18 Observe my servant, the Messiah, whom I have chosen to that office, as the only fit person for it, my beloved Son, in whom, and in whose work, I am highly delighted: I will anoint him with my Spirit above measure, and he shall preach the gospel, to the reformation of the *Gentiles*, as well as *Jews*, first in his own personal ministry, and afterwards still more abundantly in that of his apostles.

19 In his management of this work, his kingdom shall not come with observation: He shall not behave in a pompous or noisy manner, or with contention and tumult, like one that is clamorous, or loves to make a bustle in the world; but with gentleness and meekness, condescension, tenderness, and compassion.

20 Such as are weak in grace, and wounded in spirit, like a bruised reed, he will not crush, but strengthen and bind up; and where there is but little light, life, and fervour, and this attended with sad remainders of offensive infirmities, and just ready to expire, like the smoking wick of a candle, he will not extinguish, but cherish and kindle it into a sacred flame, till the least beginnings of his renewing work of grace in the soul shall overcome all defects and dangers, and be perfected in glory. And the like will he do by the smallest beginnings of his work in the world, till by means of the gospel, in the hand of the Spirit, it shall prevail against all opposition:

21 And when his name comes to be made known, by the ministry of the word among the *Gentiles*, even they shall be brought to believe in him, and depend upon him for salvation.

22 After this, (he being in a house, chap. xiii. 1.) a certain person, who was under the power and possession of the devil, and thereby deprived of his sight and speech, was brought to Jesus to have compassion upon him; and he instantly delivered him from this possession, and its dismal effects; so

much that the blind and dumb both spake and saw.

23 And all the people were amazed, and said, Is not this the Son of David?

24 But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, This fellow doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils.

25 And Jesus knew their thoughts, and said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself, is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself, shall not stand:

26 And if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself: how shall then his kingdom stand?

27 And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your children cast them out: therefore they shall be your judges.

that he, who had been blind and dumb, recovered the use both of his eyes and tongue.

23 And the miraculous power, by which our blessed Lord did this, was so manifest and extraordinary, that all the people were exceedingly astonished at it, and said, Certainly this is the promised Messiah that was to descend from *David*. Who can think otherwise of him?

24 But when the *Pharisees*, his inveterate enemies, heard how the people were affected at the miracle, and how confidently they expressed their faith in him, as the Messiah, on that account; they were enraged in their own minds, and blasphemously said, Though we cannot deny but that (*ovros*) this sorry fellow casts out devils; yet he certainly does it not by any divine power, but by a confederacy with *Beelzebub* their chief, who, to delude the people, concurs with him; and commands the lesser devils to retire at his word.

25 But Jesus knowing the maliciousness of their hearts in suggesting this, expostulated with them, saying, How perverse and inconsistent is your way of reasoning! Your argument destroys itself; for in all societies, whether kingdoms, cities, or families, the chiefs that set themselves against the common interest of the community, and the inferiors that act under them, directly opposite to the known strength and advantage of the whole, do, in effect, divide the body against itself, and must, in course, unavoidably bring it to utter ruin. It can never subsist long, much less gain any ground, by such destructive methods as these.

26 And if one devil casts out another, to the weakening of their common cause among men, and to the confirmation of my doctrine of holiness, that lies directly opposite to all their interests and designs, what is this, but the powers of hell going into a conduct that effectually splits, instead of uniting, their strength? And in that case, how can the kingdom of darkness stand? The devil is not so weak a politician, - as to enter into such pernicious measures against himself.

27 Besides, if ye pretend that the exercise of my power over devils, to cast them out, is in combination with *Beelzebub*, their prince, Pray, what will you say to your own approved countrymen and disciples, who have sometimes undertaken to cast them out*? Is it by the power of the devil that they do it?

N O T E.

* Christ here seems to refer to the ancient writers assure us, sometimes used *Jewish* exorcists in those days, who, as to cast out devils by invoking the name of

it? Ye will not say this of them, nor did ye ever presume to charge it upon them. They, therefore, shall be witnesses of the divine power by which I cast out devils, and shall rise up in judgment against you, for the partiality and injustice of your blasphemous accusation of me.

28 But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you.

28 And if it be apparent, beyond all reasonable contradiction, that I do these things against the interest of Satan, in a divine manner, by the power of God's Spirit †; it is then evident that I am come, with sovereign authority, to destroy the work of the devil, and to set up a spiritual, merciful, and holy kingdom among you,

29 Or else, how can one enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man? and then he will spoil his house.

29 Otherwise, how is it possible that I should be able, at this superior and irresistible rate, to cast out Satan from his possession of men's bodies, as well as from his dominion over their souls? For how can any one make a forcible entry, and dispossess a strong man of his house and goods, unless he first matters him by a greater power? Then, indeed, he will take possession for himself, and turn all to his own use; but otherwise he cannot.

30 He that is not with me, is against me; and he that gathereth not with me, scattereth abroad.

30 And as I so evidently act against all the might and interests of Satan, it can never be thought that he is with me, but must be against me; and whosoever he be that shall not own and side with me, in my opposition to him, and in my work of gathering sinners out of his kingdom into my own, shall likewise be looked upon as an enemy to me, and as injurious to the interests of my kingdom.

31 Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men.

31 Therefore, on occasion of what has now passed, I tell you, for your caution against one most horrid sin, which some of you are in great danger of, that all sorts of other crimes, and even blasphemies, however heinous in their circumstances and aggravations, are pardonable, and shall be forgiven to every penitent believer: But in the approaching dispensation of the Holy Spirit, in which his miraculous operations and illuminations will appear with still more shining evidence, a malicious

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speaking

NOTES.

of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob: Or perhaps he referred to such as cast out devils in his name, but did not publicly own or follow him; *Mark* ix. 38.

† Though Christ had all power in himself, as God, for the performance of his miracles; yet as none of the divine Persons act separately from each other, their nature being the same; and as Christ was likewise man, and came, as the Mes-

siah, in his Father's name; it was proper that the agency of the Holy Ghost should be sometimes taken notice of in his miraculous acts, to shew that the Father owned him in the execution of his office: as well as that at other times, he should behave as acting by his own power, as he most commonly did, to shew that he had it in himself.

‡ The blasphemy against the Holy Ghost

speaking against him then, as if he were an evil spirit, or an ascribing his wonderful gifts and operations to the devil, is such a blasphemy as shall never admit of forgiveness; since this will be obstinately sinning against the last and highest dispensation of grace, by which it can be possible for any to be recovered, or brought to faith and repentance.

32 And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come.

32 And I tell you, that whosoever, through ignorance, and preconceived prejudices about the temporal grandeur of the Messiah, speaks blasphemously against me on account of the meanness of my appearance as the Son of man, such an one may afterwards, by the power of the Holy Ghost, be brought to conviction, faith, and repentance, and so obtain forgiveness of that sin. But whosoever shall maliciously and designedly revile the Spirit of God, in his most signal and evident gifts and operations, by which he will hereafter bear witness to me, and which will be the last means of conviction and recovery, he must be inevitably shut up in impenitence and unbelief, and so shall not obtain forgiveness, either in this world, or in the day of judgment.

33 Either make the tree good, and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt: for the tree is known by his fruit.

33 As to you, the *Pharisees*, that have spoken bitter things against me, whatever pretences ye make to sanctity, it is evident that your hearts are full of malicious wickedness: For a man's heart is to be judged of by his words and actions, as a tree is by its fruit, which is either good or bad, according to the nature of the tree: Either, therefore, leave off your blasphemies; or else make no further pretences to religion and holiness, that ye may be consistent with yourselves.

34 O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.

34 Whatever others may think of you, I know you to be the seed of the old serpent, a wicked and malignant generation of men: How can ye, then, while you continue to be sinful in your governing principles and tempers, speak any thing that is really good, or that is not, one way or other, bad? For that which most fills and reigns in the heart, will naturally make its way, and discover itself, by the lips.

35 A good man out of the good treasure

35 A truly good man, on one hand, has a rich treasure of grace and holiness in his heart, and it will

N O T E.

Ghost is spoken of *Mark* iii. 29. and *Luke* xii. 10. in the future tense, and so related not to what was already, but should afterwards be done, consequent to the effusion of the Spirit; and what the *Pharisees* had said about Christ's casting out devils by *Beelzebub*, was as directly

blaspheming himself as the Spirit, and yet he speaks of blasphemy against himself as a sin that should be forgiven, ver. 32.; and afterwards preached to, and prayed for, these blasphemers, *Luke* xxiii. 34. See *Whitby's fourth appendix to this gospel.*

treasure of the heart, bringeth forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil treasure, bringeth forth evil things.

36 But I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.

37 For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.

38 Then certain of the Scribes and of the Pharisees answered, saying, Master, we would see a sign from thee.

39 But he answered and said to them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas:

40 For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the

will vent and discover itself by his uttering things *that are good to the use of edifying*; (Eph. iv. 29.) and a wicked unregenerate man, on the other, has a source of all iniquity perpetually bubbling up in his heart, and it will break out and appear in the corrupt communication that proceeds out of his mouth.

36 And (de) how light soever ye may think of your words, as if they were of little moment in God's account; nay, though you may be apt to say, *Our lips are our own, who is Lord over us?* (Psal. xii. 4.) I tell you that, not only mens false, blasphemous, and reviling words, but even all their vain, trifling, and unprofitable talk, shall be exactly scrutinized, and brought to a reckoning in the day of judgment.

37 For your words, as well as actions, shall be produced in evidence for or against you, to prove whether you are a saint or a sinner, a true believer or not; and according to their evidence, you shall be either publicly acquitted, or condemned, in the great day.

38 Then some of the lawyers and Pharisees turned upon him, and said, Matter, after all that you have taught and done, we are not satisfied about your being the Christ: We therefore desire you to shew us some miraculous sign from heaven, (Luke xi. 16.) to prove that you really have a divine commission, and that God himself owns you; or else we shall not believe in you.

39 But as this was a humorous, superfluous, and unreasonable demand, he answering them, said, None but a perverse and degenerate set of men, that have cast off God's covenant, and apostatized from the faith and obedience of their father *Abraham*, could have required any other sort of sign to satisfy them, than they have already seen, in the numerous, great, and merciful miracles I have wrought among them, to confirm my character, and my holy doctrine: And no other sort of miraculous sign, different from those that I have already wrought, shall be given them for this purpose; except one, which was prefigured by the prophet *Jonas*, in what befel him for the conviction of the *Ninevites*, and which of itself will be such an unanswerable demonstration of my divine authority and power, as will leave every one that rejects it without excuse.

40 For as *Jonas* came alive out of the great fish's belly, when he had been buried there three days and three nights in the depths of the sea, which was a proof of his being a prophet sent from God to the *Ninevites*; So I, the Son of man, shall rise again to life, when I shall have been put to death, and been

the heart of the earth.

41 The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas: and behold, a greater than Jonas is here.

been buried * three nights in the grave, to prove that I am the Messiah.

41 If, upon this further evidence, I shall be still rejected through unbelief the *Ninevites*, compared with the perverse people of these days, will rise in judgment, like witnesses for God, that they deserve to be condemned, as incorrigible infidels: For they believed and hearkened to *Jonas*, as a prophet of the Lord; and were so affected at his preaching, that they went into a solemn humiliation and repentance, covering themselves with sackcloth and ashes. They were so convinced, by his message, as to do all this, though he was but an ordinary prophet, and continued with them but a little while; and though there was no other miracle, than that which was wrought for and upon him, and not by him, and which they could only have the report of, to confirm his message to them: And observe it, One incomparably greater than *Jonas*, even the Messiah himself, who comes with evident characters of divinity, is now among you, and is often preaching, with all plainness and authority, and continuing to preach to you, as many years, as *Jonas* did days to them; he likewise has confirmed his doctrine with a multitude of signal miracles before your own eyes, and at last will conclude them with his resurrection from the dead: If, therefore, after all this, ye shall still continue in impenitence and unbelief, how aggravated will your guilt and punishment be in the great day!

42 The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and behold, a greater than Solomon is here.

42 The queen of *Sheba* in *Arabia*, (which lay south of *Jerusalem*.) being likewise compared with the people of this obstinate age, will rise up, as a witness for God, that their condemnation is just: For, upon her only hearing a report of *Solomon's* great wisdom, in a very distant country, bordering on the ocean, she, though a person of great state, and of the tender sex, took a fatiguing long journey, to see and hear it herself; and, having been favoured with some proofs of it, the readily owned and admired it: And pray observe, One incomparably greater than *Solomon*, even the Messiah himself, who is the Wisdom of God, and teaches wisdom to salvation, is preaching daily among you in your synagogues, and other places; and if, after all, ye despite this wisdom, and will not come to him,

N O T E.

* The *Jews* natural day was expressed by a day and a night, and they used to reckon a part of a day for a whole day; and to Christ's lying in the sepul-

chre part of *Friday* and of the Lord's day, and the whole of the *Saturday*, is, according to their way of computing, called *three days and three nights*.

him, that ye may have life. (John v. 40.) how great and how righteous will be your condemnation!

43 When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh thro' dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none.

44 Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out: and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished.

45 Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation.

43, 44, and 45 The case of this people is like that of one possessed with the devil, who delights in nothing but wickedness and mischief: When this evil spirit is cast out of a man, he, like a melancholy disappointed creature, wanders about in places where he may probably meet with least disturbance; there he seeks after another settlement, but cannot find it. Then he thinks with himself, I will go and try whether I cannot recover possession of the same man again; and upon his returning to make the experiment, he finds there is nothing to oppose him, but every thing more ready to entertain him than before. Upon this, he enters again, with several other still more malignant devils than himself, and they unitedly fix their abode in this man, and so make his condition abundantly worse than it ever was before. Just so the dreadful condition of this impenitent unbelieving people shall be: I have often baffled Satan among them; the light and power of my gospel have, in various instances, been too hard for him; and there have been some convictions and stirrings in the minds of the people, that have disturbed and threatened his interest in them; and all together have made him afraid, lest, by further pursuing his vile designs against the Jews, he should provoke me utterly to destroy him. Hereupon, in the great vexation of his mind, he retires to the Gentile world, hoping to meet with a better reception there. But thither my gospel shall follow him, with much greater energy and success, in turning innumerable multitudes from idols, to serve the living and true God; so that he will be abundantly more harassed and defeated there than he was among the Jews. Upon this, he will return, and try this people again; and finding that their convictions have not prevailed upon them to admit me into their hearts, and that, amidst all their pretences to purity and religion, they are still destitute of my grace, and are more ready to resign up to him than before; he will come with greater power, and fill them with more obstinate hardness of heart than ever, till their wickedness and their ruin shall be past remedy.

46 While he yet talked to the people, behold, his mother

46 While he was discoursing in this manner to the people, behold, a proper opportunity offered, for discovering a most affectionate love to his disciples.

mother and his brethren stood without, desiring to speak with him.

47 Then one said unto him. Behold, thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to speak with thee.

48 But he answered, and said unto him that told him, Who is my mother? and who are my brethren?

49 And he stretched forth his hand towards his disciples, and said, Behold, my mother, and my brethren:

50 For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister and mother.

ciples. *Mary*, his mother, and † and some of his nearest kinsmen, came to the house where he was preaching; and, not being able to get in because of the crowd, they desired he might be told that they wanted to speak with him.

47 According to their request, one of the company immediately acquainted him that his mother, and some of his near kindred, who were called his brethren, waited abroad to speak with him.

48 But he replied, saying to the person that informed him of it, What authority have any earthly relations to call me off from my Father's business? and whom do ye suppose that I account to be my dearest kindred, even as my mother, and my brethren?

49 And while he spake these words, he, pointing with his hand toward his disciples, said, Behold the dear objects of my affection! these are they whom I have taken into peculiar relation to myself, and whom I love with all the tenderness and fervour that are due to the nearest of kin; and no respect to relatives after the flesh can ever divert me from pursuing their salvation. (See the note on *Mark* iii. 34.)

50 For whosoever shall heartily comply with the will of my heavenly Father, in their believing obediential regards to me; these are the persons whom I prefer to all earthly relations; and whom I will own and embrace with all the kindness and love that a brother, a sister, or a mother, can expect or desire.

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

Behold the horrible corruption of human nature, how prone it is to be captious and cavilling at trifles; and at the same time, how full of blindness, prejudice, and malignity, against Christ and the gospel! Who could have thought that the holy One, and the wisdom of God, who gave the clearest evidence of his excellent character, as divine, and every way greater than that of *Solomon* or any of the prophets, should ever have been traduced as a confederate with the devil; or that it should ever enter into the heart of man to blaspheme the blessed Spirit in his highest manifestations of glory, and stigmatize him as an evil spirit? If we shut our eyes, and harden our hearts, against the rich means of grace which Christ has given us,

N O T E.

† It does not fully appear that *Mary* ever had any other child besides *Jesus*: And therefore these, who are called his brethren, may have been either the children of *Joseph* by a former wife; or else the cousin-germans of our Lord, such as the children of *Mary*, the wife of *Cleophas*, sister to the mother of *Jesus*; and such relations, according to the language of the *Jews*, were called brethren. But

Mr. Whiston has said a good deal to shew that our Lord's mother herself really had several other children after his birth: See his *essay upon the brethren and sisters of Christ*. But whoever these were, they probably designed to get *Jesus* away, either lest he should over-spend himself, or lest he should offend the *Pharisees*, and expose himself to danger.

us, in vain do we call for further evidence, and better means to convince us: No signs from heaven would prevail upon us; and the very heathens mult reproach us, and rise up in judgment against us. O the danger and the aggravations of sinning against light and grace! The more convictions are filled, the greater is the hardness that ensues, till at length Satan obtains a secure dominion over the sinner, and the worst of all condemnation will pass upon him in the great day. How should the thoughts of a judgment to come make us dread every word as well as deed that would go against us then! But the heart must be changed before the life can be holy; and the worst of sins shall be forgiven by gospel-grace, except that against the Holy Ghost, which they are least in danger of committing who are most in fear about it. How great is the authority, as well as grace, of our Saviour! He, as Lord of the Sabbath, directs our observation of it; and if his service and honour command our hearts and behaviour on his holy day, we shall be kept from profaning it; and he will countenance and bless us. What he did on earth, in a way of mercy for the bodies of many, was a lively emblem of what he lives in heaven to do, by his word and spirit, for our souls. At his powerful command, Satan is dethroned from our hearts, we are enlightened with the knowledge of salvation, hear Christ's voice and live, stretch out the hand of faith, and yield obedience to his word; and he will deal tenderly with the weakest believers, and vindicate them from the reproaches of their enemies; he will maintain and increase the least beginnings of his good work in their hearts, till all shall be perfected in victory and triumph; and he will own and honour them, as his nearest kindred and dearest friends. How should Christians therefore love and honour him, and unite together, in heart, affection, and endeavour, for the support of his kingdom and interest, as Satan and his instruments unite against them, for the support of theirs!

C H A P. XIII.

The parable of the sower, with its explanation; and the reason of Christ's speaking in parables, 1,—23. The parable of the tares, of a grain of mustard-seed, and of leaven. 24,—33. The parable of the tares explained, with a further reason of Christ's using parables, 34,—43. The parable of hidden treasure, of a pearl, and of a fishing net, 44,—50. The application of all to the disciples in the parable of a good householder, 51, 52.: And the treatment Christ met with in his own country, 53,—58.

TEXT.

THE same day
went Jesus
out of the house,
and sat by the sea-
side.

2 And great multitudes were gathered together unto him, so that he went into a ship, and sat, and the whole multitude stood on the shore.

PARAPHRASE.

ON the after-part of the day in which Jesus delivered the foregoing discourse, he, for the convenience of more room, went out of the house where he was, to the shore of the sea of Galilee; and there, according to the custom of the Jewish teachers, sat down to preach another sermon.

2 And great crowds of people thronging about him, he went into a boat, that they might not press upon him, and that he might be the better seen and heard: Then sitting down again, he addressed himself to all the company, as they stood before him on the shore.

3 And he spake many things unto them in parables, saying, Behold, a sower went forth to sow.

4 And when he sowed, some seeds fell by the way-side, and the fowls came and devoured them up.

5 Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth:

6 And when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had not root, they withered away.

7 And some fell among thorns: and the thorns sprung up, and choked them.

3 And the way he took to instruct them was by plain + similitudes, taken from the most common affairs of life, thereby teaching us to spiritualize earthly things: He, therefore, began with a comparison, to represent the preaching of the gospel, and the variety of its effects upon different sorts of persons, saying, Observe the following illustration: "A husbandman went into his field, to sow it with corn:"—I hereby meaning, that he was come, by his own ministry, and the ministry of his servants, to scatter the good seed of his word among the people.

4 "And, as he was sowing his seed, some of the corns fell upon the common beaten path; and, lying uncovered on the surface of the ground, the fowls of the air came and eat it all up:"—Thereby meaning, that when the gospel is preached, there are some trifling, careless hearers, who never seriously regard or think about it; and the devil diverts their minds with other thoughts, to make them entirely forget it.

5, 6 "Another part of the seed was cast upon rocky ground, where, there being but a thin coat of earth, a reflection of heat from the rock just underneath, caused it to spring up very soon; but, (δε) having no depth of ground to strike root into, as soon as the sun shone hot, it thrivelled, and quite withered away:—I hereby meaning, that there are others, who, when they hear the word, attend to, and are pleased with it; and, under a present start of affection, have some good purposes and desires; but this being only a slight touch upon the passions, their hearts are not changed, but remain hearts of stone still; and so when a fiery trial comes upon them, for the sake of Christ and the gospel, they cannot stand it, but all soon comes to nothing, for want of a rooted principle within.

7 "And there was another part of the seed, which fell on a spot of earth, that was full of briars and thorns, which grew up faster than the corn, and smothered and killed it:"—Thereby meaning, that

NOTE.

† A parable is a continued comparison of things, for the illustration of that which is designed to be represented; and teaching by parables was an usual, pleasant, and profitable way of instruction among the eastern nations, to excite the attention and inquiries of the hearers, and in the most familiar manner to instil the sentiments of the speaker, and fix them in the minds of those who were desirous to learn by them. And, as I thought that it might enliven the reading, to add

an interpretation of the parables as we go along, even though they were afterwards explained by our Lord himself; I have sometimes, as here, drawn out the meaning of their several parts, where we first meet with them, in such a paraphrastic form, as intimates that Christ did not then explain them; and have endeavoured to vary the turn of expression, and throw farther light upon them, when we come to his own account of what he intended by them.

that there are others, who hear the word with attention, and seem to make some proficiency in their profession: but their hearts are so thick set with the cares of this world, and with their vain expectations and desires of happiness from it, that their convictions and promising appearances are stilled, before they come to an effectual saving change in their hearts and lives.

8 But others fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundred fold, some sixty fold, some thirty fold.

8 "But another part of the seed was sown in a good soil, which brought forth corn to maturity, in various degrees, from thirty to an hundred-fold increase:"—I hereby meaning, that there are other hearers, whose hearts are formed, by the grace of God, for a due reception and entertainment of the word; who have a spiritual understanding of its truth and excellence, and of their own concern in it; and are so deeply impressed by it, as to bring forth fruits of righteousness, more or less, and that to the latest age.

9 Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.

9 Whosoever is capable of hearing, and desirous of being instructed, let him seriously consider the truth and importance of what I say.

10 And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables?

10 As our Lord had delivered this parable without an interpretation, his disciples, being surprised and troubled at it, came to him when he was alone, (*Mark iv. 10.*) and asked him why he taught the people only by similitudes, without explaining them?

11 He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given.

11 He answering, said to them, the reason of it lies in the holy, wise, and sovereign dispensation of God's free mercy, who gives or with-holds a clear and saving discovery of the great things of the gospel, relating to the kingdom of grace and glory, when and where, to what degree and in what manner, seems best in his sight: Ye are the people of his choice; he, in his good pleasure, has opened your eyes, and designs to open them yet more and more; but it has not pleased him to bestow the like favour upon the multitude, nor have they any claim to it.

12 For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away, even that he hath.

12 For they who, under divine influence, have a true spiritual knowledge of the great things of my kingdom, and who, like the good-ground hearers, honestly receive the word of God, and bring forth excellent fruit, shall have still a greater abundance of means for their further improvement, that his distinguishing love may operate to their growth in light and grace, till they obtain complete salvation: But they who, like the other sorts of hearers, either will not consider, or do not care to know or to profit by the word; even the means they

already enjoy shall be justly taken from them, instead of their having still better added, to be lost upon them.

13 Therefore speak I to them in parables; because, they seeing, see not, and hearing, they hear not, neither do they understand.

13 The reason, therefore, of my speaking to them in parables, without an explication, is, that they, by the righteous judgment of God, may be left to their own wilful obstinacy and blindness; because, seeing the most unquestionable miracles, they will not be convinced by them; and hearing the most excellent and intelligible doctrines of my kingdom, they will not regard them, nor admit the evidence that shines in them; but obstinately shut their eyes against the clearest light of my plainer preaching to them.

14 And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of *Isaias*, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing, ye shall see, and shall not perceive.

14 And so the prophecy of *Isaias* is fulfilled again in this people, (*Is.* vi. 9, 10.) where he speaks to the following purpose: They shall hear and see the great and glorious things of divine revelation, and shall be given up, for their wilful obstinacy, to such a judicial blindness of mind, and hardness of heart, that they shall not have a true spiritual discerning of them, nor feel their effectual impression.

15 For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.

15 For this people being righteously left, in the awful judgment of God, to themselves, their hearts are become sensual and stupid, like *Jeshurun's*, who waxed fat, and kicked against the Lord; (*Deut.* xxxii. 15.) and their ears are resolutely shut against the sound of the gospel, like *the deaf adder*, which stops her ears, and will not hearken to the voice of the charmer, charming never so wisely. (*Psal.* lviii. 4, 5.) They behave with such enmity and opposition, as if they were afraid, lest, one time or other, light and power should force themselves through their eyes and ears, and they should be convinced of the wickedness of their hearts, and the error of their ways, and their disobedient souls should be turned to the wisdom of the just; and lest I should work a thorough change upon them: It is therefore fit that they should be let alone, to perish in their chosen ignorance and insensibility.

16 But blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear.

16 But as for you, my disciples, God has kinder designs of grace toward you, and has begun to discover them already: Ye are happy, and shall be blessed indeed: God has given you the seeing eye, and the hearing ear; he has turned you from darkness unto light, and made you obedient to the voice of his word; and has inclined your hearts to desire still more and more to know and do his will.

17 And

17 For verily I say unto you, that many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them.

18 Hear ye therefore the parable of the sower.

19 When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart: this is he which received seed by the way-side.

20 But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it:

21 Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended.

22 He also that received seed among the thorns, is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful.

17 And the blessedness, which ye are hereby partakers of, transcends all that ever was enjoyed by any before you: For I solemnly assure you, that the ancient patriarchs, and many of the prophets and Old Testament saints, earnestly longed to see and hear the glorious things concerning me and my kingdom, which now are displayed before your minds, and salute your eyes and ears: But this high favour was not granted to them; they had only a glimmering dawn in types and shadows, or distant views in the promises, of the great blessedness and glory which I am now clearly revealing to you.

18 To you, therefore, I will fully explain the parable of the sower, which, as ye will see, represents the preachers of the gospel going forth, to spread abroad its doctrines, like precious seed, with very different success, upon several sorts of persons.

19 The way-side, on which the seed was cast, signifies such careless stupid hearers of the gospel, as neither relish nor understand its truth, nor make any serious reflections upon it; and Satan, that wicked adversary, proves too hard for them by his temptations, which carry their minds off from the word, and leave them as unconcerned about it, and as effectually hinder their profiting by it, as if they had never heard it.

20, 21 The stony ground, on which the seed was sown, signify such hearers as attend to the word, and have some sudden flashes of joy in their affections, and some hasty resolutions for God and religion, while they are hearing it; but it not being entertained by faith and love, and settled as a governing principle in their hearts, it soon comes to nothing; and in a time of temptation, and persecution for the gospel's sake, they are discouraged, and turn apostates; and thereby prove, that, notwithstanding all their fits of zeal and fervour, their hearts were never thoroughly penetrated and changed by what they heard.

22 The soil full of thorns, on which the seed fell, signifies those hearers, that so far embrace the word, as to make a promising profession of the doctrine of Christianity, and to have some good appearances of reformation by it; but, through their anxious care about the things of this world, and their eager pursuit after its riches and pleasures, (*Luke viii. 14.*) their sensual hearts entangle, deceive, and overset them, and all is stilled before it ever comes to maturity.

23 But he that received seed into the good ground, is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth some an hundred fold, some sixty, some thirty.

24 Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field:

25 But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way.

26 But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also.

27 So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares?

23 And (δὲ) the good ground, that was sown with the seed, signifies such hearers, as receive the word of God into new and understanding hearts; where, under the influence of divine grace, it takes deep root, is cherished and improved, and produces abundant, genuine fruits of righteousness, to the praise and glory of God, though in some twice or thrice as much more as in others †, even to the greatest plenty that human nature, in its present imperfect state, is capable of.

24, 25 But this was not the only parable which Jesus spake to the people: He furthermore delivered another, saying, "The state of the gospel-church, or of the Messiah's kingdom in this world, is like what befel an husbandman, who sowed good seed in his field; but, whilst his servant slept, an enemy came privately in the night, and sowed tares among the wheat, and then withdrew, that he might not be discovered"—Our Lord thereby intimating, that he himself, first by his own ministry, and afterwards by the ministry of his servants, sent his gospel, and planted his grace in the hearts of many, to form a church for himself in the world; but, whilst his servants and people were off from their watch and guard, the devil, that great enemy to him and souls, secretly raised up false teachers, and hypocritical professors among them, who lay concealed for a while, insinuating themselves by specious errors, and outward appearances of piety.

26 "But as, when the good seed grew up, and bore fruit, then the tares likewise began to discover themselves:"—So after some time, when, in a day of persecution and trial, sound Christians shall appear to have the grace of God in truth, by their faith and patience, their brave and open profession of his name, and their holy lives; then false pretenders will discover themselves, by a contrary temper and behaviour.

27 "The husbandman's servants, seeing the tares appear with the wheat, seemed surprised, as well as troubled at it; and asked their master, how this came to pass, since he sowed only good seed in his field?"—So Christ's faithful servants and people are grieved, and even amazed, to see that his excellent and holy gospel should be perverted and abused by any of its preachers and professors, to the introducing of dangerous errors and immoralities into

NOTE.

† An hundred-fold seems to signify the largest increase that can be; and it is mentioned as an extraordinary instance of God's blessing *Isaac*, that he sowed, and received in the same year an hundred-fold, Gen. xxvi. 12.

to the church and the world; and they are much at a loss to account for it.

28 He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up?

28 "The master told his servants, it was an enemy that had sown tares among his wheat; upon which they asked him, whether they should go immediately and weed them out?"—So Christ knows all the mischievous devices and works of Satan and his instruments; and when his servants and disciples come to discover the false pretenders to Christianity, they want to know what to do with them; and ask counsel of him, whether they shall not immediately cast them all out of the church?

29 But he said, Nay; lest, while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them.

29, 30 "But the master answered them, Do nothing rashly, lest, while ye are plucking up the tares, ye root up the wheat with them: To avoid this danger, let them both stand till harvest; and then I will order the reapers to take out the tares, and burn them altogether, and to gather the wheat into the barn:"—So, when there is any danger of mistaking true believers for hypocrites, or of stumbling and grieving sincere Christians by an over-rigorous discipline, Christ would have his servants and churches to be very cautious in casting out offenders, lest they should excommunicate saints instead of sinners, or give occasion to some upright souls to leave the communion of the church: And, rather than run any risks of this kind, he directs them not to proceed in a way of censure against persons of barely suspicious characters; but to leave them to his immediate judgment at the end of the world; when he will order his angels to separate the precious from the vile, and will cast all the hypocrites and unbelievers together into the lake that burns for ever and ever, and receive all his true disciples to himself, that where he is, there they may be also.

30 Let both grow together, until the harvest: and in the time of harvest, I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn.

31 Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain

31, 32 He likewise spake another parable to the people, saying, "The gospel-kingdom, in this world, is like a grain of mustard-feed, which a man sowed in his field, and which indeed is one of the least of feeds;

N O T E.

† The reason Christ gives for letting the tares alone, intimates, that he here speaks only of professors of dubious, though of very suspicious characters, who may possibly be real Christians, notwithstanding some appearances to the contrary: For notoriously wicked persons, and scandalous apostates, may undoubtedly be cast out of the visible church, without danger of mistaking true believers for them, or of doing any injury to the true

interest of Christ in the world. And though the world is said to be the field in which the tares were sown, ver. 38; yet as ministers and churches have nothing to do, in a way of extirpation, with them that are without, (1 Cor. v. 12, 13.) it seems necessary to understand it of the visible church as spread through the world, or at least, as having a mixture of hypocrites with true believers, while it is in this world.

grain of mustard-seed, which a man took and sowed in his field :

32 Which indeed is the least of all seeds; but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree: so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof.

33 Another parable spake he unto them: The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.

34 All these things spake Jesus unto the multitude in parables; and without a parable spake he not unto them:

35 That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world.

36 Then Jesus sent the multitude away, and went into the house: and his disciples came unto him, saying, Declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field.

seeds; but, when it grows up to maturity, is one of the biggest plants among all herbs, and becomes, as it were, a tree, large enough for the birds to lodge and build their nests in its boughs†.—Our Lord thereby meant, that his gospel in the world, and his grace in the soul, at their first beginnings, make but a small and obscure appearance; they, like the dawn of the morning, are scarce discernible, and, like the day of small things, are in the account of carnal men very contemptible; but, by degrees, they grow and spread, till they fill the heart in which they are planted, and even fill the earth; so that *Gentiles*, as well as *Jews*, shall find refreshment and rest in them.

33 He also delivered another parable to the same purpose, saying, “The gospel-kingdom is like a little leaven that a woman covered up in three measures*, which made a great quantity of meal; and there it lay and worked, till it diffused itself through the whole mass.”—I hereby meaning, that his gospel and his grace, which at first lie hid in the heart, and in the world, should secretly work with such divine efficacy, as to sanctify all the faculties of the soul, and all the members of the body, and spread themselves by degrees through all nations, to captivate them to the obedience of faith.

34 Our Saviour spake all these things to the people in parables, and in no other way; giving them only the similitudes themselves, without explaining their signification.

35 And he did this, among other reasons, that what was said, with a prophetic spirit, (*Psal.* lxxviii. 2.) might be fulfilled in him, viz. *I will open my mouth in parables, I will utter dark sayings of old*; as that may be understood with a reference to the mysteries of the gospel, which have been hid in the counsels of God from eternity, and under the obscurity of types and shadows from the beginning of the world; and which Christ himself delivered in a mysterious manner to those that would not receive, nor even bear, plainer revelations.

36 Then Jesus dismissed the multitude, and went into an house, where his disciples came to him, and desired that he would particularly explain to them the parable of the tares growing up with the wheat in the field.

37 And

N O T E S.

† The mustard tree in that country was kneaded at once, *Gen.* xviii. 6. and grew to a prodigious size. *Sinfworth* says they made an *ephah*, or

* Three measures seem to be here mentioned as the common quantity that

37 He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man;

38 The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one;

39 The enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels.

40 As therefore the tares are gathered and burnt in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world.

41 The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity;

42 And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

37 And as he used, when he had them alone, to open his mind and heart freely to them, he told them, that by the *husbandman*, who sowed the good corn, was meant *himself*, who preached the pure gospel in his own personal ministry, and by the *ministration* of those whom he sent to raise up a seed to serve him:

38 That by the *field* was meant the *world* of mankind, through which he would spread his church; that by the *good seed* was meant *true believers*, who were begotten by the gospel, and made the subjects of his kingdom of grace; but that by the *tares*, growing up among the wheat, were meant *false teachers and hypocrites*, who, under a profession of religion, crept into the church, but really were the children and instruments of the devil, bearing his image, and doing his work.

39 He further told them, that by the *enemy*, who sowed the tares, was meant the *devil*, who doeth all the mischief he can in the church, and in the world; that by the *harvest* was meant the *day of judgment*, which shall be at the end of time; that by the *reapers* were meant the holy *angels*, who *excel in strength, and do his commandments, hearkening to the voice of his word.* (Psal. ciii. 20.)

40 And that as the tares, in the parable, were in the time of harvest picked out from the wheat, and cast into the fire and burnt; so it shall be at the day of judgment in the separation that will be made between the righteous and the wicked; when, the former being taken up to heaven, the latter shall be cast into hell, to suffer the vengeance of eternal fire.

41 Then, said he, the Messiah shall sit upon the throne of his glory, and send forth his angels to bring all nations before him; and they shall separate, from among the subjects of his visible church or kingdom, all the false teachers and hypocrites, unbelievers, and workers of iniquity, who were an occasion of stumbling, or were some way injurious to his true members, and lay concealed, or not clearly distinguished in, and not separated from, his visible church before.

42 And those holy angels, as the executioners of his justice, and as ministers to do his will, shall cast them all together, like bundles of weeds fit for nothing but destruction, into the fire of hell, heated by the dreadful wrath of God; where they shall be everlastingly tormented with the utmost horror, anguish, and bitter reflections on their folly and wickedness, loss and misery:

43 Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun, in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.

44 Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field: the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof, goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field.

45 Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchantman, seeking goodly pearls:

46 Who when he had found one pearl of great price, he went and sold all that he had, and bought it.

47 Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind;

48 Which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away.

49 So

43 And then the children of God, and heirs of glory, shall shine in robes of perfect righteousness; and shall break forth out of obscurity, like the sun from behind a dark cloud, into illustrious light, in all the honours and felicities of their Father's immediate presence and kingdom. Whosoever is capable of hearing, and desirous to know these important things, let him seriously consider them with a reference to his own concern in them.

44 Our Lord, moreover, added several other parables, saying, "The gospel-kingdom, for the excellence of its blessings, is like a rich mine that lies under ground in a field; and when a man has found it, he conceals the discovery in his own mind, and, in the abundance of his joy, goes and sells all that he has to buy the field which contains this treasure."—Christ hereby intimating, that he himself is our richest treasure, as all the stores of wisdom and knowledge, and all fulness of righteousness and grace, with all the riches of salvation, are in him; and that he lies hid from the carnal unbelieving world in the gospel, which, like a field, is open to all; but when a sinner, under the guidance of God's Spirit, has searched and found him there, he hides him in his own heart, rejoices to think what a precious treasure he has found, and is ready to part with all things in the world, that he may obtain an interest in it, and enjoy the benefit of the word.

45, 46 To the like purpose he said, "The blessings of the gospel-kingdom are like a pearl of exceeding great value, which being found by a merchant who was inquiring after rich commodities of that kind, he went and sold all that he was worth, to buy it."—So Christ, together with his blessings in the gospel, is a pearl of inestimable price, which being once discovered by one who is in earnest seeking after his truest happiness, he is willing to part with all the riches and enjoyments of this world, rather than not obtain a property in him.

47, 48, 49, 50 Once more he added, The gospel of the kingdom is like a net cast into the sea, which gathered all sorts of fish, and was filled with good and bad together: And when the fishermen drew it ashore, they sat down to separate them; and preserved the good, but threw away the bad: So the gospel is preached promiscuously to all by the ministers of Christ, whom he has made fishers of men; They let down the evangelical net at his command, who brings many souls under it; and by means thereof a visible church is gathered, consisting of true believers and hypocrites: But at the

end

49 So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth and sever the wicked from among the just.

50 And shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

51 Jesus saith unto them, Have ye understood all these things? They say unto him, Yea, Lord.

52 Then said he unto them, Therefore every scribe which is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven, is like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old.

53 And it came to pass, that when Jesus had finished these parables, he departed thence.

54 And when he was come into his own country, he taught them in their synagogue, insomuch that they were astonished, and said, Whence hath this man this wisdom, and these mighty works?

55 Is not this the carpenter's son? is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren James, and Joses,

and

end of the world, when the gospel-ministry shall have fully accomplished its design, the holy angels shall be sent to separate the hypocrites from the righteous: And then, as they who have the grace of God in truth shall, by the ministry of angels, be safely lodged in heaven; so nominal professors shall be cast into hell; where will be terrible agony and wo, despair and rage; and where they will have a long eternity to lament their sin and folly, in taking up with an external *form of godliness*, and at the same time *denying the power thereof*. (2 Tim. iii. 5.)

51 When Jesus had spoken all these parables, he, to try his disciples, and shew his great readiness to instruct them, asked, whether they understood the meaning of them all? And they answered, like persons sensible of their obligations to his favour, Lord, we do.

52 Then, as a practical improvement of the whole, he said in another parable to them, See therefore that ye faithfully communicate what ye know to others, as becomes gospel-ministers, who succeed the *scribes* in their office: For every preacher in my kingdom, who is himself well instructed in the great truths of religion, may be likened to a good house-keeper, who lays up new and old stores to spend them upon the family as there may be occasion; so should he be laying up treasures of divine truth in his mind and heart, that out of the Old and New Testament, and out of new and old instructions, observations, and experiences, he may bring forth doctrines suited to all persons and cases, as may be most seasonable and advantageous.

53 And when Jesus had gone through all these parables, he left those parts.

54 And returning to *Nazareth*, his own country, where he had been brought up, and rejected before, he preached to the people on the Sabbath-day (*Mark* vi. 2.) in their synagogue, with such wisdom and authority, that they, who knew his family and education, were amazed to think that he should talk and act at such a superior rate, and said, how is it possible, that so mean and contemptible a man should be master of all this knowledge, and should be able to do such great things to confirm what he says?

55, 56 Is not *Joseph*, the poor carpenter, his Father? and is not the his mother, whom, without any manner of ceremony, we commonly call *Mary*? Are they not people of ordinary, low rank, and of no account amongst us? And as for all the rest of his nearest kindred, *James* and *Joses*, *Simon* and *Judas*, and his female relations, (see the note on chap.

and Simon, and Judas?

56 And his sisters, are they not all with us? whence then hath this man all these things?

57 And they were offended in him. But Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honour, save in his own country, and in his own house.

58 And he did not many mighty works there, because of their unbelief.

xii. 46.) do not we know them all? are they not a parcel of mean and ignorant creatures, of no figure or learning? How then comes this man to pretend to such high things as these?

57 And they, on these accounts, stumbled at him, contemned him in their hearts, and slighted his gospel. But Jesus despised the shame; and, gently reproving them for their unreasonable prejudices against him, said, A prophet is usually received with more honour and advantage among strangers, who justly form their judgment of him by the excellence of his doctrine and works, than among his own countrymen, acquaintance, and near kindred, who unrighteously judge of him according to his former mean appearances, and envy a y new honours that are put upon him, how much soever he may be worthy of them.

58 And therefore Jesus worked but few miracles among this people, not from any defect of power in himself, but because of their provoking unbelief, whereby they obstinately rejected his doctrine and the wonders he had wrought, which were abundantly sufficient to confirm it.

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

Of how much greater value is the gospel, than all the gold of *Ophir*! It is full of the richest mines of knowledge and grace; Christ and salvation are its precious treasure; and things new and old may be drawn from thence for a supply of every want: It lies open to all, but with various success; to some it is a favour of life unto life, and to others of death unto death: It is of little importance whether it be preached in places set apart for religious worship, or in a common house or ship, or on the sea shore; the great concern is, how it is heard and received: And, alas! how many are there, who despite and reject it! how many who neither understand, nor consider it! and how many who soon lose the good they seemed to have got by it! Ah hard and treacherous hearts, and wretched unbelief! and ah mischievous temptations of Satan, and of this evil world, that hide its glory from us, that prevent or stifle its good impressions upon us, that shut us out from its blessings, and that endanger our being deprived of the gospel itself, or our being sealed up under judicial hardness to everlasting destruction! But, blessed be God, there are some, to whom it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom: The gospel shall make its way through all opposition, and leaven many souls into its own likeness; and when once the seed of grace is planted in the heart, though it be ever so small in its first beginnings, it shall maintain its ground, and flourish into perfection. While saints and sinners sit under the ministry of the word, and true believers and hypocrites mingle together in the visible church, under a profession of Christ's name, it is hard in many instances for us to distinguish them: But they are all known to God, and shall be made known in the day of judgment; then there shall be an entire separation between them: And O happy they who shall be bound up in the bundle of life! The bundles of tares shall be cast into devouring flames.

C H A P. XIV.

Herod's opinion of Christ, and an account of John the Baptist's imprisonment and death, 1,—12. Christ's feeding five thousand with five loaves and two fishes, 13,—21. His walking on the sea, 22,—33. And healing many sick, 34,—36.

TEXT.

AT that time Herod the tetrarch heard of the fame of Jesus,

2 And said unto his servants, This is John the Baptist: he is risen from the dead, and therefore mighty works do they forth themselves in him.

3 For Herod had laid hold on John, and bound him, and put him in prison for Herodias' sake, his brother Philip's wife.

4 For John said unto him, It is not lawful for thee to have her.

5 And when he would have put him to death, he feared the multitude, because they counted him as a prophet.

6 But when Herod's birth day was kept

PARAPHRASE.

BY this time, Christ's disciples having gone forth to preach the gospel, and work miracles in his name, (*Luke ix. 6, 7.*) his fame was so much spread abroad, that it reached the court, and came to the ears of *Herod*, who was governor of *Gaullee*, under the Roman emperor, and was the son of *Herod the Great* that slew the infants at *Bethlehem*.

2 And when he heard of Jesus, and the divers opinions people had of him, his guilty conscience smote him for having killed *John the Baptist*; Therefore, in the terror of his mind, he said to his courtiers, I cannot help thinking but that this is *John* whom I beheaded: He is surely risen from the dead, and endued with more extraordinary power than he had before; and therefore these wonderful miracles are now wrought by him to justify his character; and I wish he be not come to revenge himself on me.

3, 4 For this *Herod* had taken *John* up, and ordered him to be bound, and committed to prison, to gratify his own resentments, and to please *Herodias* his brother *Philip's* wife, because he had married her, and *John* freely told him, that it was utterly unlawful to do, her husband *Philip* himself being then alive, and having had children by her. (*See Whitby.*)

5 *Herod* was hereby so highly provoked at *John*, that he had a great mind to put him to death; but was afraid to venture upon it, partly from the checks of his own conscience, and the veneration he had for him; and partly from an apprehension that it might raise a mutiny among the people, who universally esteemed and honoured him as a holy and inspired prophet.

6 But † about an year and half after *John's* imprisonment, when *Herod* was celebrating his birthday

NOTES.

* A Tetrarch, strictly speaking, was either a governor of the fourth part of a kingdom; or one that held the fourth rank of dignity in the Roman empire. See the note on *Luke iii. 1.*

† It is computed, says Mr. Henry on the place, that he lay a year and a half a close prisoner, which was about as much time as he had spent in his public ministry, from his first entrance into it.

kept, the daughter of Herodias danced before them, and pleased Herod.

7 Whereupon he promised with an oath, to give her whatsoever she would ask :

8 And she, being before instructed of her mother, said, Give me here John Baptist's head in a charger.

9 And the king was sorry : nevertheless, for the oath's sake, and them which sat with him at meat, he commanded it to be given her.

10 And he sent, and beheaded John in the prison.

11 And his head was brought in a charger and given to the damsel : and she brought it to her mother.

12 And his disciples came, and took up the body, and buried it, and went and told Jesus.

13 When Jesus heard of it, he departed thence by ship into a desert place, apart : and when the people had heard thereof, they followed him on foot out of the cities.

day with feasting and jollity among his friends, there was a ball in honour of the day ; and the daughter of Herodias danced so finely before the company, that Herod was vastly delighted with her.

7 Upon which he engaged himself, by a rash oath, to grant her any request she should make, though it should cost him half his kingdom. (*Mark vi. 23.*)

8 Immediately she consulted her mother, what to ask in such a favourable juncture ; and her mother having this opportunity to get rid of her fears from John's reproofs, and to glut her cruel revenge, ordered her to beg that the head of John the Baptist might be presented to her in a dish ; accordingly she went back with this request.

9 And as soon as she mentioned it to the king, he was surprised and troubled at it ; and yet, as if conscience were more concerned in keeping his wicked oath than in breaking it, he, even on the festival of his birth-day, ordered the monstrously shocking sacrifice to be made to his own and Herodias' vengeance, under pretence that he could not in honour refuse it, because he had solemnly sworn to the young damsel, in the presence of the whole company, that he would grant whatsoever she should ask.

10. Accordingly he sent to the prison ; and, without any forms of law, tyrannically caused John to be privately beheaded there.

11 And the head of that holy good man, which was worth more than the heads of Herod and all his court, was brought in a dish, and presented to the young lady ; and she carried it to her mother, that they, putting off all the tenderness of their sex, and all the honour of their exalted station, might barbarously triumph over it.

12 And when John's disciples heard what was done, they, to testify their affection and respect, went, and taking away the body, decently buried it ; and then repaired to Jesus, to give him an account of the tragical story.

13 And as soon as Jesus heard, not only how Herod had murdered John, but likewise the opinion he had of his being risen again from the dead, (*ver. 2.*) he, to avoid the rage and jealousy of this cruel tyrant, and to gain a little respite for himself and his disciples, went aboard a vessel, and passed privately with them over the sea of Galilee to the desert of Bethsaida †, (*Luke ix. 10.*) which lay in the province

NOTE.

† The desert of Bethsaida was in Trachonitis, of which Philip was Tetrarch. *Luke iii. 1.*

vince of *Philip*, who was a milder prince: But as he could not easily be concealed, the people, having learnt whether he was going, flocked after him with all speed from several cities a-foot, taking a compass by land, and got thither even before him. (*Mark vi. 33.*)

14 And Jesus went forth, and saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion toward them, and he healed their sick.

14 And Jesus, at his landing, saw a vast multitude gathered together; and finding several sick and weak persons among them, whose faith brought them thither for a cure, he, in the greatness of his compassion, healed them, as well as preached to the people. (*Mark vi. 34.*)

15 And when it was evening, his disciples came to him, saying, This is a desert place, and the time is now past; send the multitude away, that they may go into the villages, and buy themselves victuals.

15 And toward evening, his disciples came and desired him to dismiss the company, that they might go to the nearest towns or villages they could come at, and provide necessary refreshments for themselves; because the day was far spent, and they were in a solitary part of the country, which afforded no provisions to supply their wants, and prevent their fainting, or suffering in their health, for lack of proper sustenance in due season.

16 But Jesus said unto them, They need not depart; give ye them to eat.

16 But Jesus, resolving in himself what to do, said to them, for the trial of their faith, and making his intended miracle the more conspicuous, There is no necessity that they should either be distressed with hunger, or go to buy provisions for themselves; let them partake of your food.

17 And they say unto him, We have here but five loaves, and two fishes.

17 Upon which they answered, All that we have is only five barley loaves, and two small fishes; a little ordinary fare, just enough for ourselves: What will these do toward feeding so great a company? (*John vi. 9.*)

18 He said, Bring them hither to me.

18 But Jesus, for the further trial of their faith, and manifestation of his own power and goodness, said to them, How little soever your provisions are, bring them to me, that I may dispose of them as I see fit.

19 And he commanded the multitude to sit down on the grass, and took the five loaves, and

19 And then, ordering the people to sit down in several ranks upon the grass, he, in a religious manner, looked up to heaven, and craved a blessing upon the food, giving thanks † to his father for it, and sancti-

N O T E.

† Christ's blessing the food, is called his giving thanks in a like case, (chap. xv. 36. *Mark viii. 6.*) and in this very case. (*John vi. 11.*) And this, as appears to me, related to his asking a blessing, as was usual, upon set meals, and not to his praying for a miraculous multiplication of the food: For I do not find that our Lord ever wrought his miracles by an application to his Father for assistance;

but he commonly managed them in a sovereign, independant way, like the God of nature, who had a power inherent in himself to perform them, whenever he pleased: And as the widow's oil increased in the pouring it out, (*2 Kings iv. 4. &c.*) so it is probable that Christ, by his creating power, multiplied this food in breaking it. See the note on *Mark viii. 7.*

and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, he blessed, and brake, and gave the loaves to his disciples, and the disciples to the multitude.

20 And they did all eat, and were filled: and they took up of the fragments that remained, twelve baskets full.

21 And they that had eaten were about five thousand men, besides women and children.

22 And straightway Jesus constrained his disciples to get into a ship, and to go before him unto the other side, while he sent the multitudes away.

23 And when he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into a mountain apart to pray: and when the evening was come, he was there alone.

24 But the ship was now in the midst of the sea, toiled with waves: for the wind was contrary.

25 And in the fourth watch of the night, Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea.

sanctifying it for present use, by the word and prayer, therein setting us an example: And when he came to break the bread and the fishes, they, by an act of his divine power and will, increased under his hand, who gave them to his disciples, and they distributed them to the multitude.

20, 21 And so wonderful was the increase of this small quantity of provisions, that though the number that eat of it was five thousand men, besides women and children, there was enough to give them all a full meal, with a remainder of as many fragments as filled † twelve baskets, one for each apostle, and so they were no losers, nor were they above eating the broken meat that was left:

22 The people were so affected with this miracle, that they immediately thought of setting up Christ for a king, (*John vi. 15.*) who could so easily sustain an army without any charge; and the disciples notions about temporal dominion, were strong enough to dispose them to join in the design: But to prevent such an attempt, he obliged them, against their own will, to get into a boat by themselves, and row over the sea of *Galilee*, (*Mark vi. 48.*) whilst he staid behind them to dismiss the rest of the company, who would then be the more easily prevailed upon to go home.

23 And, when he had got rid of the multitude, he retired into a mountain to pray to his Father in secret; and there continued alone, pouring out his soul to him, and keeping up holy communion with him, till it was night; the second evening, which began at the sun setting, (*Exod. xii. 6.* and *Deut. xvi. 6.*) being then come on.

24 By this time the disciples had reached to about the middle of the sea; but a terrible storm arising, and the wind being against them, their boat was toiled about by the boisterous waves, and they were in great jeopardy of their lives, and could not get forward.

25 But (25) when, after long toiling, they were in the greatest extremity and danger, Jesus, like the God, whose peculiar property it is to tread upon the waves of the sea, (*Job ix. 8.*) went to them † toward the morning, and walked upon the tumultuous waters, as if he had been on dry land.

26 When

N O T E S.

† Some think that each apostle carried a basket with him, as the Jews were wont to do when they travelled.

† The Jews ordinarily divided their night only into three watches; and ac-

counted the fourth, from about three o'clock, to belong to the morning rather than to the night, (*Mark xiii. 35.*) *Vid. Lightf. Hor. Hebr.*

26 And when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, It is a spirit; and they cried out for fear.

27 But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer, it is I, be not afraid.

28 And Peter answered him, and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water.

29 And he said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water to go to Jesus.

30 But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid: and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me.

31 And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?

32 And when they were come into the ship, the wind ceased.

33 Then they that were in the ship, came and wor-

26 When the disciples saw him walking upon the surface of the lake, and, for want of more light, could not easily distinguish him, they were in great consternation, supposing it to be an apparition of some evil spirit; and, in their fright, cried out like persons in distress, and expectation of some mischief to befall them.

27 But Jesus, who came for their relief, immediately undeceived and comforted them, saying, with his usual voice, which they were well acquainted with, It is I; take courage, and do not be dismayed, either at this my appearance to you, or at the danger of the storm, from which I am come to save you.

28 Hereupon, they beginning to recover from their surprise and terror, *Peter*, who was always the most forward among the disciples to shew his zeal and courage, said, Lord, if it be thou indeed, command and enable me to come to thee walking upon the water, in the same manner as thou dost.

29 And Jesus, that he might try his faith, convince him of its weakness, and at length confirm it, said to him, Come then, as you have desired: And as soon as *Peter* went down from the boat, the power of Christ so far upheld him, that he really did walk upon the water toward his Lord.

30 But, notwithstanding this experience of extraordinary support, when he felt the force of the wind, and the swellings of the sea, his unbelieving fears damped his spirits, and made him begin to sink; upon which he cried out, with great earnestness, Lord, help me, or else I must inevitably perish.

31 And Christ being as ready to assist him as he was to ask it, immediately reached out his hand, and took hold of him, to encourage and secure him; but at the same time reprov'd him for his unbelief, saying, After you knew that it was I, and had experienced my power in carrying you so far through your danger, why, O man of weak and wavering faith, should you nevertheless doubt of my further care to preserve you, amidst the most threatening circumstances that could attend you?

32 Then they went together into the boat; and, at that very instant, the stormy winds and waves were turned into a perfect calm.

33 And, at this miraculous alteration in a moment, all that were in the vessel fell down at Christ's feet; and, adoring his divine power and compassion, said, Thou art indeed the Son of God, who dost

what

worshipped him, saying. Of a truth thou art the Son of God.

34 And when they were gone over, they came into the land of Gennesaret.

35 And when the men of that place had knowledge of him, they sent out into all that country round about and brought unto him all that were diseased ;

36 And besought him, that they might only touch the hem of his garment : and as many as touched were made perfectly whole.

what none but the sovereign Lord of the universe is able to do.

34 Now, when Christ was with them, they soon reached the port they were bound for, and came towards *Capernaum*, into the country of *Gennesareth*, (John vi. 17. and Mark vi. 53.) where he had been, and wrought miracles before. (chap. viii.)

35 And the people thereabouts, knowing what great things Jesus had done, and that he was returned amongst them, sent the good tidings to all the inhabitants of the towns and villages in that neighbourhood, desiring them to bring their sick to him, that he might heal them, whatsoever their distempers were.

36 And, when they came, they had such a reverence of him, such faith in him, and such a sense of their own unworthiness of his taking any particular notice of them, that they humbly and earnestly entreated they might only be allowed to touch the hem of his garment, which they believed would prove effectual to heal them ; and as many as touched it with this faith, were immediately and perfectly recovered of all their diseases.

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

Sin is as much to be condemned and reprov'd in the greatest, as in the meanest men upon earth : But how malignant and impetuous is its rage ! it is impatient of reproof, bursts through all bounds of humanity and honour, of justice, gratitude and goodness, of reason and conscience ; it proceeds from one step to another, till it knows no restraints, but will venture upon rash and unlawful oaths, and pretend to be oblig'd, by such a bond of iniquity, to commit the most outrageous abominations. And, O who can tell to what lengths the sinner's lusts will carry him, in the unguarded hours of mirth and jollity ! what monstrous wickedness will not man commit, if God do not withhold him ! But O how stinging is the remorse, when conscience, like *Herod's*, is awakened !—How happy is it to follow the Lamb wheresoever he goes, to commit ourselves by faith to his care and keeping, to wait for his salvation, and to imitate his goodness, whose power and compassions are infinite, who acts the God, feeds the hungry, heals the sick, and saves in times of the utmost extremity ! He is able and ready to do all this for needy, diseas'd, and perishing souls, as well as bodies ; and therefore is a proper object of our adoration and faith : And the more he is trusted, the better his honour, and our own safety and comfort are consult'd. In all our fears, troubles, and dangers let us fly to him for help : How great soever our trials may be, the least faith shall be succour'd under them ; and great faith shall entirely overcome them. *Lord, increase our faith.*

C H A P.

C H A P. XV.

Christ reproves the Pharisees for their traditions, 1,—9. States the true notion of defilement, 10,—20. Heals the woman of Canaan's daughter, 21,—28. Heals multitudes of their diseases, 29,—31. And feeds four thousand with seven loaves and a few small fishes, 32,—39.

TEXT.

THEN came to Jesus scribes and Pharisees, which were of Jerusalem, saying,

2 Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? for they wash not their hands when they eat bread.

3 But he answered and said unto them, Why do you also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition?

4 For God commanded, saying, Honour thy father and mother: and, He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death.

5 But ye say Whosoever shall say

PARAPHRASE.

SOON after the things before-mentioned, certain Jewish doctors and Pharisees, members of the sanhedrim at Jerusalem, by whose authority matters of religion used to be determined, came from thence to Jesus; and, not being able to fix a charge of his having broke any commands of God, they would pick a quarrel with him for breaking the canons which they themselves had established, saying,

2 Why do you, who pretend to so much religion, suffer your disciples to transgress the laws and traditions of our ancestors, and of the chief governors of the church? For they have ordained, that men should always wash their hands before meat, to prevent defilement, by touching their food; and yet your disciples pay no manner of regard to this injunction.

3 But he answering, said to them, Let me ask you another question, which is much more difficult for you to answer; and that is, Why do ye, in your high zeal for human traditions, transgress the commands of God himself? Which is best, to have a strict regard, as my disciples have, to the divine law, and neglect your superstitious injunctions; or, like you, to be exact observers of these, and make no conscience of that, even in things of natural obligation?

4 For God himself has given a moral command, (*Exod. xx. 12.*) that children should honour and obey their parents; should shew them all testimonies of filial affection and respect; and, in case they need it, should provide for them, in return for all their former care and cost, and for the capacities they received from them of getting and enjoying what they themselves have: And God has so solemnly guarded this law of nature and equity, as likewise to order, by a positive precept, that the disobedient son, (*ο κακολογων*) who speaks contemptuously of his father or mother, and uses them ill, shall surely be put to death. (*Exod. xxi. 17.*)

5, 6 But ye, by your traditions, say, That whatever may be the necessities of parents, if a man once binds

say to his father or his mother, *It is a gift by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me.*

6 And honour not his father or his mother, *he shall be free.* Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition.

7 Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying,

8 This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips: but their heart is far from me.

9 But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.

10 And he called the multitude, and said unto them, Hear, and understand:

11 Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man.

12 Then came his disciples, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the Pharisees were offended after they heard this saying?

binds himself by an oath, or vow, to devote to religious uses what he might have spared for the relief of his poor father or mother, he is thereby discharged from the obligation of applying it to their use, and thereby paying the honour and respect due to them; and so, by your human traditions, ye make void the express commandment of God.

7 O ye hypocritical pretenders to religion, and superstitious observers of invented ceremonies for external rather than for internal purity, well may the prophecy of *Isaiab* be applied to you, when God, speaking by him, says, (*Isa. xxix. 13.*)

8 This people talk much of religion, and make an outward specious appearance of worshipping and honouring me, by their lip-service, and ceremonious acts of devotion; and yet their hearts are estranged from me in their inmost temper, exercise, and designs.

9 But while they withhold from me the homage of their souls, and, instead of making my prescriptions the only rule of their religion, set up human inventions and commands, some of which are directly contrary to an express law of mine, as that about honouring parents; and others of them are additions to my law, as that about washing hands; and every one of them are invasions of my authority, who only have power to appoint how I will be served and worshipped; all their pretended holiness and devotion is a vain show; it is neither truly and sincerely good in itself, nor is it acceptable to me, nor profitable to their own souls.

10 And that the common people might be helped against their prejudices, and set right in so important a doctrine as this, Jesus said unto them, Observe and consider what I say, that ye may understand it, and know your own concern in it.

11 What the *Pharisees* teach about persons being defiled by eating with unwashed hands, is a vain and superstitious tradition: For such hands touching the food, which a man puts into his mouth and eats, cannot defile his soul, or make him unclean in God's account: But that which really pollutes him, has its rise in the evil thoughts and inclinations of his heart, and vents itself by the sinful words of his lips.

12 Then Jesus withdrew from the people into an house; (*Mark vii. 17.*) and his disciples came to him and said, Didst thou not foresee, and hadst thou no concern about, the offence that the *Pharisees* would take at thy speaking so plainly and so publicly against the traditions which they are so fond

of,

of, and lay such a mighty stress upon? And dost thou not perceive how provoked they are at it; and what prejudices it raises in their minds against thee and thy doctrine, which will expose thee more than ever to their rage and fury?

13 But he answered and said, Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up.

13 But Jesus answered, saying, It was necessary that I should speak as I did: For every ordinance and imposition in religion, which my heavenly Father has not instituted, shall be disowned by him, and must be rejected; it is not of God, and therefore shall not stand.

14 Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.

14 And as to the *Pharisees*, do not trouble yourselves, nor be concerned about their being offended or pleased: for they are self-conceited and obstinately ignorant teachers of the people, who blindly follow their dictates with an implicit faith: And what in the nature of things, and by the just judgment of God, can be their end, but that both the deceivers and the deceived, who wilfully persist in their erroneous ways, must perish together in the bottomless pit?

15 Then answered Peter, and said unto him, Declare unto us this parable.

15 Then *Peter*, the usual spokesman of the disciples, through the forwardness of his temper, said to Jesus, Please to explain to us the meaning of this parable which thou hast delivered about the things that do or do not render a man unclean.

16 And Jesus said, Are ye also yet without understanding?

16 And Jesus said to them all, Are ye, who have been so much and so long with me, still so dull of understanding as not to know the meaning of so familiar and plain a parable as this? Surely better things might have been expected from you, whatever one might think of others.

17 Do not ye yet understand, that whatsoever entereth in at the mouth, goeth into the belly, and is cast out into the draught?

17 Do ye not by this time easily apprehend, that whatsoever food a man eats, though it be ever so dirty, it goes into the stomach; and that which is unfit for nourishment passes through the body, and is discharged into the vault, without rendering the man, in a moral sense, either better or worse.

18 But those things which proceed out of the mouth, come forth from the heart, and they defile the man:

18 But the things which properly defile a man, or make him sinful, are such as proceed out of the corrupt fountain of his heart, and vent themselves through his lips and life.

19 For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies.

19 For out of the depraved propensities of the heart proceed carnal imaginations, contrivances, and designs; hatred, malice, and murder; wanton desires, words, and actions; adultery, fornication, and all uncleanness; covetousness, injuries, cheats and thefts, lies and falsehood in witness-bearing; and all evil-speaking or calumnies against men; and blasphemies and profaneness against God and religion.

20 These are the things which defile a man: but to eat with unwashed hands defileth not a man.

21 Then Jesus went thence, and departed into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon.

22 And behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou Son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil.

23 But he answered her not a word. And his disciples came and besought him, saying, Send her away; for she crieth after us.

24 But he answered and said, I am not sent, but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

25 Then came she, and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me.

20 These are the abominable things that make a man morally unclean and odious in the sight of God, unfit for his service, or for communion with him, and an enjoyment of him: But to eat a meal, without first washing the hands, has no moral impurity in it; it does not affect the soul, nor make any man a sinner before God.

21 When Jesus had spoken these things, he went away from those parts to the borders of the *Tyrians* and *Sidonians*.

22 And behold a surprising instance of his grace and signal earnest of mercy toward the *Gentiles*! A certain woman of *Canaan**, who was a *Greek*, (Mark vii. 26.) and so a stranger to the commonwealth of *Israel*, having heard of the many miraculous and merciful cures Christ had wrought, came from some part of that country, and earnestly cried after him, saying, O Lord, thou promised Messiah of *David's* race †, I beseech thee to have compassion upon me in healing my daughter, who is possessed, and dreadfully tormented by an evil spirit.

23 But Jesus, for the trial of her faith, seeming to take no notice of her, gave not one word of answer, good or bad; till at length his disciples, tired with her loud and importunate cries, and moved with pity toward her, desired that he would please to grant this woman's request, or at least to send her away with some answer or other; because it was so very affecting to hear how she followed them with her lamentable and incessant importunity.

24 But he answering, said to them, How can ye expect that I should shew her mercy? For, as I ordered you not to go in the way of the *Gentiles*; (chap. x. 5.) so the commission I received of my Father, to exercise my personal ministry, and perform my miracles, was not designed for the immediate benefit of the *Gentiles*, but of God's covenant people, the *Israelites*, who are gone astray, and are in perishing circumstances, like lost sheep.

25 The woman, notwithstanding this further discouragement, drew nearer to Christ; and, to express her humility and faith in him, as a divine person, fell down at his feet, and worshipped him, saying, with still greater earnestness, Lord, grant me

N O T E.

* *Canaan* was also called *Phœnicia* and *Syrophanicia*, as lying between *Syria* properly so called, and *Phœnicia* by the sea side. See *Whitby's alphabetical table*.

† It is not unlikely but that this wo-

man, though a *Gentile*, might be a proselyte, at least of the gate; since she addressed our Lord as the Son of *David*, which was a known character of the Messiah among the *Jews*.

me the help which I want, and which thou art able to give.

26 But he answered and said, It is not meet to take the childrens bread, and to cast it to dogs.

26 But that he might yet further try and humble her, he seemed to refuse and reproach her, saying, My special blessings are childrens bread, which belong to God's peculiar people the *Jews*; and it is not proper to give such favour to *Gentiles*, who are without the pale of the covenant, and deserve to be treated with neglect and disdain, as men use to deal with dogs, for their impurity and vileness.

27 And she said, Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their master's table.

27 To this she replied, Lord, I own what thou sayest is true; I am as vile and worthless as a dog, and do not deserve any mercy at thine hands; and yet wretched outcasts, as we poor *Gentiles* are, may be allowed some small pittance of favour, since even dogs are suffered to pick up the crumbs under their master's table: There is bread enough for the children, and to spare; let me, therefore, have the scraps that may be given to others; and, in the greatness of thy bounty, I beseech thee to spare me this one mercy, which is so necessary for me, and will be no loss or injury to the children.

28 Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour.

28 Then Jesus, as if he were surprised and overcome by the strength and importunity of her faith, (which, by a secret power, he had all along supported and encouraged,) answered, Blessed art thou among women, who hast been thus importunate and patient, resolute and depending upon me in thy pleas for mercy, under all discouragements. This is an extraordinary and noble faith indeed: It has power with me, and has prevailed; its request is granted to the utmost of your heart's desire. And at that very instant her daughter was perfectly healed, in token of his honouring the faith which had so highly honoured him.

29 And Jesus departed from thence, and came nigh unto the sea of Galilee; and went up into a mountain, and sat down there.

29 After this, Jesus went from those parts toward the sea of *Galilee*, nigh unto which he set himself down upon a hill, as he was wont to do when he intended to preach to the people.

30 And great multitudes came unto him, having with them those that were lame, blind, dumb, maimed, and many others, and cast them down at Jesus' feet; and he healed them:

30 And great multitudes, who had seen or heard of his former miracles, flocked to him, bringing along with them such as were lame, or blind, or dumb, or (*κροκοι*) crooked, or afflicted with any other kind of disease, and they laid them down at Jesus' feet, as miserable objects of his compassion; and he mercifully and miraculously healed them all:

31 Inasmuch that the multitude wondered,

31 So that the people were exceedingly amazed, when, all on a sudden, they heard the dumb speak, and saw the crooked and deformed made straight and whole, the lame walk, and the blind receive their

dered, when they saw the dumb to speak, the maimed to be whole, the lame to walk, and the blind to see: and they glorified the God of Israel.

32 Then Jesus called his disciples unto him, and said, I have compassion on the multitude, because they continue with me now three days, and have nothing to eat; and I will not send them away fasting, lest they faint in the way.

33 And his disciples say unto him, Whence should we have so much bread in the wilderness, as to fill so great a multitude?

34 And Jesus saith unto them, How many loaves have ye? and they said, Seven, and a few little fishes.

35 And he commanded the multitude to sit down on the ground.

36 And he took the seven loaves, and the fishes, and gave thanks, and brake them, and gave to his disciples, and the disciples to the multitude.

37 And they did all eat, and were filled: and they took up of the broken meat that was left, seven baskets full.

38 And they that did

their fight, and all manner of diseases healed, at the will and word of Christ; and they, together with the persons that were cured, rejoiced, and ascribed glory to the God of Israel, who, according to ancient prophecy, (*Isa. xxxv. 5. 6.*) had sent the Messiah to exercise such divine power and mercy among them.

32 Then Jesus, intending still further to manifest his glory, called his disciples to him; and, that he might impart his design to them, whom he condescended to treat as his friends, said, As this great company have, in their abundant zeal and affection to me, been three days together hearing my word, and seeing my works, with little food for their sustenance, and now have nothing to eat; my compassion is moved toward them, and I am determined not to send the poor creatures away fasting, lest some of them should faint with hunger before they get home.

33 His disciples, not reflecting on his late miraculous feeding five thousand, in like circumstances, (*chap. xiv. 21.*) answered, How can we provide sufficiently, in this solitary place, for the entertainment of such a multitude of people as are here?

34 But Jesus replied, for the trial of their faith, What provisions have ye got among you? And they answered, Only seven loaves of bread, and a few small fishes, to supply our own wants.

35 Here, indeed, was more food, and less company, than in the former instance; but it was as much above the ability of any creature to multiply this store for answering the present occasion, as it was in the other: And as Christ did not aim at ostentation, or at working miracles beyond necessity, he, designing to make use of the whole quantity of food that was at hand, ordered all the people to sit down in ranks upon the ground.

36 Then, taking the bread and fish in his hand, he gave thanks for these provisions, and asked a blessing upon them, as was usual at ordinary meals; and, whilst he brake and delivered them to the disciples, his divine power gave an increase, and the disciples distributed them to the multitude. (See the note on *chap. xiv. 19.*)

37. 38 And so exceedingly was this small quantity of provision enlarged, that though there were four thousand men, besides women and children, who made a full meal of it, there remained afterwards as many fragments as filled seven baskets: So that for every loaf there was left a basket full of the broken food, which was a good return to the disciples;

38 And they that did eat were four thousand men, beside women and children.

39 And he sent away the multitude, and took ship, and came into the coasts of Magdala.

disciples; and yet these fragments were not so many as in the other miracle of this sort, here being not so many people to leave morsels out of their several shares, after they could eat no more.

39 And when all this company were abundantly refreshed, Jesus dismissed them, that they might go to their several homes; and he himself took water with his disciples, and went in a boat to the country of *Magdala*, which contained *Dalmanutha*. (Mark viii. 10.)

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

What will all pretences of piety and external purity avail us, if our hearts are full of iniquity? And what is all our religion worth, if it have not divine intuition for its warrant, and the heart be not engaged in it? Human inventions and impositions, in the worship of God, are invasions of his authority; they corrupt his worship, mislead the heart, turn it aside from his ordinances, and seek their own establishment, even to the destruction of moral duties: Nonconformity to them is our duty; and they should be rooted out of the church, and of our hearts, lest we ourselves be rooted out of Christ's kingdom. But, O what a source of iniquity is the heart of man! How great and many are the detilements that it spreads through the life! How much more concerned should we be for cleansing from these, than for ceremonial purifications! And how ready is our blessed Lord to patronize his disciples, in opposition to human impositions, to relieve them in all their distresses, to heal their various maladies, and supply their wants! They, who follow him in his ways, shall be taken care of by his providence: And yet how dull of understanding are his own people, and how apt to forget the wonders of his power and love! But great faith honours Christ, and he will honour it: It breaks through all discouragements, and lays hold on the least hints of mercy: And though the infinitely wise and gracious Saviour may sometimes seem to disregard and discountenance it, and may delay his answer to it; yet he secretly upholds it, and stirs up its importunity in prayer, till at length he will certainly fulfil the desire of the believing heart: And, blessed be God that, in this way, *Gentile* sinners shall find mercy with him.

C H A P. XVI.

Christ's discourse with the Pharisees about a sign from heaven, 1, —4. With his disciples, about the leaven of the Pharisees, 5,—12. About his own character, 13,—20. About his own sufferings, 21,—23. And about their bearing his cross, 24,—28.

TEXT.

PARAPHRASE.

THE Pharisees also with the Sadducees came, and, tempting, desired him that he would shew them a sign from heaven.

THE self-righteous hypocritical *Pharisees*, and the free-thinking *Sadducees*, however opposite to one another, were alike enemies to Christ; and therefore they agreed to apply to him, under pretence of desiring to be satisfied that he came from God, and to ask him to give them some such sign of it immediately from heaven, as was given at mount *Sinai*, when the law was delivered to *Moses*.

ses*; thereby designing to put a difficulty upon him.

2 He answered and said unto them, When it is evening, ye say, *It will be fair weather; for the sky is red:*

3 And in the morning, *It will be foul weather to day; for the sky is red and lowring.* O ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky; but can ye not discern the signs of the times?

4 A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign, and there shall no sign be given unto it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas. And he left them, and departed.

5 And when his disciples were come to the other side, they had forgotten to take bread.

6 Then Jesus said unto them, Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, and of the Sadducees.

2, 3 But, as all his miracles of power and goodness had been plain and sufficient demonstrations of his divine authority, he would not gratify their unreasonable curiosity, and perverse unbelief; and, knowing the deceitful and captious design of their demand, he answered, O ye hypocrites, why do ye thus tempt me to give needless and unprofitable proofs of what is already so very evident? Ye are sagacious enough to observe the signs and tokens of fair or foul weather, by the colour of the sky; if the evening be red, ye conclude that the morrow will be fair; and if the morning be red and lowring, ye conclude it will be a wet or stormy day: Probability determines your thoughts and conduct in these cases; and yet even the highest certainty will not influence you in things of the utmost importance. What prodigious blindness and obstinacy is it that hinders your discerning, from the ancient prophecies, which are fulfilled in me, and from my numerous miracles, that the Messiah is now come, to set up his kingdom among you, and that your ruin is halting apace for rejecting him!

4 Ye are a degenerate and wicked generation of men; or else, after all that ye have seen and heard, ye would not continue in unbelief, and ask for further proofs: Put no other sort of miracles shall be wrought for your conviction than ye have already seen; except that of my own resurrection from the dead, after I shall have been buried three days and three nights in the earth, which was prefigured by the prophet *Jonah's* lying the same length of time in the great fish's belly. And, having said this, he left them, as incorrigible sinners, and went away with his disciples over the sea of *Galilee*. (Mark viii 13.)

5 And just as his disciples were got to the other side of the lake, they recollected that they had forgot to carry a sufficient quantity of bread along with them to supply their necessities.

6 The reason Jesus took an occasion to give them spiritual instructions, under a metaphor relating to bread, saying, "See to it, and be very careful that ye be not infected with the leaven of the *Pharisees* and *Sadducees*;" meaning their corrupt doc-

NOTE.

* Or perhaps they might mean, that he should give them the sign of the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven, Dan. vii. 13.

7 And they reasoned among themselves, saying, *It is because we have taken no bread.*

8 Which when Jesus perceived, he said unto them, O ye of little faith, why reason ye among yourselves, because ye have brought no bread?

9 Do ye not yet understand, neither remember the five loaves of the five thousand, and how many baskets ye took up?

10 Neither the seven loaves of the four thousand, and how many baskets ye took up.

11 How is it that ye do not understand, that I spake it not to you concerning bread, that ye should beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, and of the Sadducees?

12 Then understood they how that he bade them not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees, and of the Sadducees.

13 When Jesus came into the coasts of Cesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I, the Son of man, am?

14 And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist; some, Elias; and others, Jere-

doctrines, which were apt to insinuate and diffuse themselves like leaven in a mass of dough.

7 Upon which the disciples, mistaking his meaning, thought within themselves, and said privately one to another, (*εἰς ἑαυτοῖς*) This is designed as a reproof for our carelessness in not providing so much bread as may be necessary for us.

8 But Jesus, perceiving how grossly they mistook him, said to them, O how astonishing is it, that ye should have so little faith, as to be disturbed about your having no bread, or to think that I am concerned about your neglect in not furnishing yourselves with it!

9, 10 Do ye not yet understand my way of taking occasions from earthly things to suggest those which are spiritual, nor my power and goodness in providing necessary food in times of want? Have ye already forgot how, in the scarcity of a desert, I at one time lately fed five thousand men with five loaves, and at another four thousand with seven loaves; and how many baskets full of fragments remained, after both those great companies were satisfied? And could ye suppose that I would not take as much care of, or were not as able to supply you, if need required it?

11 How then comes it to pass, that after all this ye should be so dull of understanding, as to imagine that I concerned myself about your having no bread, when I cautioned you to take heed of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees?

12 Then they saw their mistake: And though Christ did not hereby plainly tell them his meaning; yet, upon further reflection, they understood that his solemn caution related, not to their care about bread, but about the hypocritical and artful errors, traditions, ordinances, and perverse reasonings, of the Pharisees and Sadducees that they might not be infected by them.

13 When Jesus afterwards was going with his disciples, through some part of the Upper Galilee, into the towns of Cesarea Philippi, (Mark viii. 27.) he, for their trial and confirmation, asked them, What the people thought and said about him; or what sort of person they took him to be, who appeared among them as a real man, and under the title of the Son of Man?

14 And they answered, There are very different opinions among them about thee: Some talk as if they thought thee to be John the Baptist, risen again from the dead; others take thee to be Elias, who they suppose is come before the Messiah to

Jeremias, or one of the prophets.

15 He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am?

16 And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art Christ the Son of the living God.

17 And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.

18 And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church: and the gates

anoint him to his office; and others think that thou art *Jeremiah*, or some other of the ancient prophets, raised again to life.

15 Then he put the question close to themselves, saying, Whatsoever others think or say of me, whom do ye, my apostles, take me to be? What are your own thoughts about me?

16 And *Peter*; being a man of a prompt spirit, answered in the name of the rest, they consenting and approving, Thou art neither *John the Baptist*, nor *Elias*, nor *Jeremiah*, nor any of the ancient prophets; nor art thou merely a man, but art more than a bare prophet, and than a mere man: Thou art the true Messiah, and, by way of eminence, the proper Son of the eternal God, who is the Fountain of life.

17 Then Jesus replied to him, This is a glorious confession of faith indeed; and great is your happiness, O *Simon son of Jonath*, in thus believing on me: For your knowledge of this fundamental truth did not arise from any principle of nature or education, or from the wisdom and reason of man, nor was you taught it by any man; but my heavenly Father has irradiated your mind, and revealed it to you, by his Spirit, for the saving of your soul.

18 And by reason of this noble confession of me, you may well be called *Peter*, or a *rock*: And, on occasion of my mentioning this name, I tell you, that † this person whom you have now confessed to be the Son of God, and the true Messiah; or, which

N O T E.

† It is highly probable that Christ pointed with his finger to himself, when he mentioned these words, in like manner as when he said, *Destroy this temple, &c.* meaning the temple of his body, *John* ii. 19, 21.: And as he is spoken of in scripture as the only foundation of the church *Isa.* xxviii. 16. *1 Cor.* iii. 11, 12. and *1 Pet.* ii. 6, 7.; so this is that which the apostles and prophets laid in their preaching, *Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone.* (*1 Eph.* ii. 20.) But a supposition of *Peter's* person being the rock here intended, is highly derogatory from the honour of the person of Christ, and lays a very insufficient basis for a spiritual building. It likewise appears strangely uncouth to suppose, that so transient an act as his confession, or as his afterwards preaching the gospel, and not the person or doctrine contained therein, should be the foundation of the church. It could at most be only laying

the foundation like a wise master-builder, according to the grace of God given to him, as the apostle *Paul* speaks of himself; (*Cor.* iii. 10.) and in this sense, the names of all the twelve apostles were equally inscribed on the twelve foundations of the city of God. *Rev.* xxi. 14. But if any thing personal and peculiar to *Peter* be intended in this and the following verse, it relates only to his being the first preacher of the faith he here confessed, to lay the foundation of the Christian-church, first among the *Jews*, and and afterwards among the *Gentiles*; (*Acts* ii. and x.) and so it can never found a claim for the supremacy, or the infallibility, of the pope: For, in this respect, *Peter* could have no successor, much less one that resides at *Rome*; and the pope is so far from being the first preacher of the gospel, and from going in person to convert *Jews* and *Heathens*: that he does not use to preach at all.

gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

19 And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven. and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven.

20 Then charged he his disciples that they should tell no man that he was Jesus the Christ.

which amounts to much the same thing, this great article of your faith in him, is like an immovable, everlasting rock, on which I will build my church, consisting of all true believers that shall agree with you herein; and I will so establish them upon this sure foundation, that neither all † the power and policy of devils and their instruments, nor death itself, shall ever so far prevail, as to destroy the souls of any that truly rest upon it for eternal life, or to root my interest out of the world.

19 And as you, in the name of all my apostles, have made this important confession of me, I give the key of knowledge and discipline unto you as the first preacher of my gospel to *Jews and Gentiles*, and unto them and their successors as your fellow-labourers and officers in my church and kingdom: And whatsoever you or they || shall do, in a doctrinal way, by preaching in my name, and declaring what practices are unlawful, and what are lawful, and so binding or charging sin upon the consciences of others, and loosing or acquitting them from guilt; and whatever any of you shall do, in a judicial way, by the exercise of spiritual and holy discipline, according to my will and word, in the administration of my kingdom upon earth, all this shall be surely ratified and confirmed in heaven, and be approved of in the day of judgment.

20 Then he strictly commanded the apostles not to publish, as yet, what they knew about his being the Messiah and a Person of divine original; lest the *Pharisees* should be provoked to cut him off before his time; or lest the people should tumultuously gather together, to make him a temporal king by force; or lest they, who would not then believe the disciples' report, should be prejudiced beforehand against the testimony they were to give to him after his resurrection from the dead.

21 The

NOTES.

† As gates and walls were the strength of cities, and as courts of judicature were held in their gates, this phrase may very well signify the power and policy of Satan and his instruments. *Vid. Glass. Rhetor. Sacr. cap. xii. p. 392.*

|| As the use of keys is to open doors and shut them; so delivering the keys to a person was an emblem of the authority vested in him as a steward, or as one put in trust with the management of stores and provisions and other affairs for the honour and service of his Lord. And as what Christ here says to *Peter*, he says afterwards (chap. xviii. 17, 18.) to the church, and (*John xx. 23.*) to all the a-

postles; it seems that it is to be understood with a relation to the succeeding state of the church in all ages of the world; and is to be explained by after-settlements in the New Testament, with regard to the authority of ministerial declarations, and church-acts, in the name of Christ, as far as they are duly managed in agreement with the word of God. But I rather think, that as *Mat. xviii. 17, 18.* relates only to church-authority; so what is said here, and in *John xx. 23.* relates principally, if not entirely, to that which is ministerial. See the note and paraphrase on *John xx. 23.*

21 From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders, and chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day.

22 Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee.

23 But he turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan, thou art an offence unto me: for thou favourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men.

21 The faith of the disciples being now raised so high concerning him, he thought it a proper season to acquaint them with the great sufferings and abasement he was to undergo, that they might not expect him to appear with temporal grandeur for their worldly advantage, nor be shocked at the sight of the humbling and terrible things which would, ere long, befall him: And, therefore, from that time forward he began, as opportunities offered, to tell them more plainly than ever before, that he must go to Jerusalem, and there suffer many cruelties and indignities by the malice of the Jewish sanhedrim, (which consisted of their rulers, chief priests, and scribes,) till at length they would put him to death: But, for their comfort, he added, that on the third day he should rise again to life. (See the note on chap. xii. 40.)

22 This was strange doctrine to them, who could not tell how to reconcile it to the faith they then had in his exalted character, and to their hopes of his reigning with power and glory as a temporal monarch among them: And therefore Peter, with his usual rash and forward temper, took him aside from the rest of the disciples, and so far forgot himself, and the noble confession he had lately made, as to expostulate with him, by way of passionate contradiction and displeasure, saying, We cannot bear a thought of this; it is abominable to suppose that the Son of God, and the Messiah, should suffer such reproachful and terrible things as these: Lord, have pity upon thyself, (*κυριε σωε σεαυτον*;) and then none of them can befall thee: Nay, rather than they should, we and the people, who have thee in admiration, will fight to deliver thee out of such cruel hands.

23 But Christ took this very heinously; and, turning short upon Peter, severely reprov'd him for it, saying, In this you are an adversary † to me; notwithstanding the heat of your avowed friendship, Satan hath given it a carnal selfish turn, and you are serving his interest, by attempting to prevent the great end for which I am come into the world. Be gone; say no more of this matter; I

am

N O T E.

† As Satan signifies an adversary, possibly our Lord might only mean, that Peter herein acted the part of an enemy to him. But, as this motion had a real tendency to favour the devil's interest, and discourage Jesus in his work; and as it proceeded from such carnal princi-

ples and motives as Satan excites to, it might also be spoken of as his work; though it seems that he did not design to prevent Christ's sufferings and death, since we are expressly told, that *the devil put it in the heart of Judas to betray him*, John xiii. 2.

am much displeas'd with you for throwing such an obstacle in my way; for your judgment and affections herein, are not according to my Father's will and design, relating to his glory in the redemption and salvation of lost sinners; but, according to the maxims of carnal policy, relating to the honour, ease, and riches of this world.

24 Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.

24 Then Jesus, turning to his disciples, some of the people also being with them, (*Mark* viii. 34.) said, As I myself must be perfected by sufferings; so whoever is heartily willing and resolv'd to be my disciple, must deny his own fleshly wisdom and will, and secular interests, and submit to the will of God, without reluctance or reserve; and whatever losses or persecutions, even unto death, he may be call'd to endure for my sake, he must, with faith and patience, follow my example in sufferings, as well as obedience. (See note on *Mark* viii. 34.)

25 For whosoever will save his life, shall lose it; and whosoever will lose his life for my sake, shall find it.

25 For he that thinks to preserve himself from temporal death, by sinful compliances and forsaking me, shall surely fall short of eternal life, and be plung'd into endless misery: But he that suffers the loss of a temporal life, on account of his faith in me, and obedience to me, or because he will not make shipwreck of faith and a good conscience, shall not be hurt of the second death, but obtain everlasting life, which is the life of the soul, and is best of all.

26 For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

26 For what would be the advantage of any one's possessing the present life, with all the riches, honours, and pleasures that this world can afford, if at last, through his inordinate affection to them, he should lose all the welfare, peace, and happiness of his own immortal soul? Or, if once this is lost, what valuable consideration can he ever offer to God for its redemption? and what would he not give, if he had it, and it might be accepted, in exchange for this soul of his, that it might not be miserable to all eternity?

27 For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father, with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works.

27 He will one day find this to be an important consideration, whatever he thinks of it now: For the Messiah, who, as the Son of man, at present appears in the fashion of a man, attended with all the mean circumstances, and sinless infirmities of human nature, in its humbled state, shall, in the day of judgment, appear as the Son of God, in the form of God, shining in the glory of the same divine nature with his Father, and attended with a grand retinue of holy angels: (see the note on *Luke* ix. 26.) And then he, as Judge of the whole world, will pass sentence of eternal life upon the righteous, and

and of eternal death upon the wicked, according as they shall be proved to be such by their respective works.

28 Verity I say unto you, there be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom.

28 And, as an evidence and emblem of this, I assuredly tell you, there are some now present †, who shall live to see the Messiah coming to set up his mediatorial kingdom, with great power and glory, in the effusion of his Spirit, in the wonderful increase of the gospel-church, in the subversion of the *Mosaic* frame of worship, and in the destruction of the city, temple, and nation of the *Jews*, for their obstinacy and unbelief; yea, some shall soon see a glimpse and prefiguration of his future still more eminent glory. (chap xvii. 1. 2.)

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

How do the enemies of Christ and his church combine together against him and them, though these enemies be ever so much at variance among themselves: and how much more sagacious are they in temporal, than in spiritual concerns! But, O how great is the blessedness of those that are savingly enlightened with the knowledge of Christ, and brought to believe in him! God has distinguished them by his grace; they are built on the Lord Jesus, as a sure foundation that will never fail them; and no designs formed against them shall ever prevail to their ruin. Christ, as the Son of man, has the tenderest compassion toward them; and, as the Son of God, has almighty power to save them, in defiance of all that oppose them: He has gone through the deepest humiliation and sufferings for their redemption, and now lives in his glory for their security and salvation: And whatever spiritual powers he has lodged with men, they are all for the good of his church, to be exercised by his commission, and with a reference to his final judgment: and they shall then be confirmed or reversed, according as they shall be found to agree or disagree with his word. How should believers rest and rejoice in him, own and honour him, and even triumph in the thoughts of the day, when he shall shine in all the majesty of the God, and of their Judge, who will come to save them! But, alas! how busy is Satan with us, even in the hours of our strongest faith, and sweetest enjoyments! and what need have we to be upon our watch against him, and against the deceitfulness of our own hearts, lest we be puffed up with pride, grow impatient of humbling prospects, oppose the wisdom and will of Christ, and bring ourselves under his rebukes!—We must follow the Lamb whithersoever he goes, if we would follow him at last to heaven. What if we suffer tribulation and death for his sake in the way? An immortal life of blessedness lies at the end; and whatsoever we may lose for Christ, we shall be no losers by him: His crown will make a rich and eternal amend for his cross. And O how much better is it to deny ourselves here, for an everlasting life hereafter, which can never be lost, than to deny him here, to our endless ruin, which can never be retrieved! What, in all this world, can once be compared with the loss, or salvation, of a man's own soul!

N O T E.

† To taste death, is a Hebraism for dying. Now, all these things were seen by the apostle John, and some others, before they died; and the transfiguration, which some think is here peculiarly referred to, because all the evangelists

make this the preface to their account of it, was seen by Peter, James, and John, about a week afterwards. Chap. xvii. 1. Mark ix. 1, 2. and Luke ix. 27, 28, 29.

C H A P. XVII.

Christ's transfiguration, 1,—13. His healing a lunatic, 14,—21. His prediction of his own death and resurrection, 22, 23. And his paying tribute, 24,—27.

TEXT.

AND after six days, Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart.

2 And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light.

3 And behold, there appeared unto them Moises and Elias talking with him.

4 Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here:

PARAPHRASE.

ABOUT that day seven-night, after Christ had spoken of the glory in which some then living should see him appear, (see the note on *Luke ix. 28.*) he privately went up an high mountain †, and took with him three of his favourite disciples, *Peter, James,* and his brother *John*, to give them a glimpse of his glory; that as they were, in a little time, to be spectators of his agony in the garden, (chap. xxvi. 37.) they might be so likewise, beforehand, of his majesty; and that, out of the mouth of two or three witnesses, those important facts might be established.

2 And, as he was praying, (*Luke ix. 29.*) the appearance of his body was changed † in their sight, from the ordinary form of a man, and likeness of a servant, into the illustrious form or appearance of God, that he might look like himself as the Lord of Glory: And his indwelling deity darted out its rays through the veil of his flesh, with such transcendent splendour, that his face shone with divine majesty, like the sun; and all his body was so irradiated by it, that his clothes could not conceal its glory, but became white and glittering, as the very light, with which he covered himself as with a garment.

3 And behold a further specimen of his last glorious appearance, when he will come with ten thousand of his saints! There appeared *Moses*, the giver of the law, and *Elias*, the restorer of it, in glorious forms ||: And they conversed with Christ about his sufferings and death at *Jerusalem*. (*Luke ix. 31.*)

4 Then the disciples hearing the conversation that passed between them, and thereby knowing that these two persons were *Moses and Elias*; *Peter*,

NOTE.

† This is commonly thought to have been mount *Tabor*.

† Μετεμορφωθη, he was metamorphosed, seems to refer to μορφη θεου, the form of God, and μορφη δουλου και ομοιωσιν ανθρωπων, the form of a servant, and the likeness of men, *Phil. ii. 6, 7.*: And

may intimate, that the divine rays, which the indwelling God let out on this occasion, made the glorious change from one of the forms into the other.

|| Their bodies were probably preserved for this purpose.

here: if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias.

5 While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold, a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.

6 And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their face, and were sore afraid.

7 And Jesus came and touched them, and said, Arise, and be not afraid.

8 And when they had lift up their eyes, they saw no man, save Jesus only.

9 And as they came down from the mountain, Jesus charged them, saying, Tell the vision to no man, until the Son of man be risen again from the dead.

ter, with his usual forwardness, spoke to Jesus, crying out, with wonder and joy, Lord, we are in a perfect ecstasy at this vision: How glorious and delightful is the sight! and how happy would it be for us to continue here all our days amidst this glory! If it please thee, we will pitch three tents, or make three booths of boughs, in this place: one for thee, another for Moses, and a third for Elias, that we may all dwell together in the mount.

5 While he was speaking these words, behold an immediate testimony to Christ from God his Father! A bright cloud of glory*, as a gracious emblem of the Divine Presence, encompassed all that were there; and the disciples heard the Father's voice concerning Jesus, out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whose person, office, and work, I acquiesce, and am highly delighted; and your happiness is not to be expected from extraordinary visions, but in and from him: As, therefore, ye have hitherto had Moses and the prophets, I now turn you over to my dear Son; and, in whatsoever he shall teach and command you, hearken to him.

6 And when the disciples heard with what divine majesty this voice was uttered, they, being conscious of their own sinfulness and frailty, were so exceedingly astonished and terrified, that they fell down, with their faces flat to the ground.

7 But Jesus raised them up, whom an awful sense of God's immediate presence had cast down; he came in his tenderness and affection, and taking hold of them, strengthened and comforted them, and bade them rise and not be afraid of any evil whilst he was with them.

8 And when they got up and looked about them, the extraordinary vision and appearances were all over; and they saw Jesus alone, in his usual form and habit, just as he was before this transformation.

9 Then they came down with him from the mount of vision; and, as they were descending, talked over the glorious appearance they had seen: And Jesus commanded them not to tell it to the rest of the disciples, lest they should be grieved and discouraged, because they were not likewise admitted to the sight; nor to let any other persons know it, till he, the Messiah, should rise again from the dead, lest

N O T E.

* This seems to have been such a cloud of glory as directed *Israel* in the wilderness: which, as *Jeremias* writes, observe, departed at the death of *Moses*. But it now appeared again in honour of our Lord, as the great prophet of the church, who was prefigured by *Moses*.

lest it should exasperate some the more against him, and lest his approaching sufferings should stumble others, and make them disbelieve it: But he gave leave for their publishing it afterwards; because his resurrection, and the glory which should follow, would make it credible enough, and confirm their testimony about it.

10 And his disciples, asked him saying, Why then say the scribes, that Elias must first come?

10 They accordingly took no notice of it to any one for the present; but were puzzled, in their own thoughts, about what he meant by the Messiah's rising again from the dead. (*Mark ix. 10.*) And as *Elias* said so little a while with Christ, and even his appearing at all must be made a secret of, they asked him, Why it was so commonly said by their doctors, in expounding the law and the prophets, that *Elias* must publicly appear to usher in the Messiah?

11 And Jesus answered and said unto them, Elias truly shall first come, and restore all things:

11 Jesus replied, It is very sure that *Elias* was to be the forerunner of the Messiah, according to the prophecy concerning him: (*Mal. iv. 5, 6.*) He was to preach the doctrines of repentance and remission of sins, and to point out the Christ, and direct people to him for the reformation of all that was amiss in the church and in the world.

12 But I say unto you, that Elias is come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed: likewise shall also the Son of man suffer of them.

12 But (says he) I tell you, that, answerable to the design of the prophecy, *Elias* (i. e. one coming in the spirit and power of *Elias*) has already appeared and done his office; and the Scribes and Pharisees did not know and receive or own him under that character, but rejected his baptism, and said he had a devil; (*Luke vii. 30, 33.*) and they were pleased when he was put to death: In like manner they also reject and reproach the Messiah himself, and will procure his death.

13 Then the disciples understood that he spake unto them of John the Baptist.

13 Then the disciples understood him to mean, that *John the Baptist* was the *Elias* prophesied of as the forerunner of Christ.

14 And when they were come to the multitude, there came to him a certain man, kneeling down to him, and saying,

14 The day after this, (*Luke ix. 37.*) when Jesus, in company with *Peter, James, and John*, returned from the mountain to the multitude, who were gathered together about the rest of the disciples that were left below, (*Mark ix. 14.*) a certain man came to him, and, kneeling down before him, like an humble supplicant, said,

15 Lord, have mercy on my son: for he is lunatick, and sore vexed: for oft-times he falleth into the fire, and oft into the water.

15 Lord, if thou art able, (*Mark ix. 22.*) I beseech thee to have compassion upon my son, who is my only child, and is grievously tormented by an evil spirit that has got possession of him: (*Luke ix. 38, 39.*) For at certain seasons of the moon he is distracted, and has the falling-sickness to such a degree, that many times he suddenly tumbles into the fire,

fire, and at others into the water, to the endangering of his life.

16 And I brought him to thy disciples, and they could not cure him.

17 Then Jesus answered and said, O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him hither to me.

18 And Jesus rebuked the devil, and he departed out of him: and the child was cured from that very hour.

19 Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, Why could not we cast him out?

20 And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place, and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.

21 Howbeit, this kind goeth not out,

16 And while thou wert absent, I brought him to thy disciples, in hopes that they might dispossess Satan, and heal my son; but alas! they tried, and found it such a desperate case, that they could do nothing in it.

17 Then Jesus rebuked him, and the unbelieving multitude, and especially the Scribes, who seemed to insult the disciples, and reflect upon their Lord, because they had failed in their attempt to work this cure; (*Mark ix. 14.*) and he said to them*, O incredulous, degenerate and froward race of men, how long shall I continue working miracles among you, before ye will be convinced of my power and goodness? How long shall I bear with your obstinate infidelity? Bring the child to me, that I may shew mine arm is not shortened that it cannot save.

18 They accordingly brought him to Jesus, and he immediately, with divine majesty and authority, reprimanded the devil, and forced him, by a bare word of command, to come out of the lad, who was perfectly healed that very instant.

19 As soon as Jesus had withdrawn from the people, his disciples being concerned at the defeat they had met with in attempting this cure, and not knowing the reason of it, came and asked him, Whence it was that they could not cast out the devil, and heal this child?

20 And Jesus answered them, It was for want of a proper and present exercise of faith in you, as well as in the parent of the child: For I assuredly tell you, that if at any time ye truly depend upon me, and the promises of my presence with you, though it be only with the least degree of sincere faith, such as, comparatively speaking, is but like a grain of mustard seed; ye shall do things that are seemingly as impossible, as, by a word's speaking, to remove that mountain, which ye see, to another place; and nothing shall be too hard for you to do, for the glory of God, in the discharge of your duty and office, by my power accompanying you.

21 However, be it known unto you, that † this kind of faith, which I am speaking of, does not go forth,

NOTES.

* Most expositors suppose this rebuke was given to the disciples; but the appellation that our Lord here uses, is more like those which he was wont to give to the scribes than to his disciples: And if he now called them a faithless and perverse generation, they would have had no occasion afterwards to ask him the

reason, as they did, (*ver 19.*) why they could not cast out this devil. Besides, the answer was directed to the father of the child, as one of this perverse generation, *Mark ix. 19.* See the note there.

† Interpreters generally think that our Lord meant this kind of *miracles*, viz. casting out of devils. But as, on one hand,

out, but by prayer and fasting.

22 And while they abode in Galilee, Jesus said unto them, The Son of man shall be betrayed into the hands of men :

23 And they shall kill him, and the third day he shall be raised again : and they were exceeding sorry.

24 And when they were come to Capernaum, they that received tribute-money came to Peter, and said, Doth not your master pay tribute ?

25 He saith, Yes. And when he was come into the house, Jesus prevented him, saying, What think-

forth, to the working of this sort of miracles, without earnest prayer and humiliation, with fasting, to obtain it.

22 After this, (*αποστρεφόμενον*) as they were passing through some part of *Galilee* in their return to *Capernaum*, (*Mark ix. 30.*) Jesus again put his disciples in mind of his sufferings and death, saying, The Messiah will be delivered up (*μισλλυ παραδιδουθαι*) by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, and by the perfidious management of others, into the hands of cruel men :

23 And they will put him to death, and on the third day he shall rise again : But the disciples being so strangely stupid as not to know what he meant by rising again on the third day, (*Mark ix. 32.*) were exceedingly troubled to hear of the barbarous usage, the calamities and death, that were to befall him.

24 And when they were come to *Capernaum*, where both Jesus and *Peter* usually dwelt, (*chap. iv. 13. and viii. 14.*) some officers of the temple, who collected the offerings for its service, came to *Peter*, and asked him, Whether his master would not pay the half-shekel †, which used to be given annually by the *Jews* of twenty years old and upwards, toward the expence of the daily sacrifice, and other necessaries for the worship of God ? (*Exod. xxx. 13, 14, 15.*)

25 *Peter* answered, Yes, I make no doubt but he will : And going into the house to speak to him about it, Jesus, who by his divine omniscience knew what had passed, and with what design *Peter* came, prevented him with this question, saying, *Simon*, what do

NOTES.

hand, the antecedent, according to this supposition, lies remote, and is rather collected from, than expressed in, the foregoing context : and it is difficult to make good sense of the phrase, *this kind of miracles goes not out* : And as, on the other hand, *saith* is the next antecedent, and is expressly mentioned in the preceding verse ; and the style, *this kind of saith goes not out*, lies easy and natural, I rather chuse the sense given in the paraphrase.—What our Lord here mentions about prayer and fasting, is no way inconsistent with what he had said against his disciples fasting whilst he should continue with them : (*Matt. ix. 14, &c.*) For that related only to the frequent and stated fasts of the Pharisees, and of *John the Baptist's* disciples ; but was no prohibition of his own disciples fasting, during his continuance on earth, upon

extraordinary occasions, like this : Besides, at the time here referred to, Christ was absent from these disciples, and they did not know whether they should ever see him again ; and then fasting was as proper for them, as in any other state of things.

† *Δραχμα*. The *drachma*, or tribute-money here mentioned, usually signifies the money that was yearly paid into the treasury of the temple. Two of these made a half-shekel, in value about fifteen-pence ; and four made the stater (*στατηρα*) or shekel, the piece of money mentioned ver. 27. And I think the way of Christ's arguing on this occasion cannot easily be understood, without supposing that the tribute here spoken of was demanded by the temple-officers for its service. *Vid. Lightf. Hor Hebr. in Loc.*

thinkest thou, Simon? of whom do the kings of the earth take custom or tribute? of their own children, or of strangers?

26 Peter saith unto him, Of strangers. Jesus saith unto him, Then are the children free.

27 Notwithstanding, lest we should offend them, go thou to the sea, and cast an hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up; and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find a piece of money: that take, and give unto them for me and thee.

do you think about persons rendering custom or tribute to earthly princes? Do they use to demand such payments of their children and heirs, whose interests are one and the same with their own? Or do they only require them of other people, who, being not of their family, are either subjects, or foreigners that trade with them?

26 Peter readily answered, They demand them only of subjects and foreigners: Upon which Jesus replied, You see then, that the children themselves are exempted from all such taxes; and for that reason, I, who am the Son of God, and Heir of all, am not obliged to pay tribute for the service of my Father's house, which is my temple, as well as his. (*Mal* iii. 1.)

27 However, as I am made under the law, and am come to fulfil all righteousness, so I wave my original right: And that we may not give any occasion of offence to the men that demand this sort of tribute, or to any of the people, and may not needlessly prejudice them against me and my doctrine, as if I had no regard to the temple, go away to the lake of *Gennesaret*, and, letting down your hook, take up the first fish that shall be caught; then, opening his mouth, you will find a *stater*, or piece of money of the value of a shekel, which is just enough to satisfy for me and you; and therewith pay the temple-officers for us both; though, by that instance of my dominion over all, you may see that they have no right to require it of me.

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

What an affecting mixture of glory and abasement was there in Christ's appearance upon earth! He shone in the majesty of God, was attended with glorified saints, was avouched and owned by his Father's immediate voice; and the disciples saw his glory, as the glory of the Only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth: And yet, for our sakes, he became so poor, as not to have a shekel to spare, without a miracle to provide it. Devils and diabolical spirits flew before him; and yet a perverse and faithless generation despised him. At length he was betrayed and crucified; but, after that, his resurrection from the dead put a lute upon his sufferings, and wiped off all their reproach. O glorious and condescending Saviour! He that could command a fish to come to *Peter's* hook, with a piece of money, which either by his omniscience he knew was in its mouth, or by his omnipotence he put into it, could easily have supplied himself with all the stores and riches of nature; and he that raised himself from the dead, could easily have prevented his sufferings and death, if he had not chosen to submit to them: But as his Father had in eternal counsels determined them, he freely consented to them, that he might glorify him on earth, and bring redemption to his people. O how should the thoughts of Christ's majesty recommend him to our faith, and make us rejoice and triumph in his cross! and had we more faith in these things, with what delight and ease should we perform the most difficult duties he calls us to! Were it not for want of this, who knows what wonders his power would work for us? But unbelief dishonours him, and mars all.—A glimpse of his glory in an ordinance will make us say, Lord, it is good for us to be here; how much more shall we find it good to be with him in heaven, where the saints will be all glorified together, will know

know one another, and converse with him in all his glory! Was the Divine Majesty now to shine in its own immediate light upon us, how soon would it overfet us! But, blessed be God, its present displays are tempered, and suited to our frail and sinful circumstances; and when any of its terrors dismay and cast us down, under a sense of our own nothingness, guilt, and vileness, the grace and tenderness of a dear Saviour comforts and raises us up: And as God is well-pleased in his Son, and turns us over to him, we should hearken to his good and comfortable words; and believe his promises, as well as obey his commands: But, alas! when we have been with Jesus in the mount, we soon come into the valley again; but when once we set our feet on the everlasting hills, the vision will never fail, nor darkness return any more. Every thing is beautiful in its season: Some discoveries of Christ are reserved for times when we may most need them, and they will come with the richest advantage; and the greatest of all shall be, when we get to *Moses* and *Elias*, at the resurrection of the just. In the mean time, how prudent and cautious should we be to avoid needless offences, that we may not prejudice others against Christ, his doctrines and ways; but may be *blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation.* Phil. ii. 15.

C H A P. XVIII.

Christ's discourse of humility, 1,—5. Of offences and the way of dealing with offenders, 6,—20. And of forgiving personal injuries, 21,—35.

TEXT.

AT the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the Kingdom of heaven?

2 And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them,

3 And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter in-

PARAPHRASE.

THE disciples, still retaining notions of the external grandeur of Christ's kingdom, disputed among themselves, in the way to *Capernaum*, about which of them might expect to have the chief post of dignity and authority in his dominions: And when they came into the house, Jesus, knowing what had passed, and that the same thoughts still worked in their minds, asked them, What they had been disputing about by the way? that he might bring the matter to light. At first they were silent, being ashamed to own it: (see *Mark* ix. 33, 34.) But at length, finding themselves discovered, they made no more a secret of it; but asked him, Which of them should be preferred to the highest place of honour and trust in his kingdom?

2, 3 To answer this question, by a proper emblem, as well as words, Jesus ordered a little child to be brought to him; and, setting him before them, said, The nature of my kingdom is such, that I assuredly tell you †, Unless ye be turned from this mistaken conceit, and carnal affectation of secular authority and glory, and become, in the temper of your minds, like little children, who have no ambitious desires, views, or contentions, about honour, wealth

NOTE.

† After the first grand conversion, from a state of nature to a state of grace, there are many conversions from particular errors and sins, or turnings to God through Christ, by faith and repentance, which are necessary to salvation.

into the kingdom of heaven.

4 Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

5 And whofo shall receive one such little child in my name, receiveth me.

6 But whofo shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and *that* he were drowned in the depth of the sea.

7 Wo unto the world, because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come; but wo to that man by whom the offence cometh!

8 Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast *them* from thee: it is better for

or power, ye shall not partake of the blessings of the gospel-kingdom which I am come to erect in this world, nor of the glorious kingdom to which I will bring my disciples in the next.

4 Whosoever therefore shall not reach after magisterial dominion and worldly honour †, but shall be of a humble spirit, in resemblance of this little child, he shall be esteemed by my father and me, and by his fellow-Christians, as the most excellent and honourable member of my church on earth, and shall be advanced to the highest degrees of glory in heaven.

5 And whosoever shall, without temporal views, affectionately entertain or shew friendship to such a humble disciple of mine, merely because he belongs to me, bears my image, and has learnt of me, who am meek and lowly in heart, he shall be accounted of as if he had paid the same kind regards to myself in person.

6 But, on the other hand, whosoever shall seduce, dishearten, and lay stumbling-blocks before any of these lowly-minded disciples, who by faith embrace me, and are related to me, it would have been better for him to have come to an untimely death, by the hand of public justice, like a person thrown with a great stone about his neck into the sea, than to have been guilty of such mischief to them, which will bring a much sorer punishment on himself than any temporal death can be.

7 Dreadful are the judgments of God that shall come upon the world for such corrupt opinions and male-practices as are discouraging, injurious, and enslaving to the least of my disciples; for, considering how depraved mankind are, and how busy Satan is, it is morally impossible but that, under divine permission, such things will fall out in the world: But the greatest of all woes belongs to, and shall be inflicted on, the man, whoever he be, whose sinful and mischievous behaviour is the occasion of others being perverted, or grieved, or drawn into evil.

8, 9 If, therefore, any thing that would be an occasion of sin to you, and have a pernicious influence on the least of my true disciples, be as dear, and, in your carnal sense of things, as important to you, as a hand, a foot, or an eye, it must be parted with
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NOTE.

† If Christ had designed a supremacy and temporal dominion for *Peter*, or popes, who pretend to be his successors, or a superiority of order and authority in one minister over another, it might have

been expected, that, on this occasion, he would have given some hints of it: But he is so far from doing this, that he condemns every thing that looks like it.

for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands, or two feet, to be cast into everlasting fire.

9 And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast into hell-fire.

10 Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones: for I say unto you, that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven.

11 For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost.

12 How think ye? if a man have an hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seek-

and abandoned; the body of sin must be crucified, and all its gratifications must be cut off, how much soever it may be against the grain of flesh and blood to submit to this severity, rather than the cause of truth and peace and holiness be injured, to the stumbling, or seducing of any that belong to me: For it is much better to undergo the most painful self-denying mortifications in this world, and to be admitted to eternal life in the next, than to hold that fast, whatever it be, which would cherish sinful and injurious inclinations, and minister occasions of gratifying and indulging them here, and to be everlastingly tormented for it in hell hereafter.

10 See to it, therefore, that ye do not think meanly of, or carry it with contempt and scorn, or in an insnaring, offensive or discouraging manner, towards any, even of the weakest true believers, that resemble this child: For I tell you, they are highly honoured in heaven, where they have a host of guardian-angels, who, on all occasions, invisibly watch over them, and, in a kind and beneficial manner, minister to them; who are likewise always attending my Father, as his retinue and his servants, to observe his orders, and do his pleasure, concerning them; and who do not lose the beatific vision while they are ministering to these heirs of salvation, but carry their heaven with them, and are constantly in his special presence, like his favourites and courtiers, beholding his glory.

11 And there is a higher reason still, why ye should not despise even such as may be thought the most contemptible of them that believe in me, which is also the reason why the glorious angels themselves have such a charge of them: For I, the Messiah, am come into this world on purpose to redeem and save them who were in a lost and perishing condition; to recover them from the ruins of the common apostacy; and to prevent their stumbling and falling again into perdition, after I have brought them into the way of salvation, that none may pluck them out of my own and my Father's hands.

12 What think ye of the love and care of my Father, from whom I am come to save them? It may be illustrated by this parable: If a man has an hundred sheep, and one of them strays into distant, bye, and dangerous places, does he not show a more than ordinary concern for it, lest it be utterly lost? and, leaving the other ninety-nine in his fold, does not he immediately go and search through the mountains,

seeketh that which is gone astray ?

13 And if so be that he find it, verily I say unto you, he rejoiceth more of that *sheep*, than of the ninety and nine which went not astray.

14 Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish.

15 Moreover, if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother.

16 But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.

17 And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man,

and all the country round about, for this *sheep*, that it may not perish ?

13 And when he finds it, I tell you assuredly, he will be more sensibly affected, and express greater joy, at the recovery of this one, which was so much exposed to danger, than at the safety of all the rest of his flock, which never strayed from his fold.

14 Just so, speaking after the manner of men, your heavenly Father is concerned for his sheep, that are led astray by dangerous discouragements, temptations, and snares; and rejoices over them, when he has recovered them, more than in the preservation of those that never were seduced since he brought them into his fold: For it is his design, and his pleasure, that none of the meanest of these should perish, but that every one of them should be effectually saved; and it is his commanding will, that ye do nothing to pervert, discourage, or hinder them in their way to heaven, but do all, that in you lies, to subserve and promote their salvation.

15 Suppose, therefore, one of you should receive some notorious injury, or affront, from any of your Christian brethren; do not think that you may justly despise him, and return the like upon him; or that you are not obliged to concern yourself about preventing the danger he thereby exposes himself to: But, in such a case, go to him, and, in a private, friendly manner, endeavour to make him sensible of the offence he has been guilty of; and if he takes this well, and is brought to repentance by it, your end is answered; friendship is renewed; and your brother is recovered from his sin, and from the danger he was running into; and no more is to be said about the matter.

16 But if he be obstinate and angry, or will not fall under his fault; then take with you one or two other disinterested, prudent Christian brethren of the church, to which both of you may belong, still further to hear and judge of the case between him and you, and to join in an admonition, as occasion requires, that it may have the greater weight with him to convince and make him ashamed, as coming from the mouth of two or three witnesses; of the nature of his crime, and of his behaviour under it.

17 And if this method fail, so that he be no more wrought upon by their united attempt than when you went to him singly and alone; then bring it before the church, or that particular religious society, of which ye both are supposed to be members, that he may be rebuked before all, (1 Tim. v. 20.) and that the joint endeavours of the whole body may

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may be used to reclaim him: And if he still continues obstinate under the public admonition of the church, nothing remains further to be done, but for them to proceed to a solemn censure of him, as incorrigible, that you and all the other members may withdraw your religious communion, and unnecessary conversation from him; so as to have no more to do with him, than if he were an heathen, or one of the most abandoned of men, until he is brought to repentance, and appears fit to be restored.

18 Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven.

18 I assuredly tell you, That whatsoever ye, in this way of proceeding according to my will, shall bind upon the offender on earth, by a due censure for his obstinacy and sin, shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever, in this way, ye shall unbind or loose, upon his repentance, by taking off the censure and restoring him, shall be loosed in heaven; all that ye do in a right manner, according to the rule of my word, shall be ratified above, and God will set his seal to it in the day of judgment.

19 Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth, as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven:

19 And for your further encouragement, in this, and every other proceeding of a like nature, and indeed in all your religious concerns, I assure you, that if but two of you on earth shall agree together to join in your prayers, according to the will of God, for any direction, help, or blessing, that ye stand in need of, my Father will hear in heaven, his dwelling-place, and will certainly grant your petition, as far as it may be for his glory, and your good.

20 For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.

20 For wherever so small an assembly, as but two or three of my disciples, are gathered together for any act of religious worship, according to my appointment, by my authority, to the honour of my name, and with a fiducial dependance upon me, as the only Mediator, for assistance and acceptance, and for obtaining mercy on my account; there I am always present in a peculiar manner, by my Spirit and grace, to observe, guide, assist, encourage, quicken, approve, and succeed them; there is my resting-place, and there I am, like one come thither before-hand to bid them welcome.

21 Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times?

21 Then Peter, having heard Christ's discourse about offences, came and put a question to him, saying, Lord, if, in private personal cases, any of my brethren commit offences against me, I know I ought to forgive them; but how often am I obliged to do it? Must it be over and over again, till it amounts to seven times, as some may suppose, because it is said, *A just man falls seven times, and rises up again?* (Prov. xxiv. 16.) Or are our *Rabbies* in

the right, who think otherwise, because God speaks of *three transgressions, and four, for which he would punish?* (Amos i. 3.)

22 Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times; but, Until seventy times seven.

22 Jesus answered, whatever others may think or say, I tell you, That your forgivenesses should be, like those of God himself, without limitation: But, were I to mention a number, instead of saying seven times, I would say seventy times seven, to intimate, that this noble Christian-grace ought to be repeatedly exercised, as occasions offer, without end.

23 Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king which would take account of his servants.

23 Therefore, to illustrate this matter by a plain similitude, "The state of the gospel-kingdom, with respect to God's dealing with its visible subjects, is like the proceeding of a certain king, who called his servants to a reckoning, that he might see how much they were severally indebted to him."—Thus God demands an account of all the thoughts, words, and actions, of professors of religion, as well as others; and observes in how many things they have misused his favours, and offended him.

24 And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him which owed him ten thousand talents.

24 "And when the king began to state and examine the accounts, he found one of his servants owed him ten thousand talents †."—So God, in the survey he takes of his professing people's behaviour, observes that some have run up an exceeding great score, having miserably abused all the advantages he had entrusted them with; and that every one is highly indebted to him by reason of sin.

25 But forasmuch as he had not to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made.

25 "But in as much as this great debtor had wasted all, and had nothing left whereby he could satisfy his injured lord, he, according to the custom of eastern nations, in prosecuting offenders, (*Neb. v. 5, 8.*) commanded him, his wife, and children, and all that he had, to be sold, as a punishment for his unfaithfulness and abuse of trust, since he could make no other satisfaction."—So God threatens, in his word, to inflict the severest endless punishments upon the abusers of his mercy, and transgressors of his law †.

26 "When

NOTES.

† A talent was the greatest weight among the *Jews*; and that of silver, as many learned men compute, consisted of 3000 shekels. But the *Hebrew* and *Greek* talents were different; and authors are so much divided about their value, that it is hardly possible to settle it with certainty and exactness. However, this is of little moment; but ten

thousand talents are here put for an exceeding great sum.

† We are not to expect more in a parable than it is designed to represent; nor is it to be strained to an interpretation exactly suited to every circumstance: Its principal scope is to be attended to; and sentiments are to be accommodated to its other parts, only so far

26 The servant therefore fell down, and worshipped him, saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all.

27 Then the lord of that servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt.

28 But the same servant went out, and found one of his fellow-servants, which owed him an hundred pence: and he laid hands on him, and took him by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest.

29 And his fellow-servant fell down

26 "When the servant heard this, he, in a fright, fell down upon his knees before the king, and begged his patience, promising that, in time, he would pay him all his demands:"—So, many sinners, under the terror of God's threatenings, seem to be very sorrow and penitent for their sins, promise to reform their lives, and are apt vainly to imagine, that something they can do will make God amend.

27 "Upon this, the lord of that servant, in the greatness of his compassion, suspended the execution of his threatening, set his servant at liberty, and intimated that he would forgive his debt:"—So God bears long with hypocrites in his providence, and gives them time and space for repentance, declares himself, in the gospel, to be ready to forgive humble and returning sinners; and some, that have had convictions, and thereupon made a profession of religion, presume he has forgiven them.

28 "But this very man afterwards met with one of his fellow-servants, who only owed him so small a sum as an hundred pence †; and, notwithstanding the great mercy his lord had expressed about forgiving him his ten thousand talents, he seized his debtor, and, (*κατασχων αυτου τον λαιμον*) catching hold of his throat in a violent manner, as if he would choke him, severely demanded an immediate payment of his debt:"—So hypocritical penitents, and mere professors of religion, notwithstanding their pretences and hopes of having found forgiveness with God for their most heinous offences, are rigorous and unyielding in their resentments against such as have committed any trifling fault against themselves, and will abate them nothing, but have their full revenge upon them.

29, 30 "And though his poor fellow-servant fell down upon his knees before him, and begged patience, promising,

N O T E S.

far as the nature of things allows. It, therefore, is not to be thought strange, that in this parable no notice is taken of the satisfaction of Christ; for the sinner, here represented, is supposed to have excluded himself from the benefit of the gospel-expedient for mercy, and to be dealt with according to his iniquities: And the king's forgiving his servant, and afterwards casting him into prison, cannot, in the application of the parable, be understood of God's having actually remitted any man's sins, and then reversing the pardon; for this is directly contrary to the nature of his forgiveness, in

which he *blots out our transgressions*, (1ia. xliii. 25.) and is *merciful to our unrighteousnesses, and remembers our sins and iniquities no more*: (Heb. viii. 12.) But the governing design of the parable is only to shew, that we cannot expect forgiveness from God, unless we are disposed to forgive others.

† A Roman penny was the eighth part of an ounce of silver, and in value about seven-pence half-penny; and so an hundred pence was but three pounds two shillings and six-pence; a very inconsiderable sum, compared with the fore-mentioned ten thousand talents.

down at his feet, and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all.

30 And he would not: but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt.

31 So when his fellow-servants saw what was done, they were very sorry, and came and told unto their lord all that was done.

32 Then his lord, after that he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me:

33 Shouldst not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow-servant, even as I had pity on thee?

34 And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should

promising, in time, to give him full satisfaction, just as this creditor himself had done to his lord, who shewed compassion to him; yet he had no tenderness towards his debtor, but stopped his ears against his earnest entreaties, and threw him into jail, resolving to keep him there till he should receive full satisfaction for his debt:—So these pretenders to religion, and to hopes of having obtained forgiveness of their sins against the great God, will not be prevailed upon, by any entreaties or professions of repentance, to pass by the offences which others have given them; but, unmindful of their own obligations, obstinately persist in revengeful designs against them.

31 “When some others of the fellow-servants saw this, they were much troubled to think of the cruelty of one to whom their lord had shewn so much lenity, and, in the greatness of their concern, went and acquainted him with it:—So fellow-Christians are heartily grieved at the unforgiving, unmerciful; and revengeful spirit which discovers itself in some professors of religion, who, they hope, have obtained mercy of the Lord; and they bewail it before God, begging, if it were his will, that they might be brought to behave more suitably to their profession and obligations.

32, 33 “When the king knew how unworthily this wretch had acted toward the man that owed a small matter to him, he called him again before him, and said, O thou ungrateful, cruel, and wicked creature! how much greater mercy did I give you room to expect, and did you profess and hope to obtain from me, than this poor debtor, who is only your fellow-servant, asked of you? How could you be so severe upon him, who entreated your forgiveness! Should you not have been moved with compassion towards him, by my readiness to quit your immense debt, and by the forbearance you found in me?”—So God will call those false professors to a strict account, who, after all his patience towards them, and declarations of willingness to forgive, and after all their pretences and hopes of having received the remission of their innumerable and aggravated sins, will have no compassion on their professing fellow-Christians, and fellow-creatures, that have offended them.

34 “And his lord was so angry and provoked at this unmerciful, revengeful servant, that he ordered him to be thrown into prison, and there to suffer the most rigorous punishment that justice could

should pay all that was due unto him.

35 So likewise shall my heavenly Father do alſo unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trefpaſſes.

could demand, for the debt he had contracted, till full ſatisfaction ſhould be made for it.

35 " In like manner my heavenly Father, ſays Chriſt, will ſhew his terrible indignation, and take righteous vengeance, in the everlaſting deſtruction of all pretenders to religion, who abuſe his patience and his proclamations of pardoning grace, and who act ſo contrary to their profeſſions and hopes of intereſt in his mercy, as to ſhew an implacable ſpirit, and not heartily forgive their brethren that have offended them."

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

To be ambitious of the honours of this world, is unbecoming the diſciples of Chriſt, and unſuitable to the ſpiritual and holy nature of his kingdom: But the honours he puts upon humble ſouls, are incomparably better than all that pride propoſes to itſelf; and the lower we are abuſed in our own eyes, the higher he will exalt us: The meaneſt in his family are precious in his ſight; angels miniſter to them; Chriſt himſelf died to redeem them; his Father is their Father, and loves them; and when they are in the greateſt danger, like wandering ſheep, he ſearches them out, and takes care to reduce and ſecure them. His ear is open to their cries; and, whenever they aſſemble together in the name of Chriſt, he honours them with his ſpecial preſence. But O! what will become of falſe pretenders to religion, who deſpiſe and trouble any, though the weakeſt, true believers in him, and go about to inveigle and ruin them? They muſt be caſt out of the church on earth, and the ſentence againſt them will be ratified in heaven; and, unleſs they are brought to repentance here, God will take righteous vengeance upon them for ever. How awful are church-cenſures upon tranſgreſſors, when managed according to the will of Chriſt! They are ſolemn judicial acts, paſſed in his name, and with a reference to the future judgment; and therefore ſhould neither be raſhly paſſed, nor heedleſſly or willfully incurred, nor lightly thought of, or prophanely deſpiſed. Offences againſt God are of a moſt heinous nature; and it is better to ſuffer the greateſt ſelf-denial, than to ſin againſt him; for the debt contracted by every ſin is no leſs than a talent. And what an immense ſum is it that we owe to him, and hope to obtain the free remiſſion of from him! But perſonal affronts and injuries from our fellow-creatures againſt ourſelves, are inconfiderable trivials, compared with ours againſt the great God: If, therefore, we pretend to expect his forgiving of us, how ſhould this move us to forgive others that offend us, leſt our own hopes of pardoning mercy from him ſhould be diſappointed at laſt?

C H A P. XIX.

Chriſt heals the ſick, 1, 2. His doctrine about divorce and marriage, 3,—12. His bleſſing young children, 13,—15. His diſcourſe with a rich man, about the way to eternal life, 16,—22.; and with the diſciples on that occaſion, 23,—30.

TEXT.

AND it came to paſs, that when Jeſus had finiſhed theſe ſayings, he departed from Galilee, and came in-

PARAPHRASE.

WHEN Jeſus had finiſhed the foregoing inſtructions, he took his leave of Galilee, where his miniſtry had been chiefly exerciſed hitherto, and went into the borders of Judea, which lay beyond Jordan, that he might go on with his work

to the coasts of Judea, beyond Jordan:

2 And great multitudes followed him; and he healed them there.

3 The Pharisees also came unto him, tempting him, and saying unto him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?

4 And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning, made them male and female?

5 And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh.

6 Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.

7 They say unto him, Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away?

8 He saith unto them, Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts, suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so.

work there, where *John* had been preparing his way, by preaching and baptizing. (*John* x. 40.)

2 And when he came thither, great multitudes flocked after him, as they had used to do in *Galilee*; and, according to his gracious and unwearied custom, he preached the gospel to them, (*Mark* x. 1.) and healed their sick, to shew his compassion, and confirm his doctrine.

3 The *Pharisees*, his restless and watchful enemies, followed him hither also, that they might prejudice the people against him; and, endeavouring to draw him into a determination about divorces, either against the doctrine he had taught, (*chap.* v. 32.) or against the law of *Moses*, and their own traditions, they asked him, Whether he thought it lawful for a man to put away his wife at his own pleasure, on every occasion, as he should think proper?

4, 5 Jesus, knowing their captious design, prudently, and yet effectually, answered the question, by referring them to some passages of Scripture, saying, Have ye never read, (*Gen.* i. 27.) that in the creation of *Adam* and *Eve*, the first parents of mankind, God made them male and female, one male for one female; and said, (*Gen.* ii. 24.) *Therefore shall a man leave his father and mother, the relation between a man and his wife being nearer than that between parents and children, and shall adhere to his wife; and they two shall be accounted of, as if they were but one body, as the first pair really were, before the woman was created out of the man, one part of whom is not to be separated from the other?*

6 Since therefore God, answerable to the first formation of the two sexes, has, by the primitive institution of marriage, so closely united them together, as that they should be accounted no more two, but, as it were, one body; let no ordinance of man separate them from each other, whom God has joined by such a strict bond.

7 The *Pharisees* answered, If this be so, why did *Moses* in the law order, that a man should give his wife a bill of divorce, and dismiss her?

8 Jesus replied, *Moses* did not command, he only, by a judicial or political law, for reasons of state, permitted you, of the *Israelitish* nation, on some accounts, to put away your wives, exempting you from civil punishment in case ye did so; and there was a sort of necessity for this, to prevent greater mischief, because of your hard-heartedness against the wives, whom your fierce, malicious, and stubborn tempers, when

when once prejudiced against them, would have prompted you to abuse, and even murder in your wrath, if *Moses*, in compassion to them, and for preventing your sin, had not thus suffered you to divorce them: But there was no such allowance from the beginning, in the original constitution of the law of marriage.

9 And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and who so marrieth her which is put away, doth commit adultery.

10 His disciples say unto him, If the case of the man be so with his wife, it is not good to marry.

11 But he said unto them, All men cannot receive this saying, save they to whom it is given.

12 For there are some eunuchs, which were so born from their mother's womb: and there are some eunuchs, which were made eunuchs of men: and there be eunuchs, which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. He that is able to receive it, let him receive it, let him receive it.

9 And as I am come to take away hardness of heart, and to give an heart of flesh: to rectify mens manners, and restore things to their primitive institution: I say unto you, Such divorces, on trivial occasions, shall be permitted no longer; but, from this time forward, whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be on account of her having played the harlot, in direct contradiction to matrimonial rights, (see the note on *Mat. v. 32.*) and shall marry another woman, will, in reality, commit adultery by that new contract; and he, that marries such a divorced woman, shall be deemed guilty of adultery with her likewise.

10 This being heard by Christ's disciples, seemed an hard saying to them, who had been always taught another sort of doctrine by the *Scribes*; and therefore they afterwards said to him, when he was with them alone in a house, (*Mark x. 10.*) If a man may not put away his wife for any other cause than her having violated her chastity, the unhappiness of a marriage-state must be so great, that we think it is best for one to live single all his days.

11 But he answered. However true that may be in some circumstances of things; yet every man cannot live unmarried with satisfaction to himself, and without sin; and none can do it, except such as have received the gift of chastity from God, of which number there are but few.

12 For some have the gift of continence by means of the natural temper and constitution with which God has formed them from the birth, whilst others are wickedly maimed by the unnatural violence of cruel men; and others, through divine grace, subdue their inclinations to marriage by a voluntary and religious determination of their own minds, that they may have less incumbrances in life, and fewer distractions and hindrances in the service of God; and so may the better attend to the things of the Lord, as Christians, or as ministers in his kingdom: And though all are not enabled to come up to this, and none are to be forced to it; yet if any one has received this gift from God, let him improve it as a blessing, when, all things considered, it may be best for him to live single.

13 Then were there brought unto him little children, that he should put his hands on them, and pray: and the disciples rebuked them.

14 But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven.

15 And he laid his hands on them, and departed thence.

16 And behold, one came and said unto him, Good master, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?

17 And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one that is God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.

13 After this, (*τα βεβηνα*, *Luke xviii. 15.*) some infants of the believing Jews were brought to him, not to be cured of any distemper, but that he might lay his hands upon them, and pray over them, in order to his imparting some spiritual blessing to them: (see the note on *Mark x. 13.*) But (*δι*) the disciples thinking, that, if such a practice were encouraged, it would be too troublesome to their Lord, since, for the same reason, abundance of children might be perpetually crowded in upon him, wherever he went; they began to reprimand those that brought them.

14 But Jesus observing it, was much displeased with his disciples for attempting to keep them out of the way of his blessing, (*Mark x. 14.*) and said, Let young children be brought to me, and do not go about to hinder them; for these, as well as grown persons, are subjects of the gospel-kingdom, which I am come to set up in the world †, and have an interest in its privileges and blessings.

15 And then, to shew his love and tenderness, and to confirm their privileges, he, according to an ancient rite of the Jewish church in benedictions, laid his hands upon them, and blessed them, (*Mark x. 16.*) and having done this, he went away from that place.

16 And as he was passing along, (*Mark x. 17.*) behold a hopeful young man of figure and estate, who was a ruler! (*Luke xviii. 18.*) He, having conceived a favourable opinion of Christ, came to him, and addressed him in such respectful language as the *Rabbies* of that age were fond of, saying, Good master, whom I esteem as a teacher sent from God, I beg you would please to tell me what works of righteousness I must do to obtain everlasting life.

17 Jesus answering, said unto him, Why do you, who think me to be no more than a mere man, call me, in this emphatical manner, good; since there is none to whom this title, in an absolute sense, belongs, but God, and all goodness comes from him? However, as to your question about doing some works of righteousness to give you a right to eternal life †, if

NOTES.

† It seems evident, that Christ's principal meaning here, was not that the subjects of the gospel-kingdom are like little children for their temper and qualities, though he took occasion from hence to add an instruction of this nature about it. *Luke xviii. 17.*; for this could be no more a reason why their children, rather than lambs or doves, should be brought

to him to be blessed: But he plainly intimates, that their covenant-interest, and visible church-membership, should be continued under the gospel-state; and that therefore they ought to be recommended and devoted to him; which makes his reasoning on this head clear and just.

† I take the design of the young man's questions, and Christ's answers, all along in

if you would obtain it by your own doings, you must perfectly keep the commandments of God.

18 He saith unto him, Which? Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness.

19 Honour thy father and thy mother; and, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

20 The young man saith unto him, All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet?

21 Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me.

22 But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions.

18, 19 The young man replied, What are the commandments that you mean? Jesus, to convince him of his defect, even in the duties of the second table, instanced only in them, saying, You, having been brought up in the *Jewish* religion, know the commandments of the moral law, (*Mark* x. 19.) which are such as these: Thou shalt not do any murder; Thou shalt not commit adultery; Thou shalt not steal, cheat, or defraud any man; (*Mark* x. 19.) Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour; Thou shalt honour thy father and mother; and, to sum up all in a few words, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

20 The young man, judging of these precepts according to the loose interpretations of the *Jewish* doctors, and supposing he should obtain Christ's approbation, said, These are very easy duties, and I have observed every one of them from my childhood up, as long as I can remember; I am therefore safe enough for eternal life: What can there be wanting in me, after all this, to hinder my obtaining it? Is there any thing more that you would enjoin upon me? If so, I am ready to do it.

21 Jesus, to convince him of his great mistake as to what he had done, and of his insufficiency as to what he could further do, put him upon giving a proof of his compliance with the great command of *loving his neighbour as himself*, saying, If you would be indeed as perfect as you vainly conceit yourself to be, and as the law of God requires, in some peculiar circumstances, relating to your neighbour's good, go now and sell your estate, and give it all away to the poor in these days of pressing necessity: And if, only by this single instance, you prove the sincerity of your love to fellow creatures as to yourself, I assure you of a treasure in heaven; then come again and follow me, as my disciple and my servant, and I will further instruct you into the way to eternal life, and conduct you safely to it.

22 But when the young man heard this, he thought it a hard saying, and went away from the only Saviour, with a heavy heart, and with great vexation of mind, to think that this must be a parting point between heaven and him: for he was

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in this discourse, to proceed upon what may be expected, according to the terms of the covenant of works, to give a title to eternal life; otherwise Christ's answer seems hardly reconcilable to his doctrine

of the necessity of faith in himself for that purpose; and therefore I have chosen this, rather than the more usual way of interpreting it.

very rich, and could by no means bear the thoughts of giving up all he had for Christ and future happiness, but really preferred the riches of this world to all the blessings of the other.

23 Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, that a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven.

24 And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.

25 When his disciples heard it, they were exceedingly amazed, saying, Who then can be saved?

26 But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.

27 Then answered Peter, and said unto him, Behold, we have forsaken all and followed thee: what shall we have therefore?

23 Then Jesus took this occasion to say to his disciples, How strong are the temptations of earthly riches! I assuredly tell you, that it is a very difficult thing for a man, who abounds in wealth, and whose heart is taken up with it, to be a true subject of the kingdom of grace here, and to arrive at the kingdom of glory hereafter.

24 And, that ye may take the more notice of it, I say unto you again, The love of this world's treasures, to the placing of one's happiness in them, (*Mark* x. 24.) is so exceedingly ensnaring, that it makes the difficulty of such a rich man's being a true disciple to me, and of his getting safe to heaven, greater than can be imagined; yea, than a camel's going through the eye of a needle, or than a needle's being threaded with a thick cable-ropes.

25 The disciples, upon hearing this, seemed to be extremely surprised, and cried out, Who then among mankind can be saved, since many of them are rich, and most of them desire riches, and all will find something or other in this world to engage their hearts, and hinder them in their way to heaven?

26 But Jesus, looking with earnestness and compassion upon them, under their consternation and fear, said, Such indeed is the corruption of mankind, and their addictedness to this world, that going on therein is inconsistent with salvation; and it is altogether impossible for any man, by the power of nature, to make an effectual change upon himself, or for one of them to make it upon another; but it is not impossible to the almighty grace of God to turn even the most rich and worldly-minded sinner to himself, and carry him through all temptations to eternal life.

27 Then *Peter*, answering, said to him, Behold what an effect this grace has had upon us! Though we were not rich in this world; yet have we forsaken all that we had, which was as much to us as riches are to others; we have cheerfully left our livelihood, and dearest relations and enjoyments, to follow thee through all difficulties, wants, and dangers;

NOTE.

† Καμῶνος. The word here used is observed by some to signify a *cable*, as well as a *camel*, which seems to make the metaphor more natural: But others tells us, that a camel's or an elephant's

passing through the eye of a needle, was a proverbial expression of something extremely difficult, if not impossible, in the ordinary course of things.

gers; and all our expectations are from thee: What then wilt thou please to bestow upon us? We trust thou wilt make it worth our while; but how?

23 And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me in the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

28 Jesus said unto them, I assuredly tell you, That as ye, my apostles, have gone through the work of regeneration * yourselves, and have attended me to subserve the design of my kingdom which I am setting up for the reformation and recovery of others; so ye shall bear a part in the honour and blessedness hereafter to be revealed: When I, the Messiah, shall be enthroned in glory at the Father's right hand, ye, immediately thereupon, shall be endued with power from on high, and shall preach my gospel with authority, and with mighty signs and wonders to confirm it: When I shall appear in my glory for the destruction of *Jerusalem*, your predictions about it shall be accomplished, and your characters and commissions shall be vindicated: When the *Jews* shall be called again in the last days, your doctrine shall be the means of their conversion, which will be as life from the dead: And when I shall come to judge the world, ye shall have the honour of sitting upon twelve seats next my throne; and however the twelve tribes may treat you now, they shall all be brought before you then, as assessors with me in judgment, to see and approve the sentence, which I shall pass upon them, according to my gospel dispensed by you; and as ye suffer with me in this world, ye shall be glorified together with me in the next.

29 And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundred-fold, and shall inherit everlasting life.

29 And as to all the rest of my true disciples, as well as you, whoever they be, that, for my sake and the gospel's, shall suffer any losses in their temporal interests and enjoyments; whether they be deprived of their worldly substance and estates, in houses or lands; or of their dearest relations, such as brethren, sisters, fathers, mothers, wives, or children; because they chose rather to part with them, than with me: All these shall have, in this present life, what is an hundred times better for them, in inward contentment and divine consolations and hopes, and many times in outward friends and supplies too, which God will, in his providence, raise up to them; and what crowns all is, that they shall, at length, inherit everlasting life.

30 But

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* As *αναγεννησια*, the regeneration, may relate either to the renewing work of grace, or the glorious restitution of all things, and may be referred either to the former or latter part of the sentence, I

have taken both into the paraphrase, and given it as wide a scope as I apprehend the nature of things will bear; and the reader may observe, that I generally chuse the like method in other places.

30 But many that are first, shall be last; and the last shall be first.

30 But that all this may be looked upon as a reward, not of merit, but of grace; many of the *Jews*, who have the first gospel-calls, and stand fairest in outward appearance and visible privileges, shall be rejected for their unbelief; and many of the *Gentiles*, who are now strangers to the covenant of promise, and will be called last, shall be admitted, through faith, to all the blessings of the kingdom of grace and of glory: And † even many of those *Jews*, who shall be first effectually called in order of time, shall be, in point of honour, as those who shall be called last; and many of the *Gentiles*, who shall be brought to believe in me, in order of time, after them, shall be advanced to honours as high, or higher than theirs.

RECOLLECTIONS.

How indefatigable was our blessed Lord in doing good wherever he came! how prudent in his conduct to avoid snares and dangers! and how careful to maintain and perpetuate every divine institution, and particularly in what relates to the chastity of the marriage-relation, and to the spiritual rights and privileges of the children of the covenant! These ought to be presented to him, that he may own and bless them: And how displeasing is it to Christ, for any of his disciples to go about to exclude them from their place in his kingdom, or to hinder their being brought to him in the gospel-state, that they may receive the tokens of his favour to them! Marriage is an ordinance of God, free to all, as prudence and inclination may direct; and however some may obtain from it with safety and advantage, yet this is not a gift given to all, and none are to be forced into vows against it; and when once it is contracted, nothing but adultery or death can lawfully break the matrimonial bond; nor will the civil magistrate's divorce, for other reasons, acquit the conscience from sin against God. How unable are we to keep any of God's commands, as we ought, without defect! And if we must have a perfect righteousness to entitle us to life, where shall we find it but in Christ? But, alas! many that compliment him, have very low thoughts of him, who is good, and doeth good, and who only can bring us into the way to eternal happiness; and they who do not see his excellence, and their own need of him, are naturally prone to imagine that they can obtain salvation by their own doings: But if any think themselves capable of this, they might soon be convinced of their dangerous mistake, were they put to the trial of their obedience in instances that lie most opposite to their natural inclinations and secular interests. Alas! what snares and temptations are the riches and the love of this world, to hinder us in our duty and in our way to heaven! Nothing but almighty grace can give an effectual turn to the heart, and overcome the difficulty: And whoever is hereby brought to deny himself, and suffer temporal losses for Christ, shall find a rich amend in his blessing here, and eternal life with the highest honours in his presence for ever. But whether we be first or last in partaking of gospel-benefits, it is according to the riches of God's grace.

NOTE.

† I think both these interpretations may be taken in, to comport with the discourse of the following chapter, which is an enlargement upon this verse, and sets out God's sovereign and yet righte-

ous rejection of some, and equal vouchsafement of his blessings to others, among whom we might have thought he would have made a difference.

C H A P. XX.

The parable of the labourers in the vineyard, 1,—16. Christ's prediction of his own death and resurrection, 17,—19. The petition of the mother of two disciples, and Christ's answer and discourse upon it, 20,—28. And his curing two blind men, 29,—34.

TEXT.

FOR the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which went out early in the morning to hire labourers into his vineyard.

2 And when he had agreed with the labourers for a penny a-day, he sent them into his vineyard.

3 And he went out about the third hour, and saw others standing idle in the market-place,

4 And said unto them, Go ye also into the vineyard; and whatsoever is right, I will give you. And they went their way.

5 Again he went out about the sixth and ninth hour,

PARAPHRASE.

NOW, that what hath been said, about the first being last, and the last first, is no way inconsistent with rules of righteousness, may be learnt by a plain similitude. "For the dispensation of grace, in the gospel-kingdom, is like the management of a certain matter of a family, who went out early in the morning to hire labourers into his vineyard; and, agreeing with them for a penny a-day, he set them about his business there:"—So † God called the *Jews* to faith and repentance, in the beginning of the gospel-dispensation, by the ministry of *John the Baptist*, of Christ himself, and of his apostles in their first mission to the lost sheep of the house of *Israel*: And some of them were called in the younger part of life, with proposals of spiritual and eternal blessings for their encouragement; and they thereupon professed to come into the church, and give themselves up to the Lord.

3, 4, 5 "The master afterwards went out about the third hour, and then about the sixth and ninth hours; and finding others, who stood idle in the market, like persons that waited there for employment, he bid them go into his vineyard, promising that they should have a sufficient recompence; and they accordingly went:"—So the *Jews* continuing to neglect Christ and the gospel, though they were full of expectation that the Messiah would appear about that time to set up his kingdom, God again called them by Christ's sending out the seventy disciples, as well as the apostles, during the time of his abode upon earth; and after his resurrection, his

NOTE.

† Some suppose, that *early in the morning*, and the *third*, the *sixth*, the *ninth*, and the *eleventh hours*, which signify nine o'clock in the morning, noon, three, and five o'clock in the afternoon, relate to the times of the first promise, and afterwards of *Abraham* and *Moses*, and then of the prophets, and last of all of Christ and his apostles: But as the kingdom of heaven, represented in this parable; signifies the gospel-state, I rather take them all to relate to the iver-

ral periods of its dispensation, and the various commissions for preaching it, first to the *Jews*, and afterwards to the *Gentiles*: And though this parable seems to relate primarily to the different seasons of God's calling the *Jews* and *Gentiles* by the gospel, and to the sovereign distributions of his grace to one and the other of them; yet it is mostly applicable to all persons, wherever the gospel comes, in every age, and to every period of a man's life.

hour, and did likewise.

his messengers were sent out again with a further commission to preach the gospel, first in *Jerusalem* and *Judea*, and then to the *Jews* of the dispersion, before they went to the *Gentiles*; and, at these several seasons, many came in, and made a profession of Christ's name, some of which were called in their youthful days, others in their middle age, and others in the decline of life.

6 And about the eleventh hour he went out, and found others standing idle, and saith unto them, Why stand ye here all the day idle?

7 They say unto him, Because no man hath hired us. He saith unto them, Go ye also into the vineyard; and whatsoever is right that shall ye receive.

8 So when even was come, the lord of the vineyard saith unto his steward, Call the labourers, and give them their hire, beginning from the last unto the first.

9 And when they came, that were hired about the eleventh hour, they received every man a penny.

10 But when the first came, they supposed that they should have received more; and they likewise received every man a penny.

11 And when they had received it, they murmured against the goodman of the house.

12 Saying, These last

6, 7 "Last of all, about the eleventh hour, the master found others standing idle, and expostulated with them for squandering away all their time; and when they said they had nothing to do, he bid them go into the vineyard, promising them a proper reward."—So at last God sent the gospel, by the ministry of the apostles, and others of his servants in that and after-ages, to the idolatrous *Gentiles*, who had for many generations gone on in ignorance, walking in their own ways; and they were turned from idols to serve the living and true God, upon the encouragements therein set before them; and some were called in old age, after they had wasted the greatest part of their lives in stupidity and in sin.

8 "Now when the day was finished, the master ordered all the labourers to be called, that they might receive their reward, beginning with them who came in last, and so on to the first."—So at God's completing the settlement of the kingdom of grace, he will shew the riches of his mercy to the *Gentiles*, and to them who were called last; and in the evening of life or at death, and in the evening of the world, or at judgment, they shall receive the blessing of eternal life, as well as the *Jews*, and such as were called first.

9, 10 "And when they, who came last into the master's service, received a penny, they, who were ordered to go first into the vineyard, expected to receive more, but were disappointed."—So when the *Gentiles*, and they who were called last, were admitted to all the privileges of the covenant here, and entitled to the gracious reward of eternal life which they shall receive hereafter; the *Jews*, and they who were called first, knowing this, imagined that their privileges and their glory should be still greater; but found themselves mistaken, they being to receive no more than the others.

11, 12 "And when they, that first entered upon their master's work, found they were to have no more, they murmured against him, because they who came in last, and laboured but one hour, received as much as themselves, who had borne the heat

last have wrought but one hour, and thou hast made them equal unto us, which have born the burden and heat of the day.

heat and toil of all the day :”—So the *Jews*, who had been the ancient people of God, and were first called, and valued themselves upon their external privileges and performances, murmured at the *Gentiles* being made fellow-heirs with them of all the privileges of the gospel, and of all the blessings of salvation ; because they thought the advantages and glories of the Messiah's kingdom ought to have been confined to themselves, or at least bestowed in a more ample manner upon them than upon the *Gentiles*.

13 But he answered one of them, and said, Friend, I do thee no wrong: didst not thou agree with me for a penny?

14 Take that thine is, and go thy way: I will give unto this last, even as unto thee.

15 Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? Is thine eye evil, because I am good?

13, 14, 15 “ But the master answered one of these murmurers, saying, Friend, why is this complaint? I have done you no wrong: Have I not performed my agreement with you? Take, therefore, what belongs to you, without grudging at the favour I show to others; for I will give as much to the last as to the first; and have I not a right to dispose of mine own property as I please? Why, then, should you be envious, because I am bountiful?”—So God reproves the complainers against his dispensations of mercy, and vindicates his own right, in freely disposing of gospel-blessings, according to his sovereign will, saying, How good and kind soever I am to others, I do no injury to you; ye cannot claim more than I have given you; and ye ought not to envy others. My favour is free, my gifts are entirely at my own disposal, I am debtor to none, and will leave no room for any to complain; but will have mercy on whom I will have mercy: And as I delight to glorify the exceeding riches of my grace, I will do it to such persons, and in such ways and degrees, as seem good in my sight. What! shall I not do as I please with mine own? How unbecoming is it, that ye should be offended, because I am so exceedingly gracious, even beyond all appearance of desert.

16 So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many be called, but few chosen.

16 Thus, as was said, (chap. xix. 30.) many of those, who, like the *Gentiles*, are called last, and have the least pretence to be regarded, shall be admitted to all the privileges and blessings of the kingdom of grace and glory. as well as those who, like the *Jews*, were called first, and bid fairest for pre-eminence: And they who, from a high conceit of their own merit, murmur against, and cannot be reconciled to those sovereign dispensations of forfeited goodness, excludes themselves from its saving benefits; while others, who appear to be still more unworthy, shall be partakers of them †: For many are

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† This latter part of the verse being brought in as a reason of what was said

are externally called, by the ministry of the word, and made members of the visible church; but there are, comparatively, few that are chosen of God to eternal life, and effectually called according to his purpose.

17 And Jesus going up to Jerusalem, took the twelve disciples apart in the way, and said unto them,

18 Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and the Son of man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests, and unto the scribes, and they shall condemn him to death,

19 And shall deliver him to the Gentiles, to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify him: and the third day he shall rise again.

20 Then came to him the mother of Zebedee's children, with her sons, worshipping him, and desiring a certain thing of him.

21 And he said unto her, What wilt thou? She saith

17 After these things, Jesus, knowing that the time of his sufferings drew nigh, set out for Jerusalem, with the twelve apostles, to celebrate his last passover there; and, as they were in the way, he privately reminded them of what he had told them, once and again before. would beset him; and added some further particulars about it, saying,

18 We are now going up to Jerusalem, and I would have you observe, that this will be my last journey thither; for the time draws nigh, in which I, the Messiah, shall be treacherously betrayed into the hands of the chief priests and Scribes, who will take this opportunity of apprehending and prosecuting me with malice and fury, till they procure an unrighteous sentence for condemning me to death.

19 And they will deliver me into the hands of the Roman governor, and his soldiers, to be derided, crucified, and insulted, abused, and beaten with rods, (see the note on chap. xxvii. 26.) and at last, to be put to the painful and ignominious death of the cross, as if I were the meanest of slaves, and the vilest of malefactors; and, for your comfort I add, that, on the third day, I shall rise again from the dead.

20 Then † Salome, the wife of Zebedee, came to him with her two sons, James and John, (chap. x. 2.) and imagining, that, after the rising again which he spake of, he would set up a temporal kingdom, with great majesty and glory on the earth, the fell down before him, and worshipped him, earnestly begging that he would grant her a certain request, on the behalf of those her two sons, they also joining in the petition with her. (Mark x. 35.)

21 He, knowing their ambitious design, said to her, What is the petition that you would offer? She told him it was, that, since he had spoken of the

NOTES.

in the former, seems naturally to intimate, that by the *last* being *first*, and the *first* *last*, our Lord meant not only, that the Gentiles should be made equal, in gospel-privileges and blessings, to the Jews; but that many, who were most likely, in human view, to be made partakers of them, should fall short, through self-conceit and unbelief; while others, who were much more unlikely, should

obtain them through faith, according to the sovereign disposals of God's grace.

† That this was Salome, appears by comparing Mat. xxvii. 26. with Mark xv. 40; and she may be spoken of as the mother of Zebedee's children, either because he was dead, or was not a constant follower of Christ, as she and her sons were.

saith unto him, Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left, in thy kingdom.

22 But Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? They say unto him, We are able.

23 And he saith unto them, Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with: but to sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them, for whom it is prepared of my Father.

24 And when the ten heard it, they were moved with indignation against the two brethren.

the twelve apostles sitting on twelve thrones, (chap. xix. 28.) those two sons of hers, who were his constant and favourite disciples, might, at the opening of his kingdom, be admitted to the highest places of honour, and be next in authority to himself, like persons sitting, one at his right hand, and the other at his left.

22 But Jesus, turning to her two sons, replied, Ye are much mistaken about the nature of my kingdom, which is not of this world; nor will it gratify your carnal ambition, according to your vain expectations; sufferings here being the way to its dignities and honours hereafter: If, therefore, ye would be partakers of its glory, think seriously with yourselves, whether ye are able to drink of the cup of trembling which I must drink of, and to be baptized with the sorrowful baptism which I must be baptized with by my sufferings? They readily answered, with little thought, but with a great deal of vanity and self-confidence, We are ready to suffer every thing that can befall us, for obtaining the honours of thy kingdom.

23 Jesus replied, Ye shall indeed be called to suffer terrible persecutions, reproaches, and distresses, after my example, and for my sake, in your way to my kingdom of glory: (see the note on *Mark* x. 39.) But as to the chief honours there, such as sitting next to me at my right hand and my left, these are already disposed of in God's eternal counsels, and are put into my hands to confer them, not according to any private will of my own, but according to his purpose, who *bath given me power over all flesh, that I should give eternal life to as many as he has given me*; (*John* xvii. 2.) so that these honours are not mine to give, († *ἀλλ' οἱ ἑτοιμαστοὶ*) save only to them for whom they have been prepared by my Father, in his appointments, before the foundation of the world.

24 Now, when the other ten apostles heard the ambitious request of these two brethren, and Christ's reply to it, they were filled with envy and resentment against them, for endeavouring to get a pre-eminence in the Messiah's kingdom, which they thought they had as good a claim to as either of them.

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25 But

† The particle (*ἀλλ'*) is sometimes used exceptively, as in *Mark* ix. 8. compared with *Matt.* xvii. 9.; and the Syriac version very justly renders these words, without the supplement in our translation, *Unless to those for whom it was prepared, &c.* See *Blackwall's Sacred Classics*, vol. i. p. 24.

25 But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great, exercise authority upon them.

26 But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister.

27 And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant.

28 Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

29 And as they departed from Jericho, a great multitude followed him.

30 And behold, two blind men sitting by the way-side, when they heard that Jesus passed by, cried out, saying, Have mercy on us, O Lord, thou Son of David.

25 But Jesus, seeing that the same carnal ambitious temper worked in them all, called them together, and, with great meekness and gentleness, reproved them, saying, All this is quite wrong: Ye know, indeed, that the princes of this world, the kings and emperors among the *Gentiles*, have a mighty thirst after dominion and power over their subjects, and over one another; and they among them who have the strongest arm, exercise authority over the rest.

26, 27 But it must not be thus among you in my spiritual kingdom, the nature and design of which are contrary to those of the kingdoms of this world: If any, therefore, would be truly great and honourable under me, let him humble and deny himself, and labour to promote the spiritual interests of others; and if any among you desire to have pre-eminence above the rest, let it not be by lording it over God's heritage, but by condescending to the meanest services for their soul's benefit, and by serving one another in love.

28 Herein take me, the Messiah, for your pattern, who came into this world, not to take upon me temporal state and dominion, or to be served with pomp and grandeur; but to submit to the most self-abasing offices, in doing good to the souls and bodies of men, and to lay down my own life at last, (*λυτρον αὐτῷ πολλῶν*) as a price of redemption for as many of them as the Father has given me, by dying in their room and stead, that they may be delivered from sin and slavery, from the curse of the law, and the wrath of God.

29 Upon this, Jesus and his disciples went forward to *Jerusalem*; and, passing through *Jericho* in their way thither, (see the note on *Luke xviii 35*.) a great multitude of people followed him, as they used to do wherever he went.

30 And behold a wonderful instance of his power and compassion! There were two blind men, sitting on the side of a public road to ask relief; one of whom was a noted beggar, whose name was *Bartimeus*; (*Mark x. 46*.) and when they heard, from some of the company, that Jesus, who had wrought so many miracles, was then going by, they joined in their request for a cure, crying out, with great earnestness, and faith in his power and goodness, O Lord, thou Son of *David*, whom we believe to be the true Messiah, and both able and ready to help and save the miserable, we beseech thee extend thy mercy to us.

31 And the multitude rebuked them, because they should hold their peace: but they cried the more, saying, Have mercy on us, O Lord, thou Son of David.

32 And Jesus stood still, and called them, and said, What will ye that I shall do unto you?

33 They say unto him, Lord, that our eyes may be opened.

34 So Jesus had compassion on them, and touched their eyes: and immediately their eyes received sight, and they followed him.

31 But (de) the multitude chid them for making such a noise, and bade them hold their peace, and not disturb him, who seemed to take no notice of them: However, instead of being silent, they cried out with still more vehemence and fervour, O Lord, thou expected Messiah, we greatly need the mercy which thou art come to bestow, and earnestly beg that thou wouldest please to have compassion upon us.

32 Then Jesus stopped; and, for the encouragement of their faith, ordered them to be brought to him: And, when they came near, he asked them, What mercy it was that they desired he should shew them, whether they wanted an alms, or a cure from him, or what else? thereby giving them an opportunity to make known their particular request, and an intimation of his readiness to answer it.

33 They immediately replied, Lord, the mercy we want, and humbly beg of thee to grant, is, that, according to thy greatness and goodness, and according to our distressing necessity, thou wouldest restore sight to us who are blind.

34 And they no sooner asked but received; Jesus extended his mercy toward them, according to their faith; and, upon his touching their blind eyes, they, by a mere act of his sovereign power and will, recovered their sight in an instant, and went along with the company after him, to testify their gratitude, love, and praise, and to receive still further blessings from him.

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

How free and sovereign is the grace of God! The most unlikely are effectually called; and that sooner or latter, according to his good pleasure; and the latest convert shall have all the privileges of the gospel-state, and the reward of eternal life, as well as the earliest; whilst others, who seemed to stand fairer for it, drop short of it. It is indeed a reward, because it is given, according to the promise, after our work is done upon earth, and because it is a rich amend for all our labour and sufferings for Christ: but it is a reward of grace, which God bestows, as he pleases, upon his chosen, for whom it is prepared in his eternal decrees. He herein leaves no room for others to complain, since he does them no wrong; but every mouth of proud boasters, and captious murmurers, shall be stopped. And, blessed be God, while there is life, there is hope for every sinner, especially for those that have not all their days before neglected the means of grace: But there is no encouragement for such as sit under the gospel, to defer their repentance, in hopes of being called at the eleventh hour; and as soon as the twelfth hour comes, or the day of life is ended, there remains no more hope for ever. How earnestly should we beg, that Christ would open the eyes of our minds, before it be too late; that he would shew us the worth, and our need of spiritual blessings, and the way of obtaining them through faith in him, who freely gave his life a ransom for many! And if for many, why not for me? It surely is for me, if I am brought to receive the Lord Jesus as the only sacrifice for my sins, to depend on him as able and ready to save me, and to make him my example: If I prefer spiritual to temporal blessings,

blessings, and seek to excel in humility and usefulness, in every great and good work, instead of thirsting after power and fame; and if, having sat down and counted the cost, I reckon upon the cross as well as the crown, and am made willing to follow Christ through sufferings to glory.

C H A P. XXI.

Christ's public entry into Jerusalem, 1,—11. His driving the traders out of the temple, 12,—16. His cursing the barren fig-tree, 17,—22. His silencing the Jews, by an appeal to John's baptism, 23,—27. His reproof to them, by the parable of two sons, 28,—32.; and by the parable of the vineyard let out to husbandmen, 33,—46.

TEXT.

AND when they drew nigh unto Jerusalem, and were come to Bethphage, unto the mount of Olives, then sent Jesus two disciples,

2 Saying unto them, Go into the village over against you, and straightway ye shall find an ass tied, and a colt with her; loose them, and bring them unto me.

3 And if any man say ought unto you, ye shall say, The Lord hath need of them: and straightway he will send them.

4 All this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying,

5 Tell ye the daughter of Sion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the sole of an ass.

PARAPHRASE.

NOW when our Lord and his disciples drew near to Jerusalem, and were come over-against Bethphage, which lay between that city and the mount of Olives, Jesus knowing that, at the approaching passover, he, as the true paschal lamb typified by that ordinance, must be sacrificed for us, (1 Cor. v. 7.) determined to make a public entry into Jerusalem, as an emblem of the higher honours of the kingdom that he should rise to from the dead: And, in order thereunto, he sent two of his disciples into the adjacent village, saying, at your arrival thither, you will find an ass tied with her foal, which has never been backed; (Mark xi. 2.) untie; and bring them to me, that I may make such use of them as seems good in my sight.

3 And if any one should find fault with you for attempting to loose and lead them away, Tell him that your Lord and Master wants them, for a special purpose, at this time: And, as soon as he hears this, his heart shall be inclined to let you bring them along with you.

4, 5 Jesus purposely did all this with a view to some ancient prophecies of the Messiah, that they might be punctually fulfilled in him; as particularly those in *Isa. lxii. 11. Say ye to the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy salvation cometh*; and *Zech. ix. 9. Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: Behold, thy King cometh unto thee; he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass †, and (or even) upon a colt the sole of an ass.*

6 The

NOTE.

† Christ rode on an ass, as the judges and kings of Israel did till Solomon's time: And, suitable to his character, he

herein appeared, not in the pomp and pride of chariots and horses, which God had forbid to the kings of Israel; but rode

6 And the disciples went, and did as Jesus commanded them.

7 And brought the ass, and the colt, and put on them their clothes, and they set him thereon.

8 And a very great multitude spread their garments in the way; others cut down branches from the trees, and strewed them in the way.

9 And the multitudes that went before, and that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna to the Son of David: blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord, Hosanna in the highest.

6 The two disciples accordingly went into the village, and, managing just as Jesus had commanded, found every thing fell out exactly as he had foretold it would.

7 And they brought the ass with the colt, and, putting their garments upon one of them †, *viz.* the colt, (*Mark xi. 7.*) they afterwards set Jesus on the clothes, which they had spread upon it, that he might ride, with humble triumph, to *Jerusalem*.

8 And as he rode along, an exceeding great multitude attended him, many of which spread their clothes, like carpets, in the way, for him to ride upon *; others cut off boughs of trees, and strewed them on the sides of the road, as the people used to do when kings and emperors made their triumphal entrance into a city; and great numbers met him from *Jerusalem*, carrying palms in their hands, (*John xii. 13.*) as they were wont at the feast of tabernacles.

9 And † the great crowds, that went before and behind, shouted with loud acclamations of joy, and saluted him, saying, as at their feast of tabernacles, *Hosanna to the Messiah of David's race; save now, we beseech thee, O Lord: (Psal. cxviii. 25, 26.)* We sing these honours to our Saviour and our King, the Sent of God, who comes in the name of the Lord to bless us: May all prosperity attend him and his kingdom in the highest degree; may his throne be exalted above every other throne; may he be extolled in our highest praises; may the holy angels join their songs with ours; and may all possible blessings and glory descend upon him, and upon

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rode on the foal of an ass, like *David*, the greatest of all his ancestors. See *Dr Sherlock on Prophecy, dissert. iv. p. 323.*

‡ As all the other evangelists mention only Christ's riding upon the colt, we may suppose that the participle (xxi) *ver. 5.* signifies, as it often does, *even, or to wit,* with respect to the colt or foal of an ass, and that *Matthew* here put the plural for the singular, by a figure called *enallage of number*, as it is used in *Gen. viii. 4.* and *xix. 29.* and compare *John xix. 29.* with *Matt. xxvii. 48.*: Or else we may suppose the people spread their clothes both on the ass and her colt, for Jesus to take his choice; and then set him upon *them*, meaning the clothes, which they had spread upon the colt; or

that they first set him on the ass, and immediately afterwards on her foal, Jesus choosing to ride upon the foal. *Vid. Lamp. in John xii. 14.*

* Perhaps they hung them likewise on the hedges and houses, to adorn the passage, and express their joy.

† Our Lord restrained all public tokens of honour from the people till now, that he might not stir up the envy of his enemies, nor interrupt the course of his preaching, before his time; but these reasons now ceasing, he suffered these loud acclamations of the multitude, that they might be a strong and public testimony against their wickedness, who, in four or five days afterward, would cry out, *Crucify him, crucify him.*

upon us through him ; may he bless us from on high †!

10 And when he was come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, Who is this?

10 And when he came into Jerusalem, amidst these throngs and loud acclamations, and other demonstrations of joy, the whole city was strangely affected, some with wonder, others with envy, others with contempt, and others with ecstasy; and the common enquiry among them was, Who is this, that is thus cried up, and makes such a solemn appearance amongst us?

11 And the multitude said, This is Jesus the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee.

11 And the multitude that attended him told them, This is that great prophet, who is commonly known by the name of Jesus of Nazareth, of Galilee; and whose doctrine, and wonderful works to confirm it, have been so famous in Israel.

12 And Jesus went into the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the money-changers, and the seats of them that sold doves,

12 Then Jesus went, not like a temporal prince to the palace, but, like the Lord of the temple, to his own house, to exercise his authority there: (see the note on *Mark xi. 15.*) And when he came to the outward court, the court of the Gentiles, he found a great number of traders; some paying off bills of return from distant countries, for money to buy sacrifices, and changing foreign money into half-shekels, which every one of twenty years old and upwards was to give as an offering to the Lord; (*Exod. xxx. 13, 14.*) and he found others buying and selling doves and cattle for sacrifices, under a pretence of its subserviency to sanctuary-work, and of convenience to those that came from far, and could not easily bring such things along with them: But when he saw that this traffic, which ought, and formerly used, to be carried on in the markets of Jerusalem, was introduced, by the avarice of the priests, into the place which was consecrated to the immediate service of God, and that it was managed with extortion, he threw down the stalls of the money-changers, and of the sellers of doves, and the like, and turned them all out, saying,

13 And said unto them, It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves.

13 This place was designed, not for a market, but for the religious use of Gentile-profelytes, (who might not be admitted into the inner court of the temple, to worship and offer up their prayers to the God of Israel,) according as it is written, (*Isa. lvi.*

7.)

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† Though the expressions recorded here, and in *Mark xi. 9, 10. Luke xix. 37, 38. and John xii. 13.* are somewhat different; yet they are all of a sort: And it is easy to apprehend, that in so great a multitude all these forms of congratulation were used by some or others of them. *Hosanna* is compounded of the

Hebrew verb *רושע*, which signifies *save*, and of the particle *נ*, which is a note of entreaty; and the people's using it, may intimate their praying for salvation to themselves by the Messiah, as well as for prosperity to him.

7.) *My house shall be called an house of prayer to all people, or nations:* But ye have horribly perverted its use, and profaned it, by your covetous merchandise; ye have thereby robbed God of his honour, and made an unlawful gain of the people, which is no better than theft; and so, according to an ancient complaint of the prophet, (*Jer. vii. 11.*) ye have turned it into a den or receptacle of thieves. And such was the divine majesty and authority of his behaviour on this occasion, that, notwithstanding all the interest of the priests among the people, and all the gain which many had by this merchandise, their spirits were so over-awed, that none dared to oppose him.

14 And the blind and the lame came to him in the temple, and he healed them.

14 When the market-people were gone out. Jesus staying behind in the court of the temple, such as were blind and lame came to him thither; and he honoured the holy place, and supported his own character, by exerting the same authority to heal them, by which he had purged his house, and banished the buyers and sellers out of it.

15 And when the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that he did, and the children crying in the temple, and saying, *Hosanna to the Son of David;* they were sore displeased,

15 At this time there were children in the temple*; and even these, seeing with what majesty Christ had over-awed the traders, and cured the lame and blind, joined their joyful acclamations with the multitude, crying, *All hail! Hosanna to the Messiah of the house of David:* But when the chief priests and doctors of the law saw the glorious wonders he performed, and heard the very children admiring and applauding him, they were filled with indignation and envy, instead of taking conviction by it, and bearing a part in their song.

16 And said unto him, *Hearst thou what these say?* And Jesus saith unto them, *Yea; have ye never read, Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise?*

16 And they said unto him, *Do you hear what these silly children say?* Surely you will not suffer such foolish creatures as these, who understand nothing, to make such a noise in crying you up. Jesus answered, *Yes, I hear them;* and they ought not to be rebuked for proclaiming mine and my Father's praises, which, through envy, ye deny us: And ye yourselves might easily perceive, that God has stirred up these weak instruments to own me as the Messiah, were ye but to read, and duly consider, that the scripture says, (*Psal. viii. 2.*) *Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast ordained strength:* He hereby makes his strength perfect in their weakness, and advances his own praise to the confusion of those that envy and reject me.

17 Then

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* We may suppose they were playing there while the priests made a market-place of it; or rather were brought by their parents to worship there.

17 And he left them, and went out of the city into Bethany, and he lodged there.

18 Now in the morning as he returned into the city, he hungered.

19 And when he saw a fig-tree in the way, he came to it, and found nothing thereon, but leaves only, and said unto it, Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever. And presently the fig-tree withered away.

20 And when the disciples saw it, they marvelled, saying, How soon is the fig-tree withered away!

21 Jesus answered and said unto them, Verily I say unto you, If ye have faith and doubt not, ye shall not only do this which is done to the fig-tree, but also if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; it shall be done.

22 And all things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.

17 Then leaving them to reflect upon all that had passed, he withdrew from their rage and fury on one hand, and from the acclamations of the people on the other; and went out of the city in the evening, with his twelve disciples, (*Mark xi. 11.*) as far as *Bethany*, which was near two miles from *Jerusalem*, (*John xi. 18.*) and there he lodged that night.

18 But the next morning he returned to *Jerusalem* on his Father's business, though he knew the rage and malice of his enemies there against him; and, as he was going in the way, he being truly a man, and having had but little refreshment at his lodging, was hungry.

19 And observing a fig-tree at a distance, (*Mark xi. 13.*) as he passed along, he went up to it; and finding that it had nothing but leaves, pronounced a curse upon it, in the hearing of his disciples, saying, As thou art barren now, so thou never shalt bear fruit again; thereby intimating to the disciples, in an emblematical manner, that the *Jewish* nation, and hypocritical, formal professors, who bring forth no fruits of righteousness, which, by their profession, pretences, and advantages, might be expected from them, should certainly and suddenly be destroyed. Accordingly the fig-tree immediately withered away, though the disciples did not just then take notice of it.

20 But the next morning, as they were passing that way, they saw, and observed with wonder, that this fig-tree was withered and dried up from the roots: (*Mark xi. 20.*) And they said, How amazing is it that this tree is so soon quite dead!

21 To this Jesus answering said, As wonderful and extraordinary as this may seem to you, I assuredly tell you, that if ye have but a steadfast unwavering faith, and dependance upon me, and upon the promises of God; ye shall be enabled to do, not only things as great and surprising as this which I have done to the fig-tree, but to perform what is as much greater: a wonder, as it would be for you to command this mount of *Olivet*, or any other mountain, to be plucked up by the roots, and thrown into the sea: even things as great as this shall be done according to your word.

22 Yea, whatsoever ye shall ask with importunity in prayer, and with an unshaken faith in my name, according to the will of God, for his glory, and the confirmation of my gospel; however difficult and unlikely it may appear, your petition shall be granted.

23 And when he was come into the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came unto him, as he was teaching, and said, By what authority dost thou these things? and who gave thee this authority?

24 And Jesus answered and said unto them, I also will ask you one thing, which if ye tell me, I in like-wise will tell you by what authority I do these things.

25 The baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven, or of men? And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say unto us, Why did ye not then believe him?

26 But if we shall say, of men; we fear the people; for all hold John as a prophet.

27 And they answered Jesus, and said, We cannot tell. And he said unto them, Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things.

23 Jesus then went to the temple, and as he was preaching there, the chief priests and elders of the people, who were members of the great sanhedrim, or highest court of judicature among the Jews, came to him, and insolently demanded of him, saying, By what authority have you taken upon yourself to enter into Jerusalem in a public triumphant manner; to spirit up the huzza's of the multitude; to turn the buyers and sellers out of the temple, and overthrow their seats, and preach there day after day to the people, as if you were some great person? Pray who gave you a commission to do all these things? Have you this authority from God, or man?

24 Jesus knowing their obstinacy, and their malicious ensnaring design in this demand; instead of returning a direct answer, wisely replied by putting another question to them, which he knew would confound them, and silence their cavils against him, saying, I also will ask you a question, which, if you will be so good as to resolve, I will tell you, even from your own words, by whose commission I do these things. What I would ask you is this:

25, 26 When John the Baptist preached and baptized, from whence had he his warrant? Was he sent of God; or did he come of his own head, or by the authority of any man? The chief priests and elders, considering with themselves that, if they should say, He acted therein by a commission from God, Jesus would immediately reply, Why then did ye not believe the testimony he gave concerning me, as the Messiah? and so they should be confounded: And, on the other hand, considering that, if they should say, John came of his own head, or had his commission from man, they should provoke all the people to rise up in a rage against them, and even to stone them; (*Luke xx. 6.*) for they were universally persuaded, that John was a prophet sent from God: These men, therefore, reflecting in this manner, were afraid to return a direct answer one way or other.

27 And so they chose, for once, to pretend ignorance; and replied, even contrary to the convictions of their own consciences, We do not know from whence he received his commission. Thereupon Jesus said to them, Since ye decline answering so fair and easy a question as this, ye cannot reasonably expect that I should tell you from whence I have my authority: And to what purpose should I declare it to you? For if ye are so perverse, as either not to believe, or not to own, that John was sent from God; ye would rather be provoked, than convinced,

vinced, by the plainest assertions I could lay down of my own divine authority.

28 But what think ye? A certain man had two sons, and he came to the first, and said, Son, go work to-day in my vineyard.

29 He answered and said, I will not: but afterward he repented, and went.

30 And he came to the second, and said likewise. And he answered and said, I go sir; and went not.

31 Whether of them twain did the will of his father? They say unto him, The first. Jesus saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, that the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you.

32 For John came unto you in the way of righteousness, and ye believed him not; but the publicans and the harlots believed him. And ye, when ye had seen *it*, repented not afterward, that ye might believe him.

28, 29, 30 Christ having thus thoroughly silenced the chief priests and elders, without giving them any advantage against himself, proceeded to represent, by two parables, how God would reject them and the *Jewish* nation for their impenitence and unbelief, notwithstanding all their pretences to religion, and would receive the believing penitent *Gentiles* in their stead, saying, What think ye of this parable? A certain man had two sons, and he commanded them both to go and work a day in his vineyard: The first peremptorily refused, saying, I will not go and work; but afterwards he repented, and went: And the other seemed very forward, by making fair promises of ready obedience; but did not perform them.

31 Now, though both these were to blame; yet, which of the two do ye think was most acceptable to his Father? They answered, as common sense would dictate, He that said he would not go, but afterwards repented, and went. Jesus replied, This is the very case between you, who make high pretences to obedience, and the very worst of sinners, who professedly declare against it: Both they and you have one common Father, even the Creator of all, who has a right to every one's obedience; and they are like the first son, while ye are like the second: For I assuredly tell you, that publicans and harlots, and sinners of the *Gentiles*, who did not pretend to any religion, are sooner brought to a conviction of their sin and danger, and to faith in me, and shall sooner find acceptance with God, according to the grace of the gospel, than you, who make fair professions of duty, and yet continue in impenitence and unbelief.

32 For *John the Baptist*, by his life and doctrine, proved himself to be a prophet sent from God: He came to you, like one of that character, leading a holy, serious, and unblameable life, and calling you to repentance and faith in me, as the Messiah, for the remission of your sins; and yet ye, who pretend to abundance of regard to God, and to whom *John* was properly sent, did not believe what he said concerning me: But the publicans and harlots, the worst of sinners, whom ye rank with the heathen; yea, *Gentiles* themselves, such as the *Roman* soldiers, confessed their sins, and believed what he preached concerning me: And even when ye saw how his ministry wrought upon them, their exam-

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ple had no good effect upon you; but still ye persisted in rejecting me.

33 Hear another parable: There was a certain householder which planted a vineyard, and hedged it round about, and digged a wine-press in it, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country.

33 Let me give you another parable of the same import: "A certain matter of a family planted a vineyard, hedged it in, and dug a trench for a wine-press; he likewise built a tower for the vine-dressers to dwell in, and to watch the vineyard; and letting it out to husbandmen, travelled into a far country:"—So God formerly planted his church among the *Jews*, furnishing it with every thing necessary for its fruitfulness, ornament, and defence: He encompassed it about with his special care and protection; honoured it with his presence and promises, and with the covenant of circumcision; and there he set up the altar of burnt-offerings, to which all the sacrifices were to be brought; and instituted ordinances, in which the overseers of the church were to be conversant, and watch over it; and then, committing the management of it to the chief priests, elders, and rulers, he withdrew his extraordinary visible appearances from them, leaving them promises of returning, after a while, to bestow better blessings upon them.

34 And when the time of the fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen, that they might receive the fruits of it.

34 "And when the season for the vine-harvest was come, the owner of the vineyard sent his servants to the husbandmen, to receive its fruits, and to help to gather them in:—So when, in reason, it might be expected that God's people, the *Jews*, should bring forth fruits of righteousness, according to the advantageous means they enjoyed, he sent his prophets of the Old Testament to remind them of their duty, to direct them in it, and encourage them to it.

35 And the husbandmen took his servants, and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another.

35 "But, instead of the husbandmen attending to their duty, they abused the servants their master had sent to them, beating some, and killing others."—So the rulers of *Israel* persecuted the messengers which God sent to them: They beat *Jeremiah*, (*Jer. xx. 2.*) killed many of the other prophets, (*Neb. ix. 26.*) and stoned *Zechariah*, the son of *Jehoiada*. (*2 Chron. xxiv. 21.*)

36 Again, he sent other servants, more than the first: and they did unto them likewise.

36 "Again, the matter sent still more servants; and the husbandmen dealt as injuriously with them as with the former:"—So God continued to send his prophets, time after time, to the *Jews*, with further additions of light and admonitions, to recover and reform them; and they reviled, abused, and slew them also.

37 But last of all he sent unto them his son, saying

37 "At last, he sent his own son, reasonably supposing that they must needs pay a high regard to him:"—So God, after the *Jews* and their rulers had

ing, They will reverence my son.

38 But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, This is the heir; come let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance.

39 And they caught him, and cast him out of the vineyard, and slew him.

40 When the lord therefore of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto those husbandmen?

41 They say unto him, He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out his vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons.

had from age to age slighted, oppressed, and killed his prophets down to *John the Baptist*, sent his only begotten Son to them, as the last expedient for reclaiming and recovering them, that they might bring forth fruit to him; and it was reasonably to be expected, that, however they had dealt with his servants, they should pay the highest honour and obedience to his own Son, who came with greater authority and right in himself, and with the clearest attestations of it, by the miracles he wrought to demand their subjection to him.

38, 39 "But when the husbandmen saw their master's son and heir, they thought, that, if they should but kill him, the inheritance would be their own, without any more disturbance, for ever; and therefore, consulting together, they seized and cast him out of the vineyard, and slew him:"—So when the Son of God appeared among the chief priests and rulers, and they saw with what authority he spake and acted, what miracles he wrought, and how the people cried him up; they, instead of receiving him, and encouraging others to believe in him, were filled with envy against him; and thinking, that, if they could but get rid of him, their own authority would be established without controul, they combine together, and rise up against him, to cast him out of the church, who is its Foundation, and the Author of all its blessings; and to procure his crucifixion without the gates of *Jerusalem*, and so fill up the measure of their iniquity.

40 "When therefore the lord of the vineyard returns, what do you think he will do to those wicked husbandmen?"—In like manner, when the time shall come for God to execute judgment, What is reasonably to be expected that he will do to such persecutors and murderers of his prophets, and at last of his own Son?

41 The chief priests and elders, not understanding Christ's meaning, he not having explained it to them, readily answered, "The master, no doubt, will utterly destroy those wicked husbandmen without mercy, and commit the care of his vineyard to others that will be more faithful to their trust." And so they, unawares, passed judgment against themselves, that it would be a righteous thing with God utterly to destroy them, and all the rejecters of the Messiah among them; and to call the *Gentiles* into his church, who should believe in him, and bring forth fruit unto God. But though they thus gave sentence in general against these husbandmen;

men; yet as soon as they found the parable was spoken against themselves, they said, Far be it from us that we should be guilty of so horrible a crime, as that of putting the real Messiah to death, which deserves so severe a punishment. (*Luke xx. 16, 19.*)

42 Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?

42 Then Jesus said to them, Nay, thus it certainly will be; for have you never observed that the scripture says, *The stone which the builders refused, is become the head-stone of the corner?* (*1st Cor. cxviii. 22.*) *i. e.* The Messiah, who was rejected by the *Jews*, and particularly by their chief priests and rulers, that had the care and government of the church in their hands, is become its foundation, and its principal corner-stone for uniting the *Gentiles* to it, in like manner as the chief corner-stone of an house supports and links together its two sides: And all this is appointed, over-ruled, and ordered of God, for the vindication of his own honour, the confusion of his enemies, and the salvation of his people, in such a manner as is wonderfully glorious in itself, and in the account of all those that believe.

43 Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.

43 Therefore I assure you, that, for your obstinacy and unbelief, the gospel, and all its blessings, shall be taken away from you, so that ye shall be no longer the peculiar people of God; and he will send it to the *Gentiles*, and take them into his covenant, who shall give it better entertainment, and bring forth fruits of righteousness to his praise and glory.

44 And whosoever shall fall on this stone, shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.

44 And whosoever shall, through ignorance and prejudice, be offended at the Messiah, on account of his state of humiliation, so as not to believe in him, is like a man who stumbles and falls, or is thrown down upon a great stone, to the endangering of his life: But whosoever shall finally reject him, and obstinately set himself against him, in his state of exaltation, is like a man who pulls a heavy stone upon his own head, or † on whom it is cast, which will crush him to pieces, and miserably destroy him without remedy.

45 And when the chief priests and Pharisees had heard his parables, they perceived that he spake of them.

45 Now when the chief priests and *Pharisees* had heard both these parables, with their application, they plainly saw, that *they* were the persons against whom our Lord, in a special manner, had directed them; and that he had brought them, unawares, to give judgment against themselves, relating

N O T E.

† Here seems to be an allusion to the manner of the *Jews* stoning to death, in which the person was first cast down upon a great stone; and if that did not dispatch him, a very heavy one was thrown upon his breast.

ting to their guilt, and the vengeance they deserved.

46 But when they sought to lay hands on him, they feared the multitude, because they took him for a prophet.

46 But, instead of falling under a humbling sense of it, they were so much the more enraged against him; and would have been glad, at that very instant, to have laid violent hands upon him; only they were restrained by fears, that the people would take his part, and avenge his quarrel; for he, especially at this time, stood high in the esteem of the multitude, who at least believed him to be a prophet sent from God: And therefore the chief priests and Pharisees waded executing their malicious design for the present, till they might meet with a safer opportunity for it.

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

What a wonderful conjunction of divine, human, and office-characters, do we meet with in Christ! Behold the *God*, in his perfect knowledge before-hand of every minute circumstance of things, and of the erect actions of men; in his command over their minds, and acting like the Lord of his temple, to reform abuses there, and that without resistance from those whose authority, inclinations, and interests, lay strongly against it; and in his healing diseases, and drying up the barren fig-tree at his pleasure! Behold the *Man*, in his being hungry! And behold the *Messiah*, in his riding on the ass's colt, amidst the loud hosannas of the people; in his opening the eyes of the blind; in making the lame to walk; and in his being refused by the *Jeruzalem* builders, according to ancient prophecies! But oh what sort of Messiah was this! how kind and good, how meek and lowly in heart! With what humble state did he appear, like one whose kingdom was not of this world, and whose present humiliation was to issue in a glorious exaltation! and yet how different were people's thoughts about him! Some readily owned him for the Saviour of *Israel*; whilst others did not know what to make of him, and others rejected him. And how different was the treatment he met with! Some admiring and applauding him; whilst others were filled with envy at him, and that under pretence of high regards to God. But, alas! what are all pretences to religion, if the life contradict them? And how many flat denials do some give Christ, who are afterwards effectually wrought upon, by his grace, to yield themselves up to him! He will have an interest in the world, how unworthily soever some may treat him: And fruit shall be brought forth to God, though his gospel and his grace be removed from one people to another to produce it. O how afraid should we be of a barren profession, or of stumbling at Christ, and rejecting him, through unbelief, lest we be rejected by him, to the loss of the means of grace, and to our own dreadful perdition; and how desirous should we be to lay and do, to profess, believe, and obey his call in the gospel!

C H A P. XXII.

The parable of the marriage of the king's son, 1,—14. Christ's debates with his enemies about paying tribute to Cæsar, 15,—22. About the resurrection, 23,—33. About the greatest commandment of the law, 34,—40. And about the Messiah's being the Son of David, 41,—46.

TEXT.

AND Jesus answered, and spake

PARAPHRASE.

WHILE the Pharisees were seeking an opportunity to lay hands upon Christ, (chap. xxi. 46.)

spake unto them again by parables, and said,

2 The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son,

3 And sent forth his servants, to call them that were bidden to the wedding: and they would not come.

4 Again he sent forth other servants, saying, Tell them which are bidden, Behold, I have prepared my dinner: my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready: come unto the marriage.

5 But they made light of it, and went

46.) he, as answering to their secret designs, proceeded to represent the state of the gospel-kingdom, by way of similitude, saying,

2 "The dispensation of God, in the gospel state, is like the management of a certain king, who made a great marriage-feast for his son:"—So God, having sent his own Son into the world, to be the bridegroom of the church, has made rich provisions, and gracious invitations in the gospel, to encourage sinners to accept of him †, and yield themselves up by faith to him, that they may partake of all the blessings of salvation.

3 "And when the feast was ready, the king sent his servants, to call them without delay, who before had been invited; but they refused to come:"—So God, by his Son, sent the apostles and the seventy to preach the gospel, with proposals of salvation to his peculiar people the Jews, who had before been invited to embrace the Messiah, by the ancient prophecies of him, by the ministry of *John the Baptist*, and of Christ himself; but the greatest part of them would not come to him that they might have life: And thus it is with the greatest number of those to whom the gospel is preached.

4 "After this, he nevertheless sent out other servants to the same people, saying, Tell the invited guests, that my provisions are fully prepared, and every thing is ready for a kind reception; and insist upon their coming now, before it be too late:"—In like manner, God so ordered it, that Christ, after his death, resurrection, and ascension to glory, should renew his commission to the apostles and other disciples, and send them forth, with greater measures of his spirit, to the Jews again, to assure them, that the work of redemption is fully accomplished, that a dispensation of grace is set up in all its fulness and glory, and that he is ready to receive every one who comes to God by him; and, with these encouragements, to repeat their free and solemn invitations to those refusers now, at last, to accept of him, with all his benefits, and give themselves up in a marriage-covenant to him: And thus God graciously condescends to renew the ministerial offers of mercy again and again, by many of his servants, to them that sit under the gospel.

5, 6 "But they still slighted the kind invitations, and went about other business; some to marry their

NOTE.

† Though this parable primarily respects the *Jews* and *Gentiles*, yet it is applicable to others in all ages.

went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandize :

6 And the remnant took his servants, and intreated them spitefully, and slew *them*.

7 But when the king heard *thereof*, he was wroth: and he sent forth his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and burnt up their city.

8 Then saith he to his servants, The wedding is ready, but they which were bidden were not worthy.

9 Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage.

10 So those servants went out in-
to

their farms, and others their trades; and some of them were so very ungrateful and wicked, that they reviled and abused, and even killed, the servants who came to invite them:—So the *Jews* continued to despise the gracious errand on which the apostles and other ministers were sent, and preferred their worldly interests to Christ, and the salvation of their souls; and many of them were so horribly vile, that they reproached and persecuted his servants, and put them to death: And thus it is still with many to whom the gospel is sent.

7 “ But, upon the king’s hearing this, he was exceedingly enraged, and ordered his army to go and put these ungrateful murderers of his messengers to the sword, and to burn their city down to the ground:—So, God being highly provoked at the obstinate infidelity, and cruel outrages of the *Jews*, in opposing his servants, who came to bring the last dispensation of his mercy to them, stirred up the *Romans* against them; and, in the righteousness of his providence, sent their army to destroy that nation; and burn up *Jerusalem*: And he will not always bear with other refusers of Christ, and implacable enemies of his servants; but will one day execute the most dreadful vengeance upon them, and consume them with unquenchable fire.

8 “ Then the king said to his servants, my feast is ready; but the guests that were invited have shewn such contempt as renders them utterly unworthy to be admitted to it; therefore they shall be sent to no more:—So the *Jews*, by putting away Christ and the gospel, judged themselves, and God judged them unworthy of eternal life; and therefore cut them off from his covenant, and made no further tenders of his grace to them: And, in like manner, he will deal by such persons and nations, as continue to pour contempt upon the means of grace which he sends among them.

9 “ But, that his provisions might not be lost, he ordered his servants to go into the common roads, and invite all they should meet with in their way, to the wedding-feast:—So, when God rejected the *Jews*, for their obstinate and continued infidelity, he ordered the apostles to turn to the *Gentiles*: In like manner, he will have an interest in the world, how many soever they be that despise and reject the gospel; and he externally calls all that hear it, to the obedience of faith.

10 “ The servants, according to this command, went into the public ways, and promiscuously invited

to the *high-ways*, and gathered together all as many as they found, both bad and good: and the wedding was furnished with guests.

11 And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding-garment:

12 And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding-garment? And he was speechless.

13 Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand

vited every one they met with; and, by this means, a great number of guests came to the wedding-feast:—So the apostles, according to their enlarged commission, went and preached the gospel, without distinction, to the *Gentiles*, calling rich and poor, greater and lesser sinners, to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and turn from idols to serve the living and true God; and multitudes among them renounced their former idolatry, and were received into the Christian-church; some of them being true converts, and others but temporary believers and hypocrites. In like manner gospel-ministers publish its good tidings to all sorts of sinners; and by this means many are brought to give up their names to Christ, and his church; some of which have the grace of God in truth, and others only a profession of it.

11 “And upon the king’s coming amongst his guests, he observed one of them that appeared there, without † a dress suitable to the nuptial solemnity:”—So God takes an exact notice of all that make a profession of Christ’s name, and are members of the visible church; no hypocrites can conceal themselves from him; but, however they may pass for saints among men, he sees that they have not put on Christ by faith, and are neither adorned with his righteousness nor his image, and so have no right to partake of the blessings of his kingdom.

12 “Hereupon the king expostulated with the man, saying, Friend, how durst you come so unsuitably clothed, to appear as a guest at this marriage-feast? And he was confounded, having nothing to reply:”—So God, in the great day, will call those sinners in *Sion* to a strict account, that were, by profession and obligation, Christ’s friends; and will demand of them, How they could venture to creep into churches, and expect to be made partakers of eternal life, they being destitute of true faith in Christ for righteousness, and of a work of heart-changing grace? And their mouths will be stopped; they will be self-condemned, and have nothing to plead in their own excuse.

13 “Then the king ordered his servants to bind this man like a criminal, and turn him out of the room, which was illuminated for the entertainment

Z 2

and

NOTE.

† The *wedding-garment* was a better sort of dress than was ordinarily worn; and such a garment, it seems, was so necessary, that even they who came upon an invitation, were not suffered to taste of the feast, or continue with the guests, without it. See *Hammond* on the place.

hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

14 For many are called, but few are chosen.

15 Then went the Pharisees, and took counsel how they might entangle him in his talk.

16 And they sent out unto him their disciples, with the Herodians, saying, Master, we know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest thou for any man: for thou regardest not the person of men.

17 Tell us therefore, What thinkest thou? Is it lawful to give tribute unto Cæsar, or not?

and pleasure of the guests, and to put him into a dark and doleful place without, there to bewail his presumption, loss, and misery:—"So God, by an irreversible sentence on hypocrites, will command his holy angels to thrust them out from the kingdom of glory, into a state of the thickest darkness, misery, and despair, where they shall lament their just punishment, with the utmost rage and horror, for ever. (See the note on *Matt. viii. 24.*)

14 "For it will evidently appear in the final judgment, that, as I lately said on a like occasion, (*chap. xx. 16.*) many are externally called by the ministry of the gospel, and make a profession of religion; but few, comparatively speaking, are really chosen to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth."

15 The Pharisees, perceiving that Jesus levelled this, and the foregoing parables, against them, though they did not thoroughly understand his meaning, resolved to try all the methods they could think of to take away his life; and, as they durst not attempt it by force, for fear of the people, (*chap. xxi. 46.*) they betook themselves to stratagem, consulting how they might draw him into some obnoxious expression, (*εὐλογεῖν*) in a captious dispute with him.

16 And for this purpose they sent some of their own disciples, who were great sticklers for the liberty of the Jews, and some of Herod's † party, who were zealous for the authority of the Romans over them; and ordered these to apply, in a respectful manner, to Christ, as if they were desirous to refer the decision of their controversy to him, saying, Master, we are satisfied that you are a man of great integrity and understanding, that you faithfully teach the right way of pleasing God, and that your impartiality and courage are proof against being biased by the frowns or favours of any man living; for, be he ever so great, you will freely speak your mind, whether he like it or not.

17 We therefore intreat that you would please to satisfy us in a point much disputed between us; and that is, Whether it be lawful for us, who are the peculiar people of God, and Abraham's seed, to submit to Cæsar's government, who is a foreigner, and of a different religion from ours; and to own that

NOTE.

† The Herodians were the followers of Herod the great, who was for subjecting himself and his people to the dominion of the Romans, and for complying with them in many of their heathen usages. *Prid. Connect.* vol. ii. p. 367.

that submission. by paying tribute to him? What is your judgment, or what do you say is the mind of God, in this case? Thus they thought to ensnare him, which ever way he should answer: For if it should be in the negative, *Herod's* party would accuse him to the *Roman* emperor, as an enemy to his government; and if it should be in the affirmative, the *Pharisees* would accuse him to the people, as an enemy to their rights and liberties.

18 But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, Why tempt ye me, ye hypocrites?

19 Shew me the tribute-money. And they brought unto him, a penny.

20 And he saith unto them Whose is this image and superscription?

21 They say unto him, Cesar's. Then saith he unto them, Render therefore unto Cesar, the things which are Cesar's; and unto God, the things that are God's.

22 When they had heard these words, they marvelled, and left him, and went their way.

23 The same day came to him the Sadducees, which say that there is no resurrection, and asked him,

24 Saying, Master, Moses said, If

18 But Jesus, seeing through all their subtle and malicious designs, said to them, Ye deceitful flatterers, why, under a pretence of honouring me, do ye go about in this wicked manner to entangle me in my talk, that ye may find occasions against me?

19 Then asking for a piece of money, such as used to be demanded for tribute, they shewed him a *Roman* penny, which was of that sort.

20 And since the coining of money, and thereby ascertaining its value and making it current, was always looked upon as the legal prerogative of the higher powers, he desired them to tell him whose image and inscription that piece bore.

21 They readily answered, It was the *Roman* emperor's, who was usually stiled *Cesar*. Whereupon Jesus replied, Your receiving this as your current coin, is an acknowledgment of *Cesar's* dominion over you; and therefore ye ought, in civil concerns, to return the tribute of that to him, which, by the authority and protection of his government, ye receive from him; as well as, in religious concerns, to return the homage and acknowledgments to God, that are his due, as Lord of all: Take heed, that neither of these duties interfere with the other.

22 In this manner he avoided the snare they had laid for him: And when they found, by his unexceptionable answer, that no advantage could be obtained against him, they admired his wisdom and caution, and went away disappointed in their design of accusing him, either to *Cesar*, or to the people.

23 Soon after this, on that very day, some of the sect of the *Sadducees*, who denied a future state, or any existence of angels or separate spirits, and the resurrection of the body from the dead, (*Acts* xxiii. 8.) came to try whether they could not grieve and confound our Lord, by a question which they should put to him, about an important point of revealed religion, saying,

24 Master, *Moses* ordered in the law, (*Deut.* xxv. 5.) that if a married man should die childless,

a man die, having no children, his brother shall marry his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother.

25 Now there were with us seven brethren: and the first, when he had married a wife, deceased; and having no issue, left his wife unto his brother.

26 Likewise the second also, and the third, unto the seventh.

27 And last of all the woman died also.

28 Therefore in the resurrection, whose wife shall she be of the seven? for they all had her.

29 Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God.

30 For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage; but are as the angels of God in heaven.

31 But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto

a surviving brother should take his widow to wife, in order to the raising up of an heir for his inheritance and keeping his name alive in *Israel*.

25 Now an extraordinary case has fallen out amongst us, in a family where there were seven brethren: The first of them, having had a wife, died without any child, and left his widow to be married to his next brother;

26, 27 And the second having married her, died without any offspring likewise; the same was the case of the third; and, in short, every one of them took her in their order, after the death of the rest, and none of them had any issue by her; and, at last, the woman herself died childless.

28 If therefore, according to some peoples' notion, there be a future state, and a resurrection of the body, the question is, Which of these seven shall have her for his wife in the other world, since they were all married to her in this, and none of them had any son or daughter by her, to determine, or appropriate the relation?

29 Jesus replied, ye are guilty of a very great mistake, and talk much beside the point, through your ignorance of the scripture-doctrine about a future state, and of the true sense of the passage referred to, which relates only to the peculiar circumstances of the children of *Israel* in this world; as also through your ignorance of the exceeding greatness of God's power, with whom it is no impossible thing to raise the dead, and give them a different sort of life in the world to come.

30 For in the happy state to which the dead shall be raised, there will be no need of marriage for the comfort of life, nor any room for leaving widows to others, to marry them for perpetuating names and inheritances, and keeping up a succession of generations, as there is in this miserable and dying world; but every one there will be incorruptible, immortal, and happy, even as the holy angels themselves are in heaven, who never die, or know what troubles mean.

31, 32 But that there will be a resurrection of the dead to a glorious immortality, may be gathered, by just consequence, from what God himself said to *Moses* †, whose books ye yourselves professedly own

N O T E.

† The *Sadducees* admitted only the five books of *Moses*, rejecting all the other parts of holy scripture. (*Prid. Connect.* vol. ii. p. 336.) And therefore Christ ar-

gued with them from a passage taken out of those writings, and not from other still clearer proofs in the Old Testament.

unto you by God, saying,

32 I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.

33 And when the multitude heard *this*, they were astonished at his doctrine.

34 But when the Pharisees had heard that he had put the Sadducees to silence, they were gathered together.

35 Then one of them, *which was* a lawyer, asked *him* a question, tempting him, and, saying,

36 Master, which is the great commandment in the law?

own to be of divine authority. Have ye never read and observed in them, what instructions God has given to you of this age, (for whose learning, as well as for the use of former times, they were written) when, appearing to *Moses* in the bush, (*Exod. iii. 6.*) he styled himself the God of *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*, many years after they were dead, saying, Not I *was*, but I *am* their God. This abiding relation to them imports, that they were still the sons of God, *waiting for the adoption, viz. the redemption of the body*: (*Rom. viii. 23.*) For it is unworthy of God, to suppose that after death he should continue to be a God in covenant-relation to them; and yet that their bodies, which are essential parts of their persons, should always abide in a state of death, never to revive in another world †.

33 And as this silenced the *Sadducees*, so the common people, upon hearing his answer to their objection, could not but admire the aptness, evidence, and excellence of what he taught, relating to this important article of faith.

34 But when the *Pharisees* heard how he had confuted the *Sadducees*, they were so far from being pleased at it, though he had therein established the doctrine which they themselves held about the resurrection, that they invidiously gathered together, to see whether they could not blast his reputation among the people, by puzzling him with some other question.

35 To this purpose one of them, who was by office an interpreter of the law, having a mind to try his skill, put a question to him, which was much disputed among the critics of those days.

36 Master, as there are different opinions about the law, some concluding that the ceremonial, and others that the moral is most important; and some contending for the law of circumcision, others for that of the Sabbath, and others for that of sacrifices, as the chief; which do you say is the principal commandment contained in the writings of *Moses*?

37 Je-

N O T E.

† Though their souls lived in a separate state, God would nevertheless be the God of the *dead*; for they could be said to live only in part, unless their dead bodies were to rise again: However, as the chief prejudice of the *Sadducees* against the resurrection lay in their disbelief of the immortality of the soul, or of any future state whatsoever, the argument taken from God's being the God of

the living only, was a clear and effectual confutation of their error. Nay, if he is not the God of *Abraham*, &c. in another world, he never was their God, according to the full meaning of that character, at all; for the best of their circumstances, in this life, were too defective, and afflicted, to come up to the complete happiness and dignity included in that high and glorious relation.

37 Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.

38 This is the first and great commandment.

39 And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

40 On these two commandments, hang all the law and the prophets.

41 While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them,

42 Saying, What think ye of Christ? whose son is he? They say unto him, The son of David.

43 He saith unto them, How then doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying,

44 The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit

37 Jesus answered him, That which is most comprehensive and important, is this, Thou shalt love the Lord supremely, as *Jehovah* and thy God, to the exclusion of all others; and thou shalt love him entirely, unfeignedly, and at all times, with the united powers of thy understanding, will, and affections.

38 This is the grand fundamental precept of the whole law, without a regard to which no other of its injunctions can be duly observed; and this is the summary of all the duties of the first table.

39 And the next important commandment, the nearest a-kin to this, as comprehensive of all the duties of the second table, is, Thou shalt love thy fellow-creatures as truly and sincerely as thyself, bearing all good-will to them, and doing good, as you have opportunity, to all men, and especially to the household of faith, even as you would in like circumstances do, or desire others to do unto yourself.

40 These two commandments make up the sum and substance of the moral law, which is fundamental to all true religion; these are the natural law that was originally written in the heart of man, the obligations to which can never be dissolved; and all the revelations that God has made, in the written law and the prophets, stand upon the foundation of, and are designed to enforce them.

41 Jesus having thus answered the *Scribe's* question, and stopp'd his mouth, so that he could make no reply; and the *Pharisees* still continuing together in order to their making further attempts to embarrass him; he took that opportunity, in his turn to propose a question, which would give him a fair advantage of putting them to a non-plus, saying,

42 What are your thoughts about the *Messiah*, who was promised to the fathers, and whom ye are now expecting to appear in the world? Whose son, or of what family, do ye say he must be? They readily answered, He is to be of the family of *David*, as was universally believed from the plain prophecies of the Old Testament about him. (See the note on *Luke* xx. 41.)

43 Jesus replied, How is it then to be understood, that *David*, under the inspiration of the Spirit of God, called the *Messiah* his Lord, and thereby owned and honoured him as his superior, and a divine person, saying of him, (*Psal* cx. 1.)

44 God the Father said unto my Lord, Sit thou exalted in all dignity, glory and power, on the right hand

thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool?

band of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; and continue reigning in the administration of thy kingdom, as the Christ, till all thine enemies be effectually and entirely subjected to thee, according to mine appointment?

45 If David then call him Lord, how is he his son?

45 If then *David* in a *Psalms*: which ye yourselves own to be prophetic of the *Messiah*, styles him *Lord*, by way of superiority to himself; how do ye understand this, in consistency with his being his son, or a descendent from him?

46 And no man was able to answer him a word, neither durst any man (from that day forth) ask him any more questions.

46 The *scribes* and *Pharisees*, either being ignorant, or not willing to acknowledge, that he, who was of the seed of *David*, according to the flesh, was, in his divine nature, over all God blessed for ever, and so was the root as well as the offspring of *David*, were at a loss what reply to make; and finding that they were no match for one of his superior wisdom, they, from that time forward, were afraid of entering into further disputes with him, or of attempting to ensnare him by any other questions.

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

How much more eager are many to dispute against the most important points of the law and gospel, to their own confusion, than to come like humble inquirers to Christ, to learn of, and believe in him, to their own salvation. But, after all that wit or malice can suggest to the contrary, he will confute it, and put his enemies to shame.—His grace is bountiful and free, and is proposed in the gospel to the acceptance of all that hear it. Blessed are they that are called to the marriage-supper of the Lamb, and appear with the wedding-garment as accepted guests there: But miserable is their case that reject Christ, or take up with a bare profession of his name; and many are externally called, but few are chosen of God to eternal life.—True religion is as necessary for the happiness of another world, as civil government is for the peace and order of this: They do not interfere with one another; but should be kept in proper bounds, and attended to with due regards: And as love to God is essential to the first, so the love of our neighbour is to the last; these are laws of perpetual obligation, according to the various relations in which we stand.—When believers have done with this world and all its present concerns, God will be their God for ever in another; and a resurrection to eternal life will enter their whole persons, body as well as soul, into a complete state of immortal blessedness, when all Christ's enemies shall be entirely subdued, and all the saints shall triumph in his presence: And then they shall know who and what he is, in his divine, human, and office-characters and glory, as God-man, Mediator; that he be able to reconcile all seeming contradictions about him; and shall get through all the clouds and difficulties that here surround them, and that puzzle and confound such as set themselves against him.

C H A P. XXIII.

Christ cautions against the pride and hypocrisy of the scribes and Pharisees, 1,—12. Denounces several woes against them, 13,—33. And foretels the destruction of Jerusalem, 34,—39.

TEXT.

THEN spake Jesus to the multitude,

PARAPHRASE.

AFTER Jesus had put all his adversaries to silence, he, continuing in the temple, (chap.

titude, and to his disciples,

2 Saying, the scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moises' seat.

3 All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do: but do not ye after their works: for they say and do not.

4 For they bind heavy burdens, and grievous to be borne, and lay them on mens shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers.

5 But all their works they do, for to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments.

6 And love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues.

xxii. 46.) spake to the great company of people that were about him, and to his own disciples, what might be proper to guard against an high opinion of the scribes and Pharisees, and against being misled by them, saying,

2 The scribes and Pharisees are, by their office, the successors of Moses, as interpreters of God's law; and their business is to expound and enforce it privately to their disciples, and publicly to the people in your synagogues every sabbath-day; which office is in itself good and useful, how much soever they have abused it, and behave unsuitable to it.

3 Whatsoever therefore they teach and enforce upon you, agreeable to the true intent of the law of God, that ye should look upon yourselves bound to regard and practise: But take heed of treading in their steps, or of imitating them in their lives; for while they preach and profess one thing, they do another.

4 For they are exceeding strict and rigid in their constructions of such divine precepts as best serve their turn, and in imposing them with additions of their own inventing, and so lay intolerable burdens upon the consciences of others: But they themselves will not be at the trouble of observing them, nor give the least dispensation to the people to neglect any of them; much less will they practise those moral duties that are of the greatest consequence, and of perpetual obligation.

5 And (de) whatsoever they do, that carries a face of religion, it is only in public, and in the sight of men, that they may observe and applaud them: As for instance, God commanded the Jews (Deut. vi. 8) to bind the law for a sign upon their hands, and as frontlets between their eyes; to signify that they should daily meditate upon it, and put it into practice: But these hypocritical men think they sufficiently fulfil this command, by only writing some sentences of the law upon slips of parchment, of more than ordinary breadth, and putting them upon their arms and foreheads. And as, to distinguish the Israelites from other nations, God ordered them to wear fringes in the borders of their garments, (Numb. xv. 38.—40.) these men put on such as are wider than common, that they may be particularly taken notice of as more eminently religious than others.

6 And, with the same ambitious view, when they are invited to a feast, they are very fond of getting the upper hand; and whenever they are in places of religious worship, they take care to set themselves

7 And greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi.

8 But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren.

9 And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father which is in heaven.

10 Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, even Christ.

11 But he that is greatest among you,

elves in the highest seats there, that they may be thought more worthy than the rest of the company.

7 Yea, even in the open streets, and places of the most public resort, they love to be homaged, and treated with all visible marks of the highest respect in the sight of multitudes; and are extremely delighted when any compliment them under the titles of *father* and *master* †; and so applaud them as great men that are the heads of sects and parties, and the authors of the doctrines they preach.

8 But, said Christ to his disciples, let none of you aim at vain-glorious titles ‡ of honour and precedency above others, much less at such titles as import dominion over their faith and consciences: For ye have but one Lord and King, which is the Messiah; and all of you should treat one another with mutual respect and love, looking upon yourselves as brethren that have no superiority of power one over another, but are equally subject, in all matters of faith and obedience, to your great and common Lord.

9 And let no man living upon earth be called your father, in such a sense as denotes the head of a sect, or the founder of religion, or one who is to be absolutely obeyed in matters of conscience: For, in opposition to all men, ye have but one such Father, and that is God, who is the Father of lights, and whose throne is established in the heavens.

10 Neither let any among you vainly assume to himself, or admit of, the title of *master* or *leader*, as signifying one who, of his own ability and authority, teaches and enjoins any doctrine or duty of religion: For, in opposition to human instructors, ye have but one such Master, which is Christ, the great Prophet of the church, whom, and whom only, ye ought to hear in all things, as your infallible Guide, and absolute Lord.

11 But whosoever he be among you, that most excels his brethren in gifts and graces, or in honour and

NOTES.

† The Rabbies were the great fathers of tradition, and masters in *Israel*, who laid as much stress, or more, upon their own inventions, which in time became the traditions of the elders, than upon the words of scripture themselves: And therefore when all the *Jewish* traditions came afterwards to be collected in the book called their *Talmud*, the contenders for their authority were called *Rabbins*. See *Prid. Connect.* vol. ii. p. 336.

‡ Our Lord does not condemn civil respect under the titles of *father*, *master*, and the like; for these result from known relations in life; and the apostle styled himself a *father*, on religious accounts, to them whom he had been instrumental in converting to the faith of Christ: But all titles are to be condemned, as far as any are ambitious of them and as far as they entrench upon God's authority, and are used to outenance a dominion over the faith of others.

you, shall be your servant.

12 And whosoever shall exalt himself, shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself, shall be exalted.

13 But wo unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites; for ye that up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in *yeu-felves*, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in.

14 Wo unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites; for ye devour widows houses, and for a pretence make long prayers; therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation.

15 Wo unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites; for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte; and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves.

and esteem in the church, let him not take occasion from thence to grow haughty and assuming; but let him rather be so much the more condescending and laborious, in improving his superior talents and advantages for the good of others.

12 For whosoever, under the dominion of a proud spirit, shall behave imperiously, and seek to set himself above others, shall be brought down and exposed to shame here and hereafter: But whosoever shall have mean thoughts of himself, and behave with condescension and humility, shall be highly honoured in the sight of God and man.

13 Then our Lord, turning his discourse to the *scribes and Pharisees*, said, Wo unto you, ye hypocritical teachers, and vain boasters! Your case is dreadfully guilty and miserable: For ye, who profess to have the key of knowledge, and ought to explain the ancient types and prophecies of the *Messiah*, in their reference to me and my spiritual kingdom, do all you can to oppose my gracious designs, and to prejudice the people against them; for ye neither embrace my gospel yourselves, nor let others alone that are inclined to it; but ye bear them down by your authority, threaten to cast them out of your synagogues, and vilify my person, doctrine, and miracles, to prevent their believing to the salvation of their souls.

14 Wo unto you, ye hypocritical teachers and vain boasters! For, in direct violation of the law of right and justice, ye, by specious insinuations, and rigorous exactions, make a prey of weak widows and their families, from whom any thing is to be gotten; and to cover your cruel covetousness and extortion, and bring them the more readily into your base designs, ye put on a cloak of great devotion, by lengthening out your prayers: Therefore your sin is highly aggravated; and ye shall suffer the heaviest vengeance from the hand of God, who is *a father of the fatherless, and a judge of the widows*. (Psal. lxxviii. 5.)

15 Wo, unto you, ye hypocritical teachers and vain boasters! For ye contrive and labour, run every where, and try all imaginable ways, and means to gain over a *Gentile* to your religion, and especially to your own sect; not with any design for the glory of God and the good of his soul, but that ye may have the reputation of converting him, and may strengthen your own party; and when once he is proselyted, to absolute is your ascendancy over his conscience, that ye fill his head with

with trifling and immoral notions, and his heart with the worst of prejudices; and so make him doubly more stupid and vile, more outrageously bigotted against me and my gospel †, more furiously mad, in acting under the devil's influence to serve his interests, and in potting blindly on to eternal destruction, than even some of yourselves.

16 Wo unto you, ye blind guides; which say, Whosoever shall swear by the temple, it is nothing: but whosoever shall swear by the gold of the temple, he is a debtor.

16 Wo unto you, ye ignorant, erroneous, and superstitious teachers, who pretend to be guides to the blind, but are yourselves wilfully blind: Ye mislead the people into the most dangerous errors about the obligation of oaths, telling them, that whoever swears only by the temple, his oath does not bind him, and need not be regarded; but whoever swears by the gold, or the treasure, which is consecrated to the service of God in the temple, and by which ye yourselves expect to be gainers, he is bound by his oath, and must perform it.

17 Ye fools, and blind: for whether is greater, the gold, or the temple that sanctifieth the gold?

17 Ye foolish and ridiculous teachers, (see the note on chap. v. 22.) what a weak and senseless distinction is this! For let me ask you, Which is most sacred, most related to God, and most to be regarded? the gold that is sanctified by the temple, or the temple that sanctifies the gold? Is not that which sanctifies, greater than that which is sanctified?

18 And, Whosoever shall swear by the altar, it is nothing: but whosoever sweareth by the gift that is upon it, he is guilty.

18 And ye furthermore tell the people, that whoever swears only by the altar, his oath is not binding; but whoever swears by any gift, or sacrifice, that is offered upon the altar, he is a debtor, and is guilty of the greatest crime if he does not perform his oath.

19 Ye fools, and blind: for whether is greater, the gift, or the altar that sanctifieth the gift?

19 Ye foolish and ridiculous teachers, how silly and absurd a distinction is this! For which must common sense tell one is most nearly related to God, and most strictly to be regarded with a conscience toward him? the offering which is sanctified by the altar, or the altar which sanctifies that? (*Exod. xxix. 37.*) These things carry their own evidence to any one, whose interests do not lie the other way.

20 Whoso therefore shall swear by the

20 It is therefore certain, that whosoever swears by God's altar †, does, in effect, swear by all the oblations

NOTES.

† The *Hellenist Jews*, who were mostly proselytes, shewed the bitterest rancour of all others against Christianity. (*Acts* xiii. 45. and xiv. 2. 10. and xvii. 5, 6, 13.): And *Justin Martyr* complained, that the *Jewish* proselytes were doubly more blasphemous against the name of Christ, and desirous to kill and

torment believers in him, than the *Jews* were themselves. *Dialog. cum Triph.* p. 350.

† Christ disallows of these forms of swearing, (*chap. v. 24. &c.*): But he here intimates, that such oaths must in all reason be supposed to have a reference to God, who only can be a witness

the altar, sweareth by it, and by all things thereon.

21 And whoſo ſhall ſwear by the temple, ſweareth by it, and by him that dwelleth therein.

22 And he that ſhall ſwear by heaven, ſweareth by the throne of God, and by him that ſitteth thereon.

23 Wo unto you, ſcribes and Pharifees, hypocrites; for ye pay tithe of mint, and anife, and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: theſe ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.

24 Ye blind guides, which ſtrain at a gnat, and ſwallow a camel.

oblations that are brought to it, and by the God whoſe altar it is, and to whom the offerings upon it are made.

21 And whoſoever ſwears by the temple, takes that oath by the ſacred houſe which was built at the command of God, conſecrated by his preſence, and dedicated to him; and ſo, in effect, ſwears by the God whoſe temple it is, and who, in a ſpecial manner, reſides there.

22 And, to mention another inſtance in uſe among you, whoever he be that ſwears by heaven, which is the ſeat of God's moſt glorious majeſty and dominion, ſwears, in effect, by him who dwells and rules there. So that whatever creatures ye ſwear by, ſince they have a relation to God, it is implicitly taking an oath by God himſelf; and if any thing could be ſuppoſed to abate the obligation, ariſing from thence, in one of theſe caſes, more than in another, it would be when ye ſwear by a creature of the more diſtant, and not by one of the neareſt relation to him.

23 Wo unto you, ye hypocritical teachers and ſelf-conceited boaſters! For ye are wonderfully exact and ſcrupulous in trifling niceties, which coſt you little, that ye may raiſe your reputation with the people, and engage the prieſts in your intereſt: Ye therefore make a great ſtir about paying tithes, even of ſuch ſmall herbs as mint, anife, and cummin; but utterly neglect the moſt important duties of the law, ſuch as juſtice and mercy toward man, and faith toward God, in all the revelations of his will under the preſent diſpenſation of grace, together with all faithfulneſs toward God and man: Theſe are the momentous vital things of religion, that ye ought to have made your firſt and principal care; and thoſe other trivial things ſhould have had only a ſubordinate place in your regards.

24 Ye are certainly very ignorant and ſuperſtitious directors of other people's judgment and behaviour, while ye pretend to be ſo very conſcientious about the ſmalleſt punctilios, as if ye were afraid of the leaſt ſin; and yet make no ſcruple of the worſt neglects, or of committing the moſt notorious wickedneſſes, which, in compariſon, are as much greater than thoſe that ye ſeem ſo careful to avoid, as a camel is than a gnat †.

25 Wo

N O T E S.

of the truth, and an avenger of the falſhood, of what they ſwear by the creatures that are related to him; and that therefore, if any were ſo fooliſh as take ſuch oaths, they were bound to

perform the one as well as the other.

† Here ſeems to be an alluſion to a Jewiſh cuſtom, of ſtraining their liquors before they drank, leſt they ſhould ſwallow ſo ſmall an inſect as a gnat.

25 Wo unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites; for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess.

26 *Thou* blind Pharisee, cleanse first that *which is* within the cup and platter, that the out-side of them may be clean alio.

27 Wo unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites; for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead mens bones, and of all uncleanness.

28 Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men; but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.

29 Wo unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites; because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous,

30 And say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets.

31 Wherefore ye be witnesses un-

25 Wo unto you, ye hypocritical teachers and vain boasters! For ye are exceeding diligent in making an outward shew of religion, in nice observances of external washings, rites, and ceremonies, like persons that are very curious in scouring the outsides of their cups and dishes, and making them bright; but, in your hearts and secret behaviour, ye indulge all manner of abominable wickedness, to get riches by rapine and cruelty, and use them with luxury and intemperance, (*ακαρτια*,) like persons that do not care what dirt and filth there is in the inside of their dishes and cups.

26 O stupid *Pharisee*, who knowest not the plague of thine own heart, see that your inmost thoughts and secret practices be first cleansed from corrupt principles, inclinations, and designs; and from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, as ever you would be truly holy in your life: Begin within, and all will soon appear honourable without; and a scrupulous exactness in the external forms and rites commanded in the law, will then better become you.

27 Wo unto you, ye hypocritical teachers and pharisaical boasters! For ye may justly be compared to the sepulchres of persons of note, which are whitened and garnished, and so make a very beautiful outside appearance; but within are full of dead mens bones, and of nauseous putrefaction.

28 In like manner, ye make a fair external shew of religion, and appear with a reputation for great devotion and holiness among men; but, in your hearts and secret behaviour, are full of all odious hypocrisy and indulged vices.

29 Wo unto you, ye hypocritical teachers and vain boasters! For ye yourselves pretend to have a high veneration for the ancient prophets and holy men of God; and, in token of your honouring their memory, build and beautify monuments over their graves, and repair and adorn their tombs or sepulchres, which, by means of your care, remain to this very day.

30 And, under pretence of extraordinary respect to their characters, ye further say, If our lot had been to live in the several ages of our predecessors, we, their descendents, would not have joined with them, in their cruel persecutions of the Lord's prophets. and in putting them to death for righteousness' sake.

31 Therefore, by your own confession, ye are the children of those very persons who wickedly murdered the holy prophets; and your practices prove

to yourselves, that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets.

32 Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers.

33 Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?

34 Wherefore behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise-men, and scribes; and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city:

35 That, upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel, unto the blood of Zacharias, son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar.

prove that ye really are so in your spirit and temper: Ye are the true offspring of their own likeness, and tread exactly in their persecuting steps, being a *seed of evil-doers*; (IIa. i. 4.) and *as your fathers did, so do ye.* (Acts vii. 51.)

32 I know that ye are now wickedly contriving, and in a very few days will accomplish, my death; and after that, will follow my apostles and disciples with the like barbarous rage: Go on then in your own way; ye will thereby complete the remainder of your fathers iniquity, till the measure of this nation's guilt will be filled up, and will ripen it for utter destruction.

33 O ye crafty, malignant, and hypocritical generation of men, who, for subtilty, venom, and specious appearances, are like serpents and vipers! though ye may impose upon men, how can ye answer for all your wickedness at God's bar, or escape his righteous and eternal vengeance?

34 Therefore, to leave you inexcusable, and justify God's righteous proceedings against you, in case ye still persist in obstinate infidelity and impenitence, observe the following declaration: I, by virtue of my divine office and authority, will send, to you, of this nation, ministers of the New Testament, apostles, evangelists, pastors, and teachers, who shall be no way inferior to the ancient prophets, wise-men, and *scribes*; and, instead of your receiving them and their message, some of them ye will put to death by various means; others ye will crucify; others ye will lash with thongs and rods in your places of public worship, where your ecclesiastical courts are kept; and others ye will harrass about, and pursue with violence, from one city to another †, for my name's sake.

35 All this will ye be suffered to do, that, as ye will involve yourselves in the guilt of your forefathers sins, by approving of them, persisting in them, and adding to them, with the highest aggravations of still more flagrant guilt; so the utmost vengeance may be executed upon you for all the innocent and holy blood that has been shed for righteousness' sake, even from the days of *Abel*, the first martyr, whom *Cain* slew because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous, (1 John iii. 12.) down to the days of *Zacharias*, the son of *Barachias*,

N O T E.

† All this was exactly fulfilled: They stoned *Stephen* to death, *Acts* vii. 59.; killed *James* with the sword, *Acts* xii. 2.; beheaded *Paul* and crucified *Peter*,

Euseb. lib. ii. cap. 25.; scourged the apostles, *Acts* v. 20.; punished the disciples in every synagogue, and persecuted them even to strange cities, *Acts* xxvi. 11.

Barabias or *Jehoiada* †, whom ye of this nation, slew in the court of the Lord's house, between the temple and the altar of burnt-offering, because he, under an afflatus of the Spirit, reprov'd the people for their idolatry, and with his last breath said, *The Lord look upon it, and require it*; thereby intimating, by the spirit of prophecy, that God would require his blood at their hands. (2 *Chron.* xxiv 20, 21, 22.)

36 Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation.

36 I assuredly tell you, that God will reckon with you, of the present age, for all this righteous blood, the guilt of which your still greater wickedness, of the same kind, hath entailed upon yourselves; and the most dreadful wrath shall fall upon you, as if ye had been the murderers of all these holy men and servants of the Lord.

37 O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!

37 O *Jerusalem, Jerusalem*, how deplorable is thy case, who wert once the holy and beloved city of God, and the joy of the whole earth! Thou art now become so infamous for shedding blood, that a prophet cannot perish but in thee; (Luke xiii. 33.) and so furious is thy rage, that thou art set upon stoning them for impostors, whom God, in the greatness of his mercy, and with visible tokens of his favour and authority, hath sent to thee. How often have I laboured by my doctrine and miracles, solemn warnings, kind invitations, and tenders of mercy, to call thy inhabitants, even thy wicked and rebellious children, to repentance, and to bring them in to myself! And what gracious overtures have I made to protect, cherish, comfort, and save them, with a care and tenderness like that of a hen to gather her chickens under her wings, when she apprehends them to be in danger! But, alas! ye refused my counsel, and would have none of my reproof; ye obstinately persisted in your infidelity and in your sins, and would not submit to my grace and government for your own salvation.

38 Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.

38 Behold therefore, now the glory is departed; your time of mercy is over; ye are given up, by the righteous judgment of God, as an incorrigible people; and your city, temple, and nation, are abandoned to utter ruin and desolation. (See the note on *Luke* xix. 43, 44.)

39 For

N O T E.

† *Barabias* and *Jehoiada* are names of like signification; and Christ seems to refer to this instance, rather than any other, because this is the last on record of the prophets that were slain by the Jews for reproving their iniquities: and because God's requiring this blood is particu-

larly taken notice of in scripture, as well as that of *Abel*: And some suppose, that Christ herein had likewise a prophetic reference to the death of another *Zabarias*, the son of *Baruch*, who, *Josephus* says, was killed in the temple, a little before the destruction of *Jerusalem*.

39 For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

39 For I assure you, that I will now take my † last farewell of you, will come into your temple no more, will soon leave this world and go to the Father; after which ye shall not see me again, till the time of my second appearing in the clouds of heaven, when every eye shall see me, and ye shall be forced to own that I am the true Messiah, and would be glad to join in the acclamations ye lately heard, and were enraged at, while the children and people sang their hosannas, saying, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord. (Chap. xxi. 9. 15.)

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

With what humility, integrity, and contempt of this world, should the ministers of Christ behave! and how should they live the doctrines they preach, and not lord it over their hearers! But if any of his servants act unsuitable to character, their doctrine is nevertheless to be regarded as far as it agrees with the word of God, though their disorderly lives are not to be imitated. And wo unto them who either pervert the sacred oracles, or, under a pretence of piety, are guilty of the vilest abominations; who aim at dominion over mens faith and consciences, and neither embrace the gospel themselves, nor cease from hindering others that seem to be well affected towards it; who are fond of specious appearances of external sanctity, but whose hearts are full of all impurity; who are superstitiously scrupulous about trifles, and neglect the most important things of Christianity; and who make light of oaths, and manage all their religion with secular views! How can such as these escape the damnation of hell? Christ will find out every hypocrite, and take vengeance upon them another day. In the mean while, with what faithfulness and compassion, condescension and grace, does he deal with all sorts of sinners in the gospel! But what a deplorable condition are they in, who nevertheless go on in their trespasses, and reject him by unbelief? and especially who indulge a persecuting spirit, which will one time or other bring down the heaviest vengeance upon their own heads! Let them that condemn this or any iniquity in others, take heed of practically approving it by doing the same themselves: For a time is coming, when the iniquity of impenitent sinners will be full, and God will heap the measures of wrath which they have been treasuring up to themselves against the day of wrath and revelation of his righteous judgment. Oh that we might all know the things that belong to our peace, before they be hid from our eyes! and that when Christ appears again, we may be glad with exceeding joy!

C H A P XXIV.

Christ predicts the destruction of Jerusalem, and the end of the world, 1,—35. And the unexpected suddenness of his coming to judgment, 36,—41. And gives warning to us to watch, 42,—51.

TEXT.

AND Jesus went out, and departed

PARAPHRASE.

SOON after the foregoing discourse, Jesus departed from the temple; and, as he was going out, his

N O T E.

† This was the last solemn warning that Christ gave to *Jerusalem*, after two others that are recorded; one in *Luke* xiii. 34, 35, which was occasioned by the *Pharisees* suggesting that *Herod* designed to kill him; and the other in *Luke* xix. 41, &c. which was when he wept o-

ver the city, as he was riding in triumph to it, on the first day of the week, called in our almanacks *Palm-Sunday*; whereas this was afterwards in the temple, just before his last departure from it, *chap.* xxi. 23. and xxiv. 1.

parted from the temple; and his disciples came to him, for to shew him the buildings of the temple.

2 And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.

3 And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?

4 And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you.

his disciples, who heard the wo he had just before denounced against *Jerusalem* and the holy place, came up to him, and desired him to take a view of the magnificent beautiful structure and ornaments of the various parts of the temple; as if they thought that he, as well as they, would admire this stately pile of building, and, upon observing it, might reverse his dreadful sentence against it.

2 But (*de*) Jesus answered, Are not ye too much taken with the external pomp and glory of all these things? and do ye not look upon them with too much concern at the thought of their being laid waste? Firm and stately as ye now behold this edifice to be, I solemnly assure you, it shall be so entirely demolished, that not so much as one stone of it shall be left upon another*.

3 And being now come to the mount of *Olives*, where he seated himself over against the temple, and might have a full prospect of it; some of his disciples, no longer disputing the truth or fitness of what he had said, came in a private manner, and begged of him to give them his answer to the following questions, *viz.* When shall these dreadful things, which thou hast told us about the city and temple, come to pass? and by what discernable signs or tokens shall we know the time of thy coming to set up thy kingdom in all its glory, and to fulfil these threatenings; and the time of the consummation of all things at the end of the world †?

4 Then, to check their curiosity, and lead them to what was most important to themselves, Jesus, in his reply, said, Beware that no man seduce or impose

B b 2

pose

N O T E S.

* The *Jewish* writers themselves tell us, that this was most punctually fulfilled at the siege of *Jerusalem*, under *Titus* the *Roman* commander; who, though he would fain have preserved the temple, could not prevent the soldiers burning and destroying it: Thereupon he ordered them to dig up its foundations; and *Turnus Rufus* ploughed up the ground on which it had stood. The same might be observed of all the following parts of these predictions, relating to the destruction of the city and temple, as an unanswerable proof of the truth of the Christian religion.

† It seems probable, that the disciples thought the destruction of their temple, city, and nation, would be the end of this world itself: But, be that as it will, our Lord, in his answer, took no notice of it; but marked out the signs of his coming to destroy *Jerusalem*, and esta-

lish his kingdom on earth, in such a manner as, at the same time, looked forward, and might, in most circumstances, be applied, to his coming to judgment at the last day, of which the destruction of *Jerusalem* was a lively type or emblem. And in that view I have considered them in the paraphrase, according to an usual way of interpreting prophecies; for many prophecies of the Old Testament, which had an immediate relation to the affairs of the *Jews*, are interpreted by Christ himself, and his apostles, as having had a still further reference to the gospel-state: But it seems to me, that as some of the Lord's expressions, in this discourse, may be applied in common, both to the destruction of *Jerusalem*, and the end of the world; so there are others which more directly relate to the first, and others to the last of these great events.

pose upon you by false and specious pretences, relating to the Messiah and his kingdom.

5 For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many.

5 For, before the things I speak of shall be accomplished, several impostors will set up for the Christ, each of them personating me, and professing himself to be the Messiah whom God hath sent to be the Redeemer of *Israel*; and, by their pretended miracles, tricks of art, and fair promises of delivering their followers, they will draw many after them.

6 And ye shall hear of wars, and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet.

6 Ye shall likewise hear of great broils and insurrections, battles and tumults, and of peoples being terrified with arms of war; but do not be discouraged and distressed in your minds at these things, so as to withdraw your faith in me, or neglect your profession and preaching of my gospel: For, I tell you beforehand, all these commotions must precede the utter destruction of *Jerusalem*; but these are not the last calamities that the *Jews* shall endure: Tribulations of the like sort shall follow them after this, and be acted over again before the end of the world.

7 For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places.

7 For, in this and the following ages, one set of people shall take up arms against another, *Jews* against *Gentiles*, and *Gentiles* against *Jews*, and one state against another: Discords and tumults, civil and foreign wars, will rage in *Palestine*, and other places bordering upon it; and, besides these terrors, there shall be grievous famines, plagues, and earthquakes, in several countries.

8 All these are the beginning of sorrows.

8 All these are, indeed, dreadful judgments; and yet they are but the beginnings of those miseries that will complete the destruction of the *Jewish* nation, and that will come upon all the wicked and ungodly, in the final judgment, at the last day.

9 Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake.

9 Moreover, as to what especially relates to you, my servants and disciples, ye shall suffer a great fight of afflictions; your enemies shall reproach and persecute you, and deliver you up to courts of judicature, to prisons and deaths; and all sorts of men, *Jews* and *Gentiles*, high and low, and people of all nations wherever ye may be scattered, shall be filled with prejudices, and vent their spite and malice against you, because you preach and profess my name.

10 And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another.

10 And many, who call themselves Christians, will be so shocked at these tribulations, as to fall off from their profession, and turn apostates; and then, as they were but wolves in sheep's cloathing before, they will discover a most malignant temper, and treacherously turn informers against their brethren, to whom they pretended the greatest friendship, and will do them all the mischief they can.

11 And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many.

11 Many false teachers also shall appear, either among the *Jews*, or among pretenders to Christianity, who shall amuse the people with feigned prophecies of good days, and preach horrid errors, thereby perverting many from the truth, to their own pernicious schemes and doctrines.

12 And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.

12 And because a malignant, treacherous, and persecuting spirit in some, and errors and apostacies in others, will fill these days with astounding wickedness; therefore many, though not all, who still retain their profession of my gospel, will be apt to grow indifferent in religion, cool and shy toward one another, and lose their former zeal for my glory, truths, and ways.

13 But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.

13 But, as there ever will be a remnant according to the election of grace, who shall not draw back to perdition; so, for your encouragement, I tell you, that whoever shall patiently bear these fiery trials, and shall, nevertheless, persevere in the faith and holiness of the gospel to the end of that portion of troubles that may befall him, and to the end of his days †, he shall stand fair for a preservation, by special providence, from the extreme distresses that will be the total ruin of others, and shall certainly, by special grace, receive the end of his faith, even the salvation of his soul.

14 And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world, for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.

14 And while these troubles and persecutions are spreading abroad, and scattering my disciples far and wide, the gospel, which is the great charter of my kingdom of grace and glory, shall be published through all the *Roman* empire, among the *Gentiles* as well as *Jews*, that it may be a testimony to my authority, for the salvation of them that believe, and for the righteous confusion of them that reject it, in all the nations round about you. And as soon as this is done, the *Jewish* nation, together with their city and temple, shall be utterly destroyed. And, after this gospel shall have had an universal spread through all the habitable parts of the earth, the whole design of God by it shall be finished; all his elect shall be brought into the kingdom; and this world shall come to its final dissolution.

15 When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of

15 Whenever therefore, as to the first of these periods, relating to the *Jewish* nation, ye shall see the *Roman* army compassing the city of *Jerusalem*, and

N O T E.

† When the *Jews*, by their cruel persecutions, had driven the apostles out of *Judea*, the congregation of the faithful in *Jerusalem* were ordered, by a divine oracle, revealed to their most approved

men, to depart from thence, to a village beyond *Jordan*, called *Pella*; and after they were got thither, the vengeance of God utterly destroyed the wicked generation of the *Jews*. *Euseb. lib. iii. cap. 5.*

of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place; (whoſo readeth, let him underſtand :)

16 Then let them which be in Judea, flee into the mountains.

17 Let him which is on the houſe-top, not come down to take any thing out of his houſe :

18 Neither let him which is in the field, return back to take his clothes.

19 And wo unto them that are with child, and to them that give ſuck in thoſe days :

20 But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the Sabbath-day :

21 For then ſhall be great tribulation, ſuch as was not ſince the beginning of the world

and erecting their ſtandard in the holy land, which Daniel ſpoke of as the abominable thing that makes deſolate †, (*Dan. xi. 31.*) then let him who reads Daniel's prophecy, underſtand that it will ſoon be accompliſhed, in the conflagration of *Jeruſalem* by that army.

16 Then, knowing that the utter deſtruction of the *Jewiſh* nation and polity is at hand, let them which are in *Judea* flee for their lives to ſome diſtant mountains or ſecret places, to hide and ſhelter themſelves from the miſeries from which there will be no other way of eſcape.

17 And, as this calamity will be exceeding ſudden, let not ſuch as may be on the tops of their houſes when the alarm comes, loſe any time by going in to take their goods along with them * :

18 Nor let ſuch as may be abroad in the fields venture to go home for their cloaths, or any of the moſt valuable things they have in their houſes; but let them flee, as *Lot* did out of *Sodom*, without any lingering or delay, as ever they hope to eſcape with their lives in thoſe days of imminent danger.

19 And wo to them who, in thoſe perilous times, ſhall be incapable of making a ſpeedy flight, ſuch as women with child, and with infants hanging upon their breasts! It will be very difficult for them, and their tender babes, to avoid the furious rage of the enemy.

20 And (†,) as there will be a neceſſity of the utmoſt haſte, beg of God ſo to order it in his providence, that ye may not be called to fly at the moſt inconvenient and undefirable times; that it may not be in the winter-ſeaſon, when the days are ſhort, and the roads dirty and incommodious for expedition; and beg that it may not be on the Sabbath-day, when the *Jews* will be apt to ſtop your journey, and retard your eſcape, and Judaizing Chriſtians to ſcruple travelling for their own ſafety :

21 For as the ſins of that time will be the moſt aggravated; ſo its terrors and miſeries will be the moſt diſtreſſing and ſhocking that ever were felt by any nation, from the beginning of the world to that day,

NOTES:

† It was thus called, becauſe this army of idolatrous heathens, fighting under a banner of images, which the *Jews* abhorred, would lay their temple, city, and country, deſolate.

* Here is a plain alluſion to the cuſtom of building the *Jewiſh* houſes, which were generally low-built, and flat-roofed, ſurrounded with battlements

about breast high: There they uſed to walk, ſit, converſe together, meditate, and pray, and ſometimes preach to the people in the ſtreets; and they often had ſtairs or ladders on the outside of the houſe, by which they could go up and down when they pleaſed, as ſeems plainly intimated *Mark xiii. 15.*

world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.

22 And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elects sake those days shall be shortened.

23 Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not.

24 For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders, inasmuch that (if it were possible) they shall deceive the very elect.

25 Behold, I have told you before.

26 Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: Behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not.

27 For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

day, or ever shall be afterwards, till the consummation of all things.

22 So that, if the dreadful calamities of those days should be suffered to continue in all their severities without restraint, it would be impossible that any within the confines of *Judea* should survive them: But God, in his merciful providence, will order them to be shorter than he might righteously have determined, and the enemy designed, or than, all things considered, could have been reasonably expected; that his elect which shall then be living, whether called or uncalled, may not utterly be cut off; and that the birth of a chosen race may not be prevented, which are afterwards to descend from some of that generation, and to be called in their season, till all the purposes of his grace shall be accomplished towards them

23 If, amidst those tribulations, it shall be reported, by deluded or designing men, that in this or the other place, the Messiah is risen up to deliver you out of the hands of your enemies; do not give any credit to them.

24 For impostors will appear, some of which will set up for the Messiah; and others will bring in pernicious errors, and pretend to a prophetic spirit, and by magic arts, and other fallacies, will do, or seem to do, prodigious feats, to the drawing away of many; and so strong will their delusions be, that, were it possible to defeat the purpose of God, they would deceive the very elect themselves, to their perdition.

25 Behold, I now give you, my professing disciples, warning of these things beforehand, that whenever they appear, ye may neither be stumbled at them, nor misled by them.

26 If, therefore, any shall spread a report, and say unto you, Behold the time of salvation to *Israel* is at hand, the Messiah now appears in a certain solitary wilderness, that the people may flock to him for deliverance from their enemies; do not ye go out to meet him: Or if they say, Behold, he conceals himself in some private retirement, waiting for a fit opportunity to discover himself; do not believe it: Look upon all such reports as mere impositions.

27 For as lightning diffuses and makes itself evident through all places, from one part of the heavens to the other, in an instant; so the Messiah shall suddenly appear, with surprising power, to destroy the *Jews* through all their land at once, and to spread his gospel with irresistible light and efficacy

28 For whereforever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together.

29 Immediately after the tribulation of those days, shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken.

30 And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory.

31 And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

cy, far and wide, through the earth: And so his coming to judge the world will be at the last day.

28 For as eagles, which are greedy of their prey, gather about a dead carcase with the speediest flight, wherever they find it; so the Roman army, which bears eagles in its ensigns, will rush, with impetuous swiftness, upon the expiring state of the Jews, and seize it, like a dead body, for their prey. And innumerable converts will flock to a crucified Saviour, with all alacrity and speed, as a willing people in the day of his power. And, in like manner, all the saints will be gathered to him with exceeding joy, in the twinkling of an eye, when the last trump shall sound, and the dead shall be raised.

29 Immediately after the distressing troubles that will arise in the days of the Jewish catastrophe, such shall be the desolation upon the temple and Jerusalem, and the cities of Judea, and so entire the subversion of their ecclesiastical and civil state, that it may be metaphorically represented by the sun, moon, and stars losing their light, and all the ordinances of heaven being dissolved, as the prophets used to express such confusions; (*Isa.* xiii. 10. & xxxiv. 4. *Joel* ii. 34. & iii. 15.) and immediately after like troubles toward the end of the world, there will be, in a literal sense, an amazing change in all the heavenly bodies, which shall be dissolved. (*2 Pet.* iii. 10,—12.)

30 And then the Messiah shall make himself known in his true character, as a sign to be admired, instead of a sign to be spoken against: All the tribes of Israel shall then be forced to mourn in reflection on their infidelity, and on their crucifying him, and entailing his blood, in a way of vengeance, upon their own and their childrens heads; and every one shall have such evident discoveries of him, as will be a full demonstration of his exalted dignity and authority, to the joy of his friends, and the confusion of his enemies: And thus it will be in a still more abundant manner, when every eye shall see him appearing in the clouds of heaven, in all his majesty and glory, to judge the world at the last day.

31 And, at the time of his coming to destroy Jerusalem, he will send his apostles and ministers, as his messengers, to sound the gospel-trumpet, and proclaim the year of jubilee, among the Gentiles; and, by means of their preaching, will gather in his elect to himself, and to his church, wherever they are scattered through all quarters of the earth. In like manner, at the end of the world, he will send forth his holy angels, who are ministering spirits to the

the heirs of salvation; and they, with a mighty sound, like that of a great trumpet, (1 Cor. xv. 52. 1 *Thess.* iv. 16.) shall alarm a stupid world, and gather out, from every nation, all the chosen and called of God, how widely soever they may be scattered abroad under the heavens.

32 Now learn a parable of the fig-tree: When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh;

33 So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors.

34 Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled.

35 Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.

36 But of that day and hour knoweth no man; no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.

37 But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

32, 33 Now, for your further information and improvement of these things, observe what I am going to tell you under the following similitude: As when, in the spring, ye see the tender shoots and leaves of the fig-tree begin to sprout, ye are sure that the summer will very soon appear; even so, when ye shall see the several signs I have been speaking of come to pass, ye may be as certain that the time of my coming hastens apace, and is just at hand.

34 Yea, as to what concerns the destruction of the *Jews*, and the troubles that shall go before it, I assuredly tell you, All these surprising events are already so near approaching, that there are some now living who shall see them come to pass before they die.

35 And, as to what relates to the final judgment and dissolution of all things †, I assure you, A time is coming, when the present frame of the visible heavens, and of the earth, shall certainly be dissolved, though they have continued, by the ordinance of God, to this day, and it may seem unlikely that they ever should be destroyed; but not one word of what I have foretold you shall ever fail of its accomplishment.

36 But the time for the destruction of the world, at the final judgment, is not so near as ye may be ready to expect: Though there is a day and hour critically and unalterably appointed of God for it, which, by way of eminence, is called *that day*; yet, when this shall be, is a secret reserved in his own bosom: Neither any man on earth, nor the holy angels in heaven, can find it out; nor has my Father revealed it to the Messiah himself as man, or as any part of his commission for making it known to others. (See the note on *Mark* xiii. 32.)

37 However, it belongs to my commission to tell you, as a matter of great importance, to excite your watchfulness and caution, That the time of my coming to judge the world, of which the destruction of the

N O T E.

† Here our Lord seems to make a transition to what more directly and immediately relates to his coming to judge the world at the last day, which he discourses on at large in the following chapter. See the notes on *Mark* xiii. 32. and *Luke* xxi. 35.

the city and nation of the *Jews* is an eminent type, will be as sudden and unexpected to the generality of mankind, as the dreadful desolation was upon the old world in the days of *Noah*.

38 For as in the days that were before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark,

39 And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

40 Then shall two be in the field, the one shall be taken, and the other left.

41 Two women shall be grinding at the mill: the one shall be taken, and the other left.

42 Watch therefore, for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come.

43 But know this, that if the good-man of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up.

38, 39 For as in his days, before the flood came, the people were worldly and sensual, spent their time, and were swallowed up in the business and pleasures of life, slighted the warnings which *Noah* gave them, and would believe nothing of their danger till the very day that the deluge surprised and drowned them all: So it will be with the unbelieving *Jews*; they will go on heedlessly in the way of their own carnal hearts, despising all the warnings which I and my apostles shall give them, till, before they are aware, sudden destruction will come upon them, and they cannot escape: And so it will remarkably be with the wicked of the earth, with respect to the judgment of the great day, at the end of the world.

40, 41 Then God will make a wonderful distinction between one person and another: As, at the destruction of the *Jews*, among people of the same business and circumstances of life, and, according to human view, in the same danger, like two men working together in one field, and two women grinding corn together at one mill, some, by a sovereign turn of providence, shall be saved from the dreadful calamity, and others shall be left to fall in it: So, at the day of judgment, some, whom the world could not distinguish, and who knew not how to form a certain judgment concerning themselves, shall be adjudged to eternal life; and others to eternal death, contrary to the expectation of many about them.

42 Since therefore such an awful day will surely come, and ye know not when; it is your great duty and interest to be always observing the tokens, and living in expectation of it, and to be watching over your own hearts and ways, that whatever calamities may befall you in this world, and especially whenever ye come to die, and give up your accounts to God in judgment, ye may not be surprised into ruin before ye are aware.

43 And (do) consider seriously how all wise men use to behave in other cases of importance: As for instance, suppose any house keeper were to be told, that in some hour of the night, though it were not certainly known which, his house would be set upon by thieves; he would be sure to watch carefully all along, till the danger should be over, that they might not break into his habitation, and rob him.

44 It

44 Therefore be ye also ready : for in such an hour as you think not, the Son of man cometh.

45 Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his Lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season ?

46 Blessed is that servant, whom his Lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing.

47 Verily I say unto you, That he shall make him ruler over all his goods.

48 But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My Lord delayeth his coming,

49 And shall begin to smite his fellow-servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken :

50 The Lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not ware of ;

51 And shall cut him asunder, and appoint *him* his portion with the hypocrites : there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth,

44 It therefore still more highly concerns you' in an affair of so much greater moment, to be always safe and provided against the worst : For though ye are assured that calamitous days will come, and that every one of you must die, and appear before God in judgment ; yet ye know not when, and may be overtaken by these awful events at unawares.

45 In such circumstances then as these, which I have forewarned you of, who do ye suppose will be reckoned an upright and prudent servant among those, whom his Lord has furnished with the knowledge of his will, and made an overseer in his house, for distributing a portion in season to every one according to his need ? Is it not the servant that is diligent in improving his knowledge, and all opportunities for a due discharge of his trust ?

46 That servant is blessed indeed, who shall be found acting such a wise and faithful part in his spiritual concerns, whenever his Lord shall appear, be it sooner or later, to execute any judgment on the earth ; and especially when he shall come to reckon with him at death, and at the final judgment.

47 I assuredly tell you, that his great Lord and Master will advance him to the most excellent dignity and blessedness, and make him partaker of the riches of the glory of his inheritance, in his everlasting kingdom.

48, 49 But if, on the other hand, he, who has been intrusted with great gifts and talents, and opportunities of usefulness in his master's house, shall begin to think in his heart that there is no present danger of his Lord's visiting his iniquities, or taking him away by death, and summoning him to judgment ; and thereupon shall begin to revile his fellow-servants in the church, and to give himself up to immorality, luxury, and profaneness :

50, 51 The Lord of that unfaithful and foolish servant will come upon him with a terrible surprise, and cut him off from the land of the living, and from all his sensual pleasures, in the midst of his security and wickedness ; he will violently separate his soul and body by some dreadful stroke of divine vengeance, and will adjudge him to a share with the worst of sinners and hypocrites in the hottest place in hell, as the just reward of his iniquity ; where he will be distressed with the bitterest lamentation and anguish, in the reflections of his own guilty conscience, and under the wrath of God for ever.

R E C O L L E C T I O N S.

How clearly is the Messiah's character supported by those awful predictions that have been to punctually accomplished in the destruction of *Jerusalem*! and with what solemn lustre will it shine, when every eye shall see him appear in the clouds of heaven, to fulfil the rest, at the consummation of all things! How little should the external grandeur and dissolving glory of this world affect us, especially in what relates to the worship of God! and how much better is it to be with Christ, wherever he is, than in the most pompous temple, from whence he is departed in his great displeasure!—This world is full of troubles, and the people and servants of God often have a large share of them for his sake; but how much more terrible distress must the wicked suffer for ever in the future state! While, therefore, the believer has good hopes, through grace, of escaping the wrath to come, no terrors on earth should dismay or turn him aside from the faith, profession, and holiness of the gospel: And yet it is lawful for the disciples of Christ to flee out of the way of their enemies rage, when the providence of God gives them opportunities for it; and he will restrain and over-rule tribulation and persecution themselves, to the further advancement and increase of his kingdom; for in the midst of judgment he remembers mercy, that he may accomplish the purposes of his grace to the elect, and bring them safe at last to glory. But oh how many others will be misled by the errors of the wicked, and fall into perdition! And with what different sentiments, and events, will the faint and the sinner see Christ at his coming to judgment! With what watchfulness and preparedness then should every one of us be looking, and waiting for it, that it may not surprise us, before we are aware, into eternal confusion and misery! And with what earnestness should we pray for all reasonable appearances of providence and grace in our favour, that we may be hid in the day of the Lord's anger, and may neither be among them whose iniquity abounds, or whose love waxes cold; but may endure to the end, and be saved! Dreadful will be their case, who, in a day of trial and death, shall be found unfaithful, whatever their gifts and professions may be: But this is the great encouragement and comfort of all Christ's true disciples and servants, that he will take care to shelter them from the worst of storms in this world, and from eternal wrath in the next. Blessed are they that shall be found faithful when their great Lord shall come to judge the world at the last day: They shall be owned, and crowned with immortal honours, to their exceeding joy.

C H A P. XXV.

A continuation of Christ's discourse. in the parable of the ten virgins, 1,—13. In the parable of the talents, 14,—30. And in a description of the last judgment, 31,—46.

T E X T.

THEN shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom.

P A R A P H R A S E.

AT the awful time of the Messiah's appearing to take vengeance on the obstinate Jews, but more especially to judge the world at the last day, the state of the gospel kingdom, and the way of God's dealing with its visible subjects, may be fitly represented by this parable: "Ten virgins, who were invited to a wedding, took their lamps, and went out to meet the bridegroom †:"—So Christ, the

N O T E

† It was a frequent custom, in those times, to have weddings in the night; when the bridegroom used to go attended with his friends to the bride's house, where she waited for him with her bride-

maids, who, when they heard of his approach, went out with lamps to light and conduct him into the house, and the number of virgins present on those occasions, was seldom less than ten.—

Though

the bridegroom of the church, having set up his kingdom in the world, invited *Jews* and *Gentiles* to come and partake of its blessings; and many among them professed to be his disciples, to wait upon him, and to wait for him, at his last appearing to judgment.

2 And five of them were wise, and five were foolish.

2 "Now five of these virgins were prudent and thoughtful; and the other five were inconsiderate and careless:"—So some of those that make a profession of Christ, being true believers, are wise unto salvation; and others, being merely nominal Christians, foolishly deceive themselves with hypocritical pretences, and a formal profession of Christ's name.

3 They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them:

3, 4 "The foolish virgins took their lamps, without any oil to keep them burning; but the wise took vessels of oil with them, to supply their lamps, till the bridegroom should come:"—So formal professors who make a present shew of religion, have no serious concern about, and are destitute of, that grace of God in their hearts which is necessary to an acceptable and final perseverance in their holy profession; but true believers are most of all solicitous about, and are possessed of, a real principle of grace in their own souls, that they may endure to the end and be saved.

4 But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.

5 While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept.

5 "In the mean while, the bridegroom not coming so soon as might have been expected, all the virgins were drowsy, and fell asleep:"—So while thoughts of Christ's coming to judgment represent it as at a distance, the generality of true believers themselves are apt to slacken their zeal, fervour, and diligence, and to fall into a remiss, careless, and stupid frame of spirit, and all hypocritical professors naturally sink into a deep sleep of carnal security, as if they apprehended that he would never appear at all.

6 And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him.

6, 7 "But (at) midnight, there was a sudden loud alarm, saying, Behold, the bridegroom is just at hand, go forth, ye slumbering and sleeping virgins, to meet him: And they all, being roused by this surprising summons, made what haste they could to get their lamps ready to receive him."—So when visible professors are most secure and thought-

7 Then all those virgins arose, and

N O T E.

Though this parable may be applied particularly to the *Jews*; yet I take it to have a much more extensive view, because it sets out things common to all who, having heard the gospel, make a profession of Christ's name: And therefore, to save room, I have paraphrased

it only in this light, which manifestly includes the other; and if any would also apply it to Christ's coming to destroy *Jerusalem*, as a type of the final judgment, his own thoughts may easily add that consideration of it.

and trimmed their lamps.

8 And the foolish said unto the wife, Give us of your oil, for our lamps are gone out.

9 But the wife answered, saying, Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves.

10 And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and they that were ready, went in with him to the marriage, and the door was shut.

thoughtless, and in least expectation of Christ's coming to call them to an account, some sudden awful alarms of the near approach of death and judgment rouse them out of their sloth and indolence, whether they be real Christians or not; and both sorts are then in a hurry, and concerned to appear with safety, acceptance, and comfort, before him: And thus it will be with many of God's own people at the last day.

8 "And, in the midst of all this confusion, the wise virgins having oil in their vessels to keep their lamps burning, the foolish ones intreated that they would give them some of it, because they themselves had none, and their lamps were gone out:"—So true believers, under all their declensions and surprize, will be found to have the saving grace of God in their hearts, at death and judgment, as well as a profession of it; but all hypocrites then, finding themselves destitute of it, will be in the utmost distress; their profession will then come to nothing, and all the light of their specious appearances and false hopes will go out; they will then see their absolute need of that grace, which before they were careless about; and would be glad to be in the condition of sincere Christians, and to have any help from them.

9 "But the wise virgins replied, We cannot possibly furnish you with oil, having only just enough for ourselves; but go speedily to them that sell it, and there seek a supply, as we have done:"—So true believers are, and will be sensible, that they have no more grace than is necessary for themselves, that all is little enough, and that they cannot communicate any to others, nor have any works of supererogation to place to their account; they will pity graceless sinners, but not be able to help them any otherwise than by directing them to the means of grace, which God has appointed for dispensing it, and, in an attendance on which, they themselves were made partakers of it.

10 "And while the foolish virgins were, at the last moment, seeking after oil, the bridegroom came; and they, whose lamps were burning, went in with him to the marriage-feast, upon which the door was shut:"—So formal professors, who have lived contentedly without the grace of God till they find they must immediately appear before him, are then all in confusion about obtaining it; and while, too late, they are seeking after it, death and judgment seize them, and shut them out of Christ's blessed mansions; but true believers are admitted into the

11 Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us.

12 But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not.

13 Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.

14 For the kingdom of heaven is as a man travelling into a far country, who called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods :

15 And unto one

presence of his glory, there to abide, amidst all delights, like persons shut in with him for ever.

11, 12 " After the door was shut, the foolish virgins came, and called earnestly upon the lord of the feast, saying, We beseech thee to admit us to the wedding; but he replied, I assuredly tell you, I do not look upon you as the companions of my bride, and will regard you no more than perfect strangers :"—So presumptuous hypocrites will be very earnest, at death and judgment, for admittance to heaven; but all their pleas will be in vain, Christ will shew his disapprobation of them, and utterly reject them as none of his.

13 Be ye, therefore, always wakeful and watchful, lest any of you, who profess my name, be found graceless at the day of death and judgment: For, as I told you before, (chap. xxiv. 44.) ye do not know the exact time when I, the Messiah, shall come to call you to a final account; and if ye, like the foolish virgins, shall be utterly unprepared then, it will be too late to obtain mercy, but ye must be unavoidably excluded from all the glory and the joys of my presence for ever.

14 For, to give you a further illustration of the state of the gospel-kingdom, and of the way of God's dealing in the last judgment with his professing servants, ye may take it in the following similitude: " A certain man, designing to go into a distant country, called his servants together, and committed his money to their trust, that they might manage and improve it, for his use, against his return :"—So Christ intimated, that he preached his gospel whilst he was on earth; and gave gifts to his apostles, ministers, and private persons, when he ascended up on high: To some he gave † miraculous powers and extraordinary gifts, to some the means of salvation, and to some special and effectual grace; and, as all things were delivered into his hands, he likewise distributed to some the bounties of providence, as he pleased: And all these he gave in various proportions, that every one might profit others by them, for the advancement of his kingdom and glory in the world; and when he shall come to judgment at the last day, he will call them all to an account how they have used and improved his gifts.

15 " Accordingly he gave to one five talents, (see

N O T E.

† This parable seems most immediately to refer to the various gifts and powers which Christ bestowed on his professed disciples before his ascension to heaven; but may be extended to all his dispensations of providence and grace, till he shall come again. See the note on *Luke xix. 13.*

one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one: to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey.

16 Then he that had received the five talents, went and traded with the same, and made *them* other five talents.

17 And likewise he that had received two, he also gained other two.

18 But he that had received one, went and digged in the earth, and hid his lord's money.

19 After a long time, the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them.

20 And so he that had received five talents, came and brought other five talents, saying, Lord, thou deliverest unto me five talents: behold, I have gained besides them five talents more.

21 His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant; thou hast

(see the note on chap. xviii. 24.) to another two, to a third one, as might be most suitable to their several stations and capacities; and having thus disposed of his affairs, he departed:—So Christ, before and after his ascension to heaven, distributed his various gifts, in different measures, to ministers and private persons, according to their several capacities and employments, for the edification of the church, and promoting his interest in the world, till he shall come again to judgment.

16, 17 “Then he, to whom five talents were given, immediately set himself to trade with them, and gained five more; and he who had two, doubled them likewise:—So some ministers and Christians, who are faithful to their Lord, exert themselves for his glory and the good of his people, by a suitable improvement of his gifts and graces, in some proportion to the assistances and opportunities he affords them.

18 “But the servant, who received one talent, buried it in the earth, and made no use of it for any advantage to himself or others:—So graceless ministers and professors make no good improvement of the spiritual gifts and means of grace, or bounties of providence, which Christ bestows on them; but bury all their talents in earthly things, are careless about his honour and interest, and are slothful and unprofitable to themselves, and to all about them.

19 “The lord of these servants, after he had been gone a great while from them, returned, and required every one to give an account of what he had done with his money:—So, at the end of the world, Christ will appear the second time, and summon all mankind before him, especially those that have enjoyed the gospel, to give an account of what use they have made of the various gifts he has bestowed upon them.

20, 21 “And he who had five talents came first, and bringing five more, said, Lord, I gratefully acknowledge that thou entrustedst me with five talents; behold the happy increase! By trading with these, I have gained another five: His lord replied with approbation, You have proved yourself to be a diligent and faithful steward, in employing those small sums for the purposes for which I gave them; I will bestow upon you still more abundant riches and honours, that you may be as happy as my favour can make you:—So, at Christ's second coming, his faithful servants and disciples, and particularly such as have been most eminent in his church, will

been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.

22 He also that had received two talents, came and said, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me two talents: behold, I have gained two other talents besides them.

23 His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.

24 Then he which had received the one talent, came and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not sowed:

25 And I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, there thou hast *that is* thine.

will thankfully own the grace that fitted and qualified them for his service, and that was not bestowed in vain, but stirred them up to diligence, and turned to good account: And he will publicly and kindly accept their labours of love for his name's sake, owning them to be evident proofs of his grace in them, and of their fidelity to him; and, in the riches of his liberality, will advance them to the inheritance of the saint in light, and set them on thrones of glory; where, according to their utmost capacities, they shall enter into, and be surrounded with, all possible blessedness and exalted delights, resulting from his presence and favour, in a participation of his own immortal joys.

22, 23 " Then he who had received two talents, came, and, bringing two more, made the like acknowledgment of his lord's favour, and of a proportionable increase, by means of his trading with them: And his lord replied with like approbation of him, and assurances of the great things which he would further bestow upon him:—So when others of Christ's faithful servants and disciples, of lower attainments, appear before his judgment-seat to give up their accounts, they, in like manner with the rest, will thankfully own his favour, and its blessed effects on them; and he will also freely accept and own their services, in their measure, as equal proofs of the truth of his grace in them, and of their faithfulness to him; and will advance them to glory and blessedness, as high as they may be capable of, in his everlasting presence and love; where they will plunge into, and be swallowed up in, a boundless ocean of unutterable joy, which he will give them in communion with himself.

24, 25 " At last he who had received one talent, came, and excused his own sloth, by an unjust reflection upon his lord, saying, I apprehended thee to be a severe master, who demandest more than thou gavest, like one who, according to the proverb, would reap where he had not sown, and gather corn where he had never scattered seed; and so I dreaded thy austerity, and would not venture to make any use of thy talent, but buried it in the earth. Behold, here is the money thou gavest me, and I hope thou wilt not insist on more:—So, after the judgment of the righteous, Christ will call the wicked to an account: And graceless ministers and people, who have only the bounties of providence, and gospel-gifts and privileges, are apt to entertain hard thoughts of God, and to excuse their own sinful neglects, by unjust reflections upon him, as if he de-

manded more of them than he had ever given, or would give an ability to perform; and, therefore, they resolve to bury their minds in earthly things, and yield themselves up to slothfulness in religion; and they hope to come off, in the day of judgment, because they are not so wicked as some others, and have done no great harm, though they have done no good.

26 His lord answered and said unto him, Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not sown:

27 Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury.

28 Take therefore the talent from him, and give it unto him which hath ten talents.

29 For unto every one that hath shall

26, 27 But his lord replied, Thou perverse and idle drone; it is plain, by your own confession, that you knew I expected an improvement of the money I left with you; and therefore, if you would not trade with it in hopes of a greater increase, you ought at least to have put it out to the banker, that, at my return, I might have received mine own with common interest *.—So, in the great day of account, Christ will say to the unprofitable, whom he deems to be a slothful and wicked servant, If you unrighteously imagined that I was severe in requiring more than I gave, how durst you neglect an improvement of what you own I bestowed upon you? or how could you think that I would not insist on an improvement of *that*? And who told you, that I would not have rendered your attempts effectual, had you made the best use you could of such advantages as I favoured you with, beyond what you deserved, or could have demanded? This, therefore, is all frivolous and abusive pretence, and should rather have been an argument for diligence than for sloth; but that which really moved you to neglect my service, was your own indolence and dislike of it, and not your want of ability for it.

28 "Then the lord of these servants ordered the single talent to be taken away from him who had made no use of it, and given to him who had been most remarkably faithful and laborious unto the doubling of his five talents:—So Christ will strip graceless persons, whether ministers or people, of all the good things he bestowed upon them; and will add signal blessings to them that are eminently faithful and diligent in the exercise of their gifts and graces, for his glory, and the good of the church.

29 For † as every one who has grace and other gifts, and, by their influence, makes a careful improvement

N O T E S.

* Putting money out to use was customary in those days; and Christ here seems to allow of a reasonable interest to be received for it.

† It is a little doubtful to me, whether this verse be a continuation of what

Christ will say in judgment, or of what he said before-hand, to set out the general method of his dispensations here and hereafter; and, therefore, I have given such a sense as may take in both.

shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away, even that which he hath.

30 And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

31 When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory.

32 And before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats:

33 And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left.

34 Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for

provement of them, may depend upon an increase of these and other blessings, with abundance of comfort in them on earth; so he shall be crowned with all the riches of a glorious and everlasting inheritance in heaven: But as he, that has only the gifts of providence and of gospel-privileges, and makes no better use of them than if he really had them not, may expect to be one way or other blasted before he dies; so he shall be utterly deprived of all good things that he had, or seemed to have, for ever in the day of account.

30 And then the great Judge of all will order the idle, useles, and wicked servant, to be cast into the dreadful darkness and horror of an eternal hell; where he shall have bitter lamentation and wo, with endless rage and agony, as the just punishment of his sin.

31 Now when the Messiah, who condescended to take upon him the nature of man, shall appear to make these various retributions, he will come, not only in the glory of his Father, (chap. xvi. 27.) shining in all the perfections of the Godhead; but likewise in the exalted honours, that are peculiar to his person and office, as Mediator and Judge of the world; and with a bright retinue of an innumerable company of angels, as his magnificent train and ministers of state, to execute his commands; and then will he sit in a visible manner, with awful majesty and grandeur, upon his illustrious throne, which he has prepared for judgment.

32 And all mankind, high and low, young and old, saints and sinners, *Jews* and *Gentiles*, of all nations, shall be brought before his judgment-seat to give an account of themselves to God; and he shall separate the righteous from the wicked, as a shepherd uses to sever his sheep from the goats.

33 And he will set his chosen and called in an honourable situation, at his right hand, as his dear property, that were given to him by the Father, redeemed by his blood, and sanctified by his Spirit; but the wicked he will set, in a place of dishonour and disgrace, at his left hand, as filthy and abominable creatures, like goats, who loved, and lived, and died in sin, and are none of his.

34 Then, having made this separation between them, and put them into distinct companies, the royal Judge will proceed to pass sentence, first on the company at his right hand, saying to them, with the authority of a king, whose word is with power, and shall take effect, and with all the endearments of a smiling aspect and affectionate voice, "Come

for you from the foundation of the world.

35 For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in:

36 Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.

37 Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink?

38 When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee?

39 Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee?

40 And the King shall answer, and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, In as much as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.

hither, O ye blessed of my Father, who have found grace in his sight, whom he has blessed and will bless, as he is my Father, and a Father of mercies to you on my account; take possession of all possible glory and blessedness, riches and delights, in the heaven of heavens, as an inheritance of grace, by right of adoption, which he has provided for you in his everlasting counsels, and free appointments, and which he prepared for your use from the beginning of time, when he created the heavens and the earth.

35, 36 "For the tokens of my sheep, to whom this kingdom belongs, are found upon you: Ye have used the talents I gave you, for my glory, and my people's good; and the evident fruits of your faith and love, which prove their sincerity, appear in this, That, when I was hungry and thirsty, ye gave me meat and drink; when I was in straits and difficulties, as a stranger, ye courteously entertained me; when I wanted cloaths to cover and warm me, ye provided them for me; when I was sick, (*επισκεψασθε*) ye paid me kind and compassionate visits; and when I was thrown into jail for the gospel's sake, ye came to relieve and comfort me."

37, 38, 39 Then the righteous will answer, with all humility, like persons amazed, and, as it were, put to a holy blush, to think that so gracious and honourable a notice should be taken of such poor little mean services as theirs, 'Lord, how is it that thou shouldest put such a surprisngly favourable construction, beyond all our desert, on any thing that ever was done by us, most of whom never saw thee in the flesh? When had we opportunity of ever performing any of these dutiful offices of kindness and charity, and thereby testifying our love to thee, as hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, who needed relief, or as naked, sick, and in prison? Surely nothing we have ever done can be worthy of so high an encumium, much less of so glorious a reward!'

40 But Christ, like a king, who will then appear to display the glory of his grace, as well as of his righteousness, will reply, "As I know how your heart stood affected toward me, and how all your works and labours of love were performed for my sake, and in obedience to my command; the interpretation I have given of your actions, by their principles, is a righteous judgment; and I will put the best construction upon them to your advantage: Therefore I assuredly tell you, that since ye have done these things to one or other, though it were only to the meanest, of these my members and servants, whom ye now see at my right hand, and

whom

whom I reckon as my brethren, I judge what ye did to them, because of their relation to me, as done to myself; and all this I place to my own account, that as ye therein owned and honoured me before men, so I may now own and honour you in the presence of my Father, and of his holy angels."

41 Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye curled into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.

41 After this, Christ will turn to the company of the wicked on his left hand, and pass sentence upon them, saying, with dreadful majesty in his voice and countenance, "Depart from my blessed and glorious presence, ye impenitent unbelieving sinners, who lie under the righteous curse of a broken law, for your iniquities, I will be no Saviour to you, who rejected me, and persisted in your sins; but as ye have chosen the service, and done the work of the prince of darkness, and of the rest of the apostate spirits whom he employed to seduce you, I now banish you from my presence, to keep them company, and to suffer with them the everlasting torments of that unquenchable fire which incensed justice originally prepared for them. And this is a righteous sentence upon you:

42 For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink:

43 I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not.

42, 43 "For ye have the plain marks of apostasy, impenitence, and unbelief, upon you: It evidently appears, that ye have hid my talents, and made no good use of them; that ye have been unfaithful to your trusts, and are none of mine; in that, when I was hungry and thirsty, ye gave me neither meat nor drink; when I was in straits and difficulties, as a stranger, ye gave me no entertainment; when I wanted cloaths to cover and warm me, ye would not be at any expence to provide them for me; when I was sick, ye never came to shew any kindness or compassion to me; and when, for the sake of the gospel, I was cast into prison, ye never came to relieve or comfort me."

44 Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or a thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee?

45 Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, In as much as ye did it not to one of the least

44 Then the wicked will answer in their turn, with a design to excuse and justify themselves, saying, like persons all in confusion and hurry, "Lord, when did we ever see thee hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not perform the offices of kindness and charity to thee, which such circumstances called for? Our eyes never beheld thee in such want and necessity, and we never refused to communicate to thy relief."

45 But Christ will reply, "I, who know your hearts, and all your principles and designs, assuredly tell you, That as, for want of love to me, and of due regard to my commands, ye despised one or other of these, my brethren, whom ye now see at my right hand, and would not do the before mentioned

least of these, ye did it not to me.

46 And these shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal.

tioned things to them for my sake, as induced thereunto by their relation to me; I judge righteous judgment, in reckoning your neglect of them as a disaffection to myself: My sentence therefore shall stand."

46 And, in pursuance of these different awards, from which there is no appeal, these wicked and justly accursed creatures shall depart from my blessed presence into everlasting destruction: But the righteous shall inherit the kingdom, which consists in a complete possession of everlasting life and blessedness.

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

Oh the inestimable worth of true grace in the heart! When it is at the lowest ebb there, it, nevertheless, makes a wide difference between real believers, and mere professors of the gospel. Though this may sometimes not be discerned now, it will certainly appear in the day of judgment, when the grace that is in one will not profit another, nor pretences pass for realities; but every one must give an account of himself to God. And oh with what awful majesty and glory will the Lord Jesus appear, when he comes to judge the world at the last day! What a vast assembly will then be gathered together before his tribunal! And what a dreadful disappointment will some meet with there, who deceived themselves with vain hopes here! Christ will then separate between the precious and the vile; will lay them all open in a clear light, with regard to their governing principles and views, as well as the course of their lives; and will judge them upon the foot of proper evidence, and reward them according to their respective works, as they shall witness for or against them. Wo to all those that take up with a formal hypocritical profession; that entertain hard thoughts of God, and so neglect the trusts committed to them; or that go about to accuse him, and excuse themselves! The great Judge of all will discover even their most secret iniquity; will confute, and pour confusion upon them, for their false pleas, either of innocence, or of want of proper assistance and encouragement; and, as the just reward of their sin and sloth, will banish them his delightful presence, and take everlasting vengeance upon them. But blessed are they that have the grace of God in truth, and are thereby inclined and enabled to be faithful in the discharge of the duties of their stations, whether their talents be more or less. Christ will take a kind and gracious notice of his work in them, and even of the least of their upright services for him: And while they will think meanly of their best performances, and disclaim all merit by them in the great day, he will make the best of them in their favour; and, in the rich abundance of his grace, will admit them into his blessed presence, and crown them with immortal honour, to their utmost satisfaction and joy, in his everlasting kingdom.

C H A P. XXVI.

The Jews conspire against Christ, 1,—5. A woman anoints his head, 6,—13. Judas sells him, 14,—16. Christ eats his last passover with the disciples, 17,—25. Institutes his supper, and foretels his disciples forsaking, and Peter's denying him, 26,—35. His agony in the garden, 36,—46. Judas betrays him into the hands of the officers, 47,—56. He is arraigned, and condemned in the high-priest's court, 57,—68. And Peter denies him, 69,—75.

TEXT.

AND it came to pass, when Jesus had finished all these sayings, he said

PARAPHRASE.

WHEN Jesus had made an end of all these important discourses, he reminded his disciples, that, on the approaching passover, which they knew was to be celebrated at Jerusalem within two or three

said unto his disciples,

2 Ye know that after two days is the feast of the passover, and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified.

3 Then assembled together the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders of the people, unto the palace of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas,

4 And consulted that they might take Jesus by subtilty and kill him.

5 But they said, Not on the feast-day, lest there be an uproar among the people.

three days, he, the Messiah, should be betrayed into the hands of the Jewish rulers, who were his most inveterate enemies, and would deliver him up to the Roman power to be crucified; they having no power within themselves to put any one to that sort of death. (See the note on *John* xviii. 31.)

3 About the time that he foretold this, the chief priests, and doctors of the law, and elders of the people, the men of chief authority, as being members of the † sanhedrim, joined together in a confederacy against him; and met in the palace of *Caiaphas*, who was high-priest that year, (*John* xi. 49, 51.) to concert the properest measures for compassing their malicious design.

4 And the scheme they formed and resolved upon was, not to seize Jesus by open violence, which might be hazardous to themselves, and defeat their plot against him, especially at the time when there was such a vast concourse of people from all parts, many of which were well-affected towards him; but to contrive means of getting him privately into their power, and then to put him to death.

5 However, some among them were so apprehensive of the great interest he had in the affections of the populace, that they advised against attempting even this private way of apprehending him, till after the passover; lest the multitude, perceiving the design of the sanhedrim, should be outrageous, and take up arms to rescue him out of their hands: But others were for having him seized as soon as possible; and God, permitting their counsel to take effect, over-ruled it for the accomplishment of his own design, that, at the very time of the passover, the true Paschal Lamb should be publicly sacrificed for us.

6, 7 Now

N O T E.

† The Jewish sanhedrim, or great council, was the supreme court of judicature, which God instituted in the days of *Moses*; and consisted of seventy wise men or elders, besides *Moses*, their prince or chief: (*Numb.* xi. 16, 17, 24, 25.) But some learned men suppose, that *Elidad* and *Medad* (mentioned ver. 26.) were added to the seventy, and so made seventy-two, after the rate of six for every tribe of *Israel*. This great council ordinarily sat in a court, or chamber, of the temple, called *Gazith*; and judged of all matters of the greatest consequence. The next court of judicature, inferior to this, consisted of twenty-three; which, sitting in a room by, or over, the gates of their cities, were called *judges and officers in their gates, to judge the people*

with just judgment, *Deut.* xvi. 18. Two such councils sat at *Jerusalem*; one in the gate *Shubhan*, or the gate of the mountain of the house; and the other in the gate *Nicanor*, or the gate of the court: And one council of this sort sat in the gate of every city that contained at least one hundred and twenty heads of families; these had judgment in matters of life and death in some cases, though not in all: And if, in any town or city, there were less than one hundred and twenty families, there was a court or consistory of three, which took cognizance only of inferior causes, or such as were not capital. *Vid. Seld. de Synedr.* l. 2. c. 4. sec. 2, 7, 8. cap. 5. & cap. 10. sec. 3, 4. And see *Lightfoot's Temple*, vol. 1. p. 1102.

6 Now when Jesus was in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper.

7 There came unto him a woman having an alabaſter-box of very precious ointment, and poured it on his head, as he ſat at meat.

8 But when his diſciples ſaw it, they had indignation, ſaying, To what purpoſe is this waſte?

9 For this ointment might have been ſold for much, and given to the poor.

10 When Jeſus underſtood it, he ſaid unto them, Why trouble ye the woman? For ſhe hath wrought a good work upon me.

6, 7 Now a few days before this *, as Jeſus was ſitting and eating at a village near *Jeruſalem*, called *Bethany*, in the houſe of *Simon*, who, by way of diſtinction, was ſtyled the Leper, (ſee the note on *Mark* xiv. 3.) a certain woman, *Lazarus's* ſiſter, bringing along with her an alabaſter-box of very coſtly and fragrant ointment, opened the box, and poured the precious ointment upon his head and feet, (*John* xii. 3. in teſtimony of her faith in him as the Meſſiah, or God's Anointed, and of her love and reſpect to him

8 But when his diſciples obſerved it, ſome of them were much diſpleaſed, ſaying privately †, What an imprudent extravagance is this? Our Maſter does not affect ſuch delicacies and profuſeneſs: Why does this woman waſte ſo much precious ointment without any occaſion, when it might have been improved to more valuable purpoſes?

9: For this might have been ſold for a conſiderable ſum, and the money been diſtributed among the poor for the relief of their neceſſities: Thus they raſhly cenſured her, and were wanting in their reſpect to their Lord.

10 But Jeſus knowing all hearts, and obſerving not only their murmurings about it, but likewise the different principles that influenced her and them, rebuked them, ſaying, Why do ye blame this woman, as if ſhe had done amiſs? She has herein acted a better part than you; for it is, indeed, a good work, very proper and reaſonable in my preſent circumſtances, and is the effect of her faith in, and love to me.

II For,

NOTES.

* It ſeems from *John* xii. 1. that what follows, about the anointing of Chriſt's body at *Simon's* houſe in *Bethany*, was ſix days before the paſſover, and ſo was three or four days before the time at which he here ſaid, (ver. 2.) *After two days* is the paſſover: And it is probable, that *Judas's* going with diſcontent, after this anointing, to the ſanhedrim, and offering to deliver Jeſus into their hands, was the principal reaſon that prevailed with them to go on immediately with their deſign of apprehending him, (verſe 3, 4.) leſt they ſhould not meet with another opportunity ſo convenient for it.—Though, in *John* xii. *Simon's* houſe is not mentioned, and *Lazarus* and *Martha* are ſaid to be at ſupper; it might be, either that they all dwelt together in the ſame houſe, or that *Lazarus* was at *Simon's* houſe as a gueſt, and

Martha as an aſſiſtant in the entertainment: and that *Mary* being there as a friend, was the woman here meant who anointed Jeſus. And though both our evangelift and *Mark* mention the woman's anointing only his head, and the apoſtle *John* ſpeaks of *Mary's* anointing only his feet, it is no unuſual thing for one of theſe ſacred hiſtorians to ſupply what was omitted by the others; and the apoſtle *John* writing laſt, might, for a further enlargement of the hiſtory, add the anointing of his feet: And ſo all this may very well conſiſt with the hiſtory's being the ſame, as they appear to be in other circumſtances. This ſuppoſition frees them from various perplexities that otherwiſe would attend them.

† This was probably at the inſtigation of *Judas*, who murmured at it, *John* xii. 4, 5.

11 For ye have the poor, always with you, but me ye have not always.

11 For, as to what ye suggest about disposing of this costly ointment for the benefit of the poor, Ye will always have them present with you, as proper objects of your charity, whom ye may have perpetual opportunities of relieving, as often as ye are inclined to it; but I shall continue to be corporally present with you, only for a very little while, being soon to go to the Father; and therefore ye ought not to grudge this her seasonable expence, to testify the honourable regards she has to me.

12 For in that she hath poured this ointment on my body, she did it for my burial.

12 For this is not so needless a charge as ye imagine, since, in a few days, I must be crucified and buried; and, as she will not have an opportunity to embalm my body then, which, in that case, ye would think a suitable token of her respect to me, she has been secretly influenced to pay me this honour before-hand; and has thereby shewn, that her believing and affectionate homage exceeds yours.

13 Verily I say unto you, Where-soever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her.

13 I assuredly tell you, This woman's thus remarkably anointing my body against my burial, is such an extraordinary instance of her faith and love, and so much to the honour of my name, that it shall be recorded to her commendation, and to the encouragement of those graces in others, wherever the glad tidings of salvation, founded on my death and resurrection, shall be published, even through all the nations of the world.

14 Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went unto the chief priests,

14, 15 After this, Judas, surnamed Iscariot, though he was one of the twelve apostles whom Christ had chosen to be his most intimate friends and attendants, and always treated with kindness and favour; yet this ungrateful, covetous, and perfidious hypocrite, through the instigation of Satan, (*Luke xxii. 3*) and the discontent of his own mind, went to the chief priests, and asked them, What they would give him to betray Jesus privately into their hands? assuring them that for a sum of money he would do it: And, as this was what they most of all wanted, they readily agreed to give him thirty shekels of silver †, which was, by the law, the price of a slave, (*Exod. xxi. 32.*) *A goodly price that he was prized at!* (*Zech. xi. 13.*)

15 And said unto them, What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you? And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver.

16 And from that time he sought opportunity to betray him.

16 And yet, mean and trifling as the sum was, this base-spirited creature took up with it; and from that time forward, watched for an opportunity to acquaint them with the place to which Jesus privately retired, that they might find and seize him.

17 Now the first day

17 Now on the first day of unleavened bread, the

N O T E.

† A shekel was about two shillings and four pence: but, if we reckon it at half a crown, this sum amounted only to three pounds fifteen shillings sterling.

day of the feast of unleavened bread, the disciples came to Jesus, saying unto him, Where wilt thou that we prepare for thee to eat the passover?

18 And he said, Go into the city to such a man, and say unto him, The master saith, My time is at hand: I will keep the passover at thy house with my disciples.

19 And the disciples did as Jesus had appointed them; and they made ready the passover.

20 Now when the even was come, he sat down with the twelve.

21 And as they did eat, he said, Verily I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me.

the day appointed of God, and usually observed by the Jews, for killing the paschal lamb, which was to be eaten in the evening, as a memorial of *Israel's* protection from the destroying angel, and deliverance out of *Egypt*; his disciples, knowing that no difficulties or dangers would divert him from observing an ordinance of God, came and asked him at what house he would please to have them make ready for their eating the passover; they being all strangers at *Jerusalem*, and having no habitation of their own there*.

18 And Jesus, to shew his authority, and his foreknowledge of all things, ordered *Peter* and *John* (Luke xxii. 8.) to repair to *Jerusalem*, where they should meet with a man, whom he described by some particular circumstances; (*Mark* xiv. 13.) and bade them tell him, Their Lord and Master had sent them so let him know †, that the time determined of God for his being put to death was just at hand, and to demand liberty for himself and his disciples to eat the paschal lamb together at his house.

19 Accordingly these disciples, without disputing his order, or doubting of success, went into the city, found the man whom Jesus had described, and did every thing according to the directions he had given them; and, as this man readily complied with their design, they got the lamb killed in the court of the temple, had it roasted, provided unleavened bread, and wine, and bitter herbs, and made every thing ready for Christ's celebration of the passover with them, in a room properly furnished, and commodious for that purpose. (*Mark* xiv. 15.)

20 Now when, after sun-set, the latter evening came on †, which was the time for the Jews eating the passover, Jesus went to the house, and there sat down with the twelve apostles to supper.

21 And while they were eating, he, knowing all that was in *Judas's* heart, took occasion to say, I assuredly tell you, that one of you, who, as my friends and family, are now celebrating this feast with me, will treacherously discover me to mine enemies,

N O T E S.

* *Dr. Lightfoot* says, The houses of *Jerusalem* were not to be hired; but, during the time of the feast, were of common right.

† Christ's ordering them to tell the man this, seems to intimate, that he was one of his disciples, or at least one of his friends, though not an apostle.

‡ The time appointed for killing

the paschal lamb (*Exod.* xii. 6.) was בין הערבים *between the two evenings*, or in the afternoon before sun-setting; for all the afternoon was called the evening of that day; and the latter evening began at sun-setting, which was the time for eating the passover. See *Ainsworth* on *Exod.* xii. 6, 8. and *Whitby's* appendix to *Mark* xiv.

nemies, that they may privately apprehend, and put me to death. (See the note on *Luke* xxii. 21.)

22 And they were exceeding sorrowful, and began every one of them to say unto him, Lord, is it I?

22 Upon hearing this, the disciples were exceedingly alarmed, and troubled within themselves, to think that such evil should befall their Lord, and that any of them should act such a monstrously vile and ungrateful part in it; and each of them *Judas* excepted, being more apt to suspect his own than any of his brethren's heart, though he was not conscious of the least inclination or design that way; and being desirous of Christ's clearing him, began, in his turn, to say, Lord, I humbly hope it is not I that shall prove to be this villainous wretch.

23 And he answered and said, He that dippeth his hand with me in the dish, the same shall betray me.

23 Christ, not thinking it proper as yet to fix the charge particularly on the man to whom it belonged, replied, One of you, who is now putting his hand into the same dish, and eating with me, (see the note on *Mark* xiv. 20.) is the perfidious disciple, who, under a pretence of friendship, will certainly betray me, according to that ancient prophecy, *Mine own familiar friend, which did eat of my bread, has lift up his heel against me.* (Psal. xli. 9.)

24 The Son of man goeth, as it is written of him: but wo unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed; it had been good for that man, if he had not been born.

24 I, the Messiah, must needs undergo the bitterest sufferings, and am willing to endure them, according to the prophecies concerning me: But, how much soever infinite Wisdom will over-rule the wickedness of the traitor to accomplish the most glorious designs, this is no excuse to him, or extenuation of his sin; his righteous punishment, therefore, will be so exceeding dreadful, that it would have been happy for him never to have had a being, since it is better not to be at all than to be so miserable.

25 Then Judas, which betrayed him, answered and said, Master, is it I? He said unto him, Thou hast said.

25 Then *Judas*, who was the traitor Christ pointed at, being so hardened in his wickedness as not to be moved by the terrible wo denounced against him, put on a bold face; and supposing, under the power of unbelief, that Christ did not know his secret design, or would not discover him to the rest, and fearing lest his silence should be construed into an argument of guilt, he said, Master, I hope you do not mean that I am he who will betray you? To which Jesus replied, in terms that amounted to his saying, Thou art the man. (See the note on *Luke* xxii. 70.)

26 And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and

26 And at the latter end of the paschal supper, before the table was cleared, Jesus, to shew that he was thereby typified as the Lamb of God, who was to be sacrificed for us, took in his hands such bread as was then in common use; and, having set

and said, Take
eat; this is my
body.

it apart for sacred service by thanksgiving and prayer *, he brake it, and distributed it among the disciples, saying, Take, and eat it: For I appoint this sacramental bread to be henceforth eaten as the memorial of my body's being broken for your redemption, by my sufferings and death; in like manner as the eating of the paschal lamb was appointed to be a memorial of the preservation of *Israel* from the destroying angel, and of their deliverance out of *Egypt*. (See the note on *Mark* xiv. 22. and *Luke* xxii. 19.)

27 And he took
the cup, and gave
thanks, and gave
it to them, saying,
Drink ye all of it:

27 After the same manner, he likewise took a cup of such wine in his hand as they had at the paschal supper; and, setting this apart, by thanksgiving and prayer, to sacramental use, delivered it to his disciples, saying to every one of them, Drink of this. (See the note on *Luke* xxii. 20.)

28 For this is
my blood of the
new testament,
which is shed for
many, for the re-
mission of sins.

28 For I appoint this sacramental wine to be henceforth drunk by all my disciples, as the representation and memorial of my blood's being shed for the confirmation of the new covenant, and purchasing of all its blessings, and particularly for the forgiveness of the sins of vast multitudes, not of the *Jews* only, but of the *Gentiles* also, even of all that by faith receive the atonement †.

29 But I say
unto you, I will
not drink hence-
forth of this fruit
of the vine, until that
day when I drink
it new with you in
my Father's king-
dom.

29 But I tell you, that, from this time forward, I have done with drinking the juice of the grape in commemoration of *Israel's* deliverance; and will have that ordinance continued no longer, than till the things it typified shall be fulfilled, (*Luke* xxii. 16.) by a more glorious redemption, in the gospel-kingdom, which will take place after my resurrection, and will call for a new use of wine in the commemorative ordinance I have now instituted: Nor will I any more so freely and familiarly commune with you again in person, till I take you up to heaven; where I will admit you to still more intimate and delightful fellowship with me, which will be always fresh and entertaining, like new wine that was never drunk before, and is of a different nature from that which we have been drinking now; and where we shall celebrate together, with inexpressible joy,

N O T E S.

* The *Jews* loaves were broad and thin, and so might easily be broken.

† Though Christ was not yet crucified, he speaks of his death as if it were already past, because it was just at hand, and this ordinance was to be a standing memorial of it in all after-ages: Thus

God said of circumcision to *Abraham*, just before he and all his were circumcised, *This is my covenant.* (*Gen.* xvii. 9. 10.) And he said of the passover to *Israel*, just before he had passed over their houses, and delivered them out of *Egypt*, *It is the Lord's passover,* *Exod.* xii. 11.

joy, your complete deliverance from all sin and sorrow †.

30 And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives.

30 And when, at the close, they had sung a psalm, or song of praise, suited to the present occasion, Christ, knowing that the time of his being betrayed was just coming on, would not stay to be apprehended in the house, lest he should bring the master of it into trouble; nor in *Jerusalem*, lest it should occasion public tumults and outrages; but retired with his disciples to the mount of *Olives*.

31 Then saith Jesus unto them. All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad.

31 As Jesus was on his way thither ‖, he foretold them, that they would be so surpris'd and terrified that very night, by reason of the distressing things which would befall him in their presence, that every one of them would desert him; for the time was just at hand, in which that famous prophecy would be fulfilled, (*Zech. xiii. 7.*) *Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd, and against the Man who is my Fellow, saith the Lord of hosts: Smite the Shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered.*

32 But after I am risen again, I will go before you into Galilee.

32 But for your comfort, said he, though I shall be put to death, I shall soon rise again: And do not think that I will forsake you, though ye will highly deserve it; no, I, like a shepherd, will go before you, and gather you together again in *Galilee*, where ye shall see me.

33 Peter answered and said unto him, Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended.

33 *Peter*, who was too rash and self-confident, instead of having a godly jealousy over himself, seem'd to take it ill that Christ should suspect him, and said, Lord, whatever is the consequence, and whoever shall be afraid to own thee, yea, though every one of thy disciples, and all the world besides, should abandon thee; yet I am sure, and I promise, that no danger or terror shall ever make me afraid to cleave to, and stand by thee.

34 Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, that this night before the cock crow, thou

34 Jesus, knowing that he resolv'd and spoke in his own strength, and what would be the event, answered, *Alas, Peter!* I assuredly tell you, that, notwithstanding all these mighty professions of love, zeal, and courage, this very night, before the time of cock-crowing* is past, you will not only be afraid

N O T E S.

† Some suppose that our Lord here refers to the time of his eating and drinking with his disciples for the confirmation of their faith, after his resurrection. (*Acts x. 4.*) But I do not understand how, if he then drank *wine*, it can in any sense be called *new wine*, which relates either to a new use of it, or to what, for its superior excellence, and new delight, may, in a figurative sense, be called *new wine*.

‖ It appears from ver. 36. that Jesus was not yet come to *Gethsemane*, which lay at the foot of the mount of *Olives*.

* The time of cock-crowing was usually reckoned from our midnight to three o'clock of our morning; and that about three o'clock was most remarkable, as being commonly the loudest toward break of day: Accordingly this was sometimes called the second cock-crowing; and at other times, by way of eminence, the cock-

thou shalt deny me thrice.

35 Peter said unto him, Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee. Like-wise also said all the disciples.

36 Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane, and saith unto the disciples, Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder.

37 And he took with him Peter, and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful, and very heavy.

38 Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me.

39 And he went a little further, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be

fraid to appear for me; but will shamefully, three times over, deny that you belong to, or have any knowledge of me.

35 But Peter, notwithstanding this fair warning from one who knew him better than he knew himself, still persisted in his vain confidence, and replied with greater vehemence than before, No, though my life were to go for it, I assure thee that I never will do so base a thing as to disown thee: And the rest of the disciples, seeing him so resolute, and not being sensible of their own weakness and what temptations might befall them, were induced by his example to join in the like protestations.

36 Then Jesus, taking with him all the apostles except Judas, who by this time was gone to the chief priests to inform them where they might find him, (*John* xiii. 30.) went with them to a garden, near a village called *Gethsemane*, which signifies a press for olives, and was at the foot of mount *Olivet*, where he trode the wine-press of his Father's wrath alone: For, having entered the garden, he ordered eight of the eleven disciples to stay at a certain place there, till he should retire for prayer.

37 And as Peter, and the two sons of Zebedee, *James* and *John*, had been eye-witnesses of his glorious transfiguration in the mount, (*chap.* xvii. 1. &c.) he took them along with him to be witnesses of his deepest humiliation and agonies; and, as soon as they were got from the other disciples, he was in great distress and consternation of spirit, under a strong impressive sense of the terrible sufferings he felt, and was going to endure, from the powers of darkness, and from divine justice for his people's sins.

38 Then, turning to these disciples, he said, My soul is (*πενιθρος*) compassed about with the most grievous sorrows, so that I can hardly subsist, but am ready to die under them; and they will never entirely leave me, till they issue in my death: Stay ye here, and observe how it is with me; and guard against the temptations that are coming upon yourselves.

39 Hereupon he retired about a stone's cast from them; (*Luke* xxii. 41.) and, prostrating himself upon the ground, in great humility, reverence, and sore distress, he, like a man of sorrows, who could not but have a natural reluctance to sufferings, pray-

N O T E.

cock-crowing; and so the difference is *night before the cock crow twice, thou easily reconciled between this place and shalt deny me thrice.* See the note on *Mark* xiv. 30. where it is said, *This Luke* xiii. 34.

be possible, let this cup pass from me : nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt.

40 And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with me one hour ?

41 Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation : the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.

42 He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done.

43 And he came and found them asleep again : for their eyes were heavy.

ed, saying, O my Father, to whom I stand related as thy dear Son, if the salvation of thy people may be accomplished, consistently with the honour of thy perfections, without my undergoing the bitter agonies and sufferings which thou hast called me to, I earnestly beseech thee to excuse me from them ; however, I entirely and freely submit to thy will, that the innocent aversions of human nature may not be attended to, but thy purpose and good pleasure may be fulfilled, whatever it cost me : Here I am, do with me what seems best in thy sight, I still delight to do thy will.

40 Having thus poured out his soul to his heavenly Father, he returned back to the three disciples ; and finding them all asleep, roused them ; and directing his discourse to Peter, said, How surprising is this ! What, Peter ! Did you say but now, that you would die with me ; and did ye all join with him in that profession ? And cannot ye so far deny yourselves, as to keep awake only for one hour, at my command, that ye might shew your affection and concern for me now, in my extreme anguish ?

41 Watch and pray with me in my temptation, as sympathizing friends under my sufferings for your sakes ; and stand upon your guard, earnestly begging the grace which is needful to preserve you in the dangers that are now coming upon yourselves ; lest sloth and drowsiness betray you into mischief before ye are aware, and ye fall into sin, in forsaking and denying me, by reason of the terrors that are now at hand. I know, indeed, that your hearts are with me ; and that ye are sincerely desirous to shew your love to me, and to avoid all iniquity : But, alas ! there are remaining corruptions with you, and the infirmity of your weak and frail bodies is a clog and hindrance to you ; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would, without the utmost religious care, and special assistance from above.

42 Having given them this gentle caution and rebuke, he withdrew a second time, and renewed his earnest prayer, saying, O Father, in whom is all my confidence, if it be not consistent with thy glory to save thy people, without my bearing the bitter agonies and sufferings for them which thou hast appointed to me, I entirely acquiesce, and freely submit to thy will.

43 Then, coming back to his disciples, he again found them all asleep as at first : For they were exceeding drowsy, and could not keep their eyes open, how much soever they strove for it ; it being very

very late in the night, and they being sunk with grief, (*Luke xxi. 45.*) and extremely tired with the fatigue they had undergone in preparing the passover, and attending their Lord.

44 And he left them, and went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words.

44 And he, withdrawing a third time, prayed much to the same purport as before, resigning himself unreservedly to his Father's will and pleasure, which had such an absolute ascendancy over him as to be a law within his heart. (*Psal. xl. 8.*)

45 Then cometh he to his disciples, and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take your rest: behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.

45 Then returning, and finding his disciples asleep again, after they had been twice roused, he said, Well, sleep on now, and indulge yourselves in it, if ye can, or dare. It is now too late to shew your kindness to me, by watching with me, or to escape the danger that is rushing upon you: Behold, the dreadful time, I forewarned you of, is come; and I, the Messiah, am just ready to be treacherously delivered into the hands of wicked men, both *Jews* and *Romans*, in order to their taking away my life.

46 Rise, let us be going: behold, he is at hand that doth betray me.

46 And, having got through the extremity of his foregoing agony, he resumed his courage, and shewed himself prepared for all events, saying, Arise, let us go and face our danger: Observe, the traitor and his company are just now coming to seize me.

47 And while he yet spake, lo, Judas, one of the twelve, came, and with him a great multitude, with swords and staves, from the chief priests and elders of the people.

47 And at that very instant, behold, his enemies were upon him, *Judas*, one of his apostles, who had familiarly eat bread with him, appeared at the head of a great number of *Roman* soldiers, and officers of the sanhedrim, (*John xviii. 3.*) which mostly consisted of the chief priests and elders of the *Jews*: By order of this ecclesiastical court, they came armed with swords and clubs, to apprehend Jesus, under the conduct of *Judas*, who had promised to lead them to the place of his retirement, that they might take him without running any risk of opposition from the people.

48 Now he that betrayed him, gave them a sign, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is he, hold him fast.

48 Now, in order to their compassing this design, without danger of mistaking one or other of the disciples for Christ, because it was night, and his face was not sufficiently known by the officers and soldiers, *Judas* told them beforehand by what token they might be sure which was he, saying, Apprehend the person whom I shall kiss, and secure him; for ye may depend upon it, that is the man.

49 And forthwith he came to Jesus, and said, Hail, Master; and kissed him.

49 Accordingly he, marching in the front of the company, went directly up to Jesus; and accosting him in the most friendly words, said, Master, God be with thee; all prosperity, joy, and safety, attend

attend thee; and, as a further sign of honour and friendship, and of sincerity therein, he * kissed his face.

50 And Jesus said unto him, Friend, wherefore art thou come? Then came they and laid hands on Jesus, and took him.

50 But (δι) Jesus knowing his hypocritical and villainous intention, under these feigned tokens of the greatest affection and respect, reproved his perfidiousness and ingratitude, with this meek and gentle, and yet really cutting rebuke: What! my friend, as you professed and ought to be, and at this very time seem to be, by putting on an air of the most cordial complaisance! what means this way and manner of your coming, at the same time, with armed men along with you? How do swords and staves, and *Hail, Master*, with a kiss, agree with one another? And why are you yourself present, (εφ'ω παρει) or with what face can you appear here openly before me, to conduct this horrid scene against me? And whilst he was speaking, the officers seized him, and he suffered himself to be made their prisoner.

51 And behold, one of them which were with Jesus, stretched out his hand, and drew his sword, and struck a servant of the high priest's, and smote off his ear.

51 Things being come to this extremity, and Jesus not rescuing himself, as he easily could, if he pleased, out of their hands; behold the rash and inconsiderate rage and zeal of *Peter*, who, having a sword, drew it with all his might, and striking furiously at the head of *Malchus*, one of the high priest's servants, cut off his right ear. (*Jahn xviii. 10.*)

52 Then said Jesus unto him, Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword, shall perish with the sword.

52 Jesus, seeing this, immediately commanded him to forbear, and put his sword into its scabbard: For, says he, they who, without a just and lawful call, run immediately to the sword to revenge themselves, shall ordinarily fall by it †. As for my disciples, the weapons of their warfare are not carnal, but spiritual: Their way to victory over their enemies is not by opposing force to force, but by prayer, faith, and patience, in hope that God will fight for them. And as to these *Jews*, who now make use of the *Roman* sword against us, they shall, ere long, be themselves destroyed by the arms of the *Romans*.

53 Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father,

53 Besides, *Peter*, do not you know, that, if I had a mind to resist and vanquish these enemies, I could, without any more ado, have called upon my Father,

N O T E S.

* Christ probably, in his great condescension and kindness, had used to admit his disciples to salute him in this manner at their returns to him after they had been for some time absent; and so *Judas* took this liberty, though

he had been from him but a little while.

† This, in all likelihood, would have been *Peter's* lot, if Christ had not overruled the spirits of the armed soldiers to prevent it.

Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?

54 But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?

55 In that same hour said Jesus to the multitudes, Are ye come out as against a thief with swords and staves for to take me? I sat daily with you teaching in the temple, and ye laid no hold on me.

56 But all this was done, that the scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled. Then all the disciples forsook him, and fled.

57 And they that had laid hold on Jesus, led him away to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and the elders were assembled.

58 But Peter followed him afar off, unto the high priest's palace, and went in, and sat with

Father, who always heareth me; and he would instantly have sent a great army of angels (see the note on *Mark* v. 9.) to defend me, and to destroy them; and this I could still procure, were I not willing to suffer all that they can inflict upon me.

54 But should I take any extraordinary methods to rescue myself out of their hands, how could the predictions of God's word be accomplished, which foretold my sufferings and death as the principal design for which I came into the world, and to which I am calmly and willingly to submit?

55 Immediately upon this, Jesus, turning himself to the company that were there to apprehend him, said, What means this outrageous manner of your coming against me with swords and clubs, as if I were some desperate villain who must be conquered and made to submit by force of arms? I have not behaved like such an one; nor is there any occasion to treat me with this violence, as if I would resist you: And, were I a criminal, ye had fair opportunities of seizing me often enough in the temple, where I, especially of late, have daily appeared, preaching to the people; and yet none of you could find any just occasion, nor would venture, to apprehend me.

56 But * God has now at length suffered you to execute your wicked designs against me, that his eternal counsel, and the ancient predictions of the prophets, relating to my sufferings and death, might be accomplished. Then, when the disciples saw their Lord was fallen into the hands of his enemies, they all forsook him, and fled for fear, as he had foretold them they would, lest they likewise should be seized and punished together with him.

57 And they, who had taken Jesus into custody, hurried him away first to *Annas's* house, (*John* xviii. 13.) and then to the palace of *Caiaphas* the high priest; where, though it was in the dead of the night, the scribes and elders were got together to sit in judgment upon him.

58 In the mean while, *Peter*, having a little recovered his fright, followed Jesus at a distance, as they were carrying him to *Caiaphas's* house; and, soon after the company were entered, he went in, and mingled himself with the servants, that he might be screened from suspicion, and might see the issue

NOTE.

* Some have thought these may be taken as the words of the evangelist, who makes this remark. But as *ταυτα γενησιν* may be rendered, *this is done*; so, the scriptures must be fulfilled, are recited as Christ's own words to the multitude in *Mark* xiv. 49.

with the servants to see the end.

59, Now the chief priests and elders, and all the council, sought false witness against Jesus to put him to death;

60 But found none: yea, though many false witnesses came, yet found they none. At the last came two false witnesses,

61 And said, This fellow said, I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to build it in three days.

62 And the high priest arose, and said unto him, Answerest thou nothing? what is it which these witnesses against thee?

63 But Jesus held his peace, and the

of this affair, whether Christ's enemies would proceed to extremity against him, or whether he would miraculously deliver himself out of their hands.

59 Now the chief priests and elders of the people, and the other members of the sanhedrim, having, by their authority, seized and bound him, and yet having nothing criminal to lay to his charge, were very inquisitive and industrious to find out proper tools, that, right or wrong, would give information against him of some crime, which might furnish them with a plausible pretence to condemn him, as deserving to die.

60 But they could meet with none sufficient to answer their end: Nay, though they got many that were wicked and malicious enough to testify false things against him; yet their falsehoods were so evident, and so inconsistent with one another, that they confounded themselves, and the council could make nothing of them to convict him of any capital crime: But, at length, two false witnesses appeared;

61 And * misreciting and misconstruing some words he had formerly spoken, about raising the temple of his body from the dead three days after it should be killed, they alledged, with horrid virulence and contempt, "We heard this wretch say, that he could and would demolish our famous temple, where God dwells and is worshipped, and build it again in three days;" which they supposed might prove him to be an enemy to that holy place, and to be actuated by the spirit of *Beelzebub*.

62 And as Jesus made no reply to such a false and frivolous charge; but, *as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth*, (Isa. liiii. 7.) the high priest got up in a rage, and said, in an insulting manner, What! do you stand mute, in contempt of the court? Do not you hear what these have deposed? What defence are you able to make against an accusation, by two witnesses, of such a high crime and misdemeanour? Or why do they thus witness against you, if it be not true?

63 But still Jesus continued silent; not because he did not know how to refute such a palpable calumny,

F f 2

N O T E

* They made a false recital of Christ's words, in order to their wresting them: For he did not say, *I can*, or *I will destroy*, as in *Mark xiv. 58.*; but, *Destroy ye this temple*, *John ii. 19.*: And to this temple, they added, *made with hands*,

Mark xiv. 58.; thereby restraining the sense of his words to the temple at *Jerusalem*; whereas he spoke with a reference to the temple of his body, which they would destroy, *John ii. 21.*

the high priest answered and said unto him, I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us, whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God.

64 Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless, I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.

65 Then the high priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy: what further need have we of witnesses? behold, now ye have heard his blasphemy.

66 What think ye? They answered and said, He is guilty of death.

lunmy, but that he might let them take their own course, who, he knew, were resolved to cut him off, whatsoever he might say for himself, and to turn every thing against him. Then the high priest urged him to accuse himself, saying, I solemnly charge and command you upon oath, by the name of the great, the living, and all-seeing God, that you frankly declare unto us, whether you really think yourself to be the true Messiah, who is God's eternal Son.

64 When he put this important question in so awful a manner, Jesus thought it high time to be plain and open in his confession; and therefore replied, *It is as you have said; I indeed am he*, though ye do not believe it: However, I tell you all, (*ὅμως*) The time is coming, when I, who am the true Messiah, being the Son of man as well as the Son of God, shall be seen, by the whole council and all the people, exalted in dignity and power at my Father's right hand, and visibly appearing in the clouds of heaven, according to ancient prophecies: (*Psal. cx. 1. and Dan. vii. 13.*) In a little time, ye shall see the wonderful effusion of my Spirit to glorify me; after that, shall ye see me coming to judge and destroy this city and nation: And at the last day, ye shall see me coming in all my glory to judge the world: And though now I am arraigned, like a criminal, at your bar, ye shall then be arraigned at mine, and forced to own, that I am the Christ, the Son of God, as I now declare myself to be. (See the note on *Luke xxii. 70.*)

65 The high priest hearing this, immediately rent his garment, in token of detestation and abhorrence, (as the *Jews* used to do when they thought any one spoke blasphemously), and said, He has now reproached the great and living God, by assuming such glory and power to himself as belong only to him: What occasion have we to search for other witnesses, or to hear any farther evidence against him? Behold, how he is condemned out of his own mouth; all the company have heard his bare-faced blasphemy.

66 What think ye of these words? Has he not herein plainly witnessed against himself as a blasphemer? To which the majority † of them, at least, replied, Yes, yes; he is certainly guilty of a capital

N O T E.

† If *Joseph of Arimathea*, and *Nicodemus*, who seem to have been members of the sanhedrim, were present on this occasion, the first of these did not consent

to Christ's being put to death, *Luke xxiii. 50, 51.*; and we may well suppose the same of the last.

67 Then did they spit in his face, and buffeted him; and others smote him with the palms of their hands.

68 Saying, Prophesy unto us, thou Christ; who is he that smote thee?

69 Now Peter sat without in the palace: and a damsel came unto him, saying, Thou also wast with Jesus of Galilee.

70 But he denied before them all, saying, I know not what thou sayest.

71 And when he was gone out into the porch, another maid saw him, and said unto them that were there, This fellow was also with Jesus of Nazareth.

72 And again he denied with an oath, I do not know the man.

73 And after a while came unto him they that stood by, and said to Peter, Surely thou also art one of them, for thy speech bewrayeth thee.

74 Then began he to curse and to swear, saying, I know

pital crime, for which, by our law, he ought to die. 67, 68 As soon as they had thus unrighteously condemned him †, some of the company as was prophesied, (*Isa.* 1. 6.) began to spit in his face with indignation and contempt, which set others on to abuse him with all manner of rude indignities: Some of them insolently boxed and buffeted him; (*κολαφισται*) and others, having blindfolded him, made their game of him in a ludicrous manner, and struck him with their hands, and with rods, (*ραβδισται*) saying, Now, you who pretend to be a prophet, give us a specimen of your skill, and name this and the other man that smote you.

69 Whilst all this was doing, *Peter* continued, not in the court, but in a lower part of the room among the servants; (*Mark* xiv. 66.) and as he was sitting there, a certain maid-servant, observing him, came to him, and said, I verily believe you are one of the disciples, or friends of this Jesus of Galilee, who were with him in the garden.

70 But *Peter* being surprised and filled with fear at this unexpected charge, made a rash answer all in a hurry, saying, in the hearing of the whole company, I know nothing of Jesus, nor what you mean by my being with him.

71 A little while after, he went out into the porch, and another of the maid-servants, seeing him there, said to some of the by-standers, Certainly this sorry fellow was one of Jesus of Nazareth's followers, and was with him when he was apprehended.

72 Then *Peter*, over-hearing her, broke out into a violent passion; and, to bear her down, and take off all suspicion from himself, roundly swore that he did not so much as know the man she spake of.

73 And a little after this, some others of the company attacked *Peter* a third time, saying, It surely cannot be true that you are not one of Jesus of Galilee's disciples; for even your pronunciation shews you to be a Galilean, you have the very brogue and clownish accent of that country.

74 Then he, being in the utmost consternation, and not knowing what to say for himself, resolved to stand it out to the last; and so backed his denial

N O T E.

† It is probable, that, upon the foregoing confession, the council either retired for a little while, or ordered Jesus to withdraw, till they might consider what further steps to take with him; and

that then their officers, who had him in custody, were the ring-leaders of all this insolence and barbarity, at the instigation of the priests. See the notes on *chap.* xxvii. 1. and *Luke* xxii. 63.

know not the man. And immediately the cock crew.

75 And Peter remembered the words of Jesus, which said unto him, Before the cock crew, thou shalt deny me thrice. And he went out, and wept bitterly.

nial with volleys of oaths, and horrid imprecations, saying, I insist upon it, that I have no acquaintance with this man, and never saw him till now : And immediately, upon this last most shocking denial, the cock crew toward break of day, as Christ had foretold him. (Ver. 34. see the note there.)

75 And Peter no sooner heard it, than he reflected upon the previous warning Christ had given him, saying to him, Before the time of cock-crowing is past, you will three times over deny me : And calling this to mind, his heart was melted into deep contrition for his great and aggravated sin ; and going out from the company, to give free vent to his grief, he forely lamented his case, weeping bitterly.

R E C O L L E C T I O N S .

How great were the sufferings of the Son of God, in which he likewise shewed himself to be a real, a perfect, and holy man ; and which could never have been so great, had they not been for the sins of men ! He trode the wine-press of his Father's wrath alone ; none of his disciples bore any part in the work, whereby he took away sin, reproach, condemnation, and death from us. For this purpose he readily submitted to his Father's will, and, according to ancient prophecies, endured the worst of agonies, abuses, and shame, for us : But he, who was then arraigned as a criminal at the bar of men, and was treated with cruelty and ridicule by the vilest of them, shall appear in all his glory, to the joy of his saints, and the confusion of his enemies, at the last day.—How thankfully should the children of God celebrate the memorials of their dear and dying Saviour ! And why should any of them think much of sufferings for his sake, who has undergone so much for theirs, and has taken out the sting of all that can befall them ! But, O how malignant and hideous an evil is sin, which cost our Lord so dear to make an atonement for it ! And into what monstrous forms does it shape itself, sometimes deliberately pursuing the most horrid villainies, under a disguise of religion and friendship ; and at others hurrying even God's own people into self-confidence on one hand, and dreadful defections on the other ; yea, though very rarely, into lying oaths and curplings, under the power of strong temptation, passion, and fear ! How jealous should we be over our own hearts ! and how should we dread being left to ourselves, or resolving and acting in our own strength ! What need have we to be humble, and to watch and pray that we enter not into temptation, since, when it once begins to prevail, none knows how far it may carry us ! But if, at any time, we have fallen by our iniquity, our repentance ought to be answerable to our sin ; and if we have the grace of God in truth, when we have sinned grievously, our reflections upon it will fill us with such sorrows as often make one weep bitterly.

C H A P. XXVII.

Christ delivered to Pilate, 1, 2. Judas's despair and death, 3,—10. Christ's trial before Pilate, 11,—14. The clamour of the people against him, 15,—25. His being sentenced to be crucified, and the execution of it, 26,—44. Remarkable signs attending his death, 45,—56. His burial, and his sepulchre watched, 57,—66.

TEXT.

WHEN the morning was come, all the chief priests,

PARAPHRASE.

JESUS having been thus examined and condemned by the council, they retired for a little while ;

priests, and elders of the people, took counsel against Jesus, to put him to death.

2 And when they had bound him, they led him away, and delivered him to Pontius Pilate the governor.

3 Then Judas, which had betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders,

4 Saying, I have sinned, in that I have betrayed the innocent blood. And they said, What is that to us? see thou to that.

5 And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, and went

while †; and, when the morning-light appeared, the whole sanhedrim, consisting mostly of the chief priests and elders, went into further consultations about what course they should take that might be most effectual to cut him off.

2 And as the Romans had lately taken the chief power of life and death into their own hands, the sceptre having departed from Judah, just as the great Shiloh, or promised Messiah, came, (*Gen.* xlix. 10. see the note on *John* xviii. 31.) the council ordered him to be bound like a capital offender; and then, leading him through the streets, to make him a public spectacle of their triumph, rage, and scorn, they brought him, as an infamous malefactor, to Pontius Pilate, who, at that time, was the Roman governor of Judea; and so fulfilled Christ's own prophecy, that they should deliver him to the Gentiles to be crucified. (*Chap.* xx. 19.)

3 Then Judas, who had treacherously betrayed him into their hands †, as soon as he found that his Master suffered himself to be condemned by the council, and to remain under their power who were likely to procure his death, he was filled with horror and agony, in reflection on his own aggravated wickedness; and wishing, though too late, that it had never been committed, he went and returned the thirty pieces of silver, for which he had sold his Lord, to the chief priests and elders from whom he had received it,

4 Saying, to Christ's honour, to their caution, and his own confusion, I have been guilty of the worst of villainies, in betraying an innocent person, even to death. But, instead of their taking conviction of their own crime, in hiring him to do it, they put it off with a slight, and said, What care we? that is no fault of ours; you must look to it yourself; we do not know that he is innocent, whatever you do; nay, we have judged him worthy of death.

5 And when he saw with what neglect they treated him, and that there was no stopping their prosecution of Jesus, he, in the vexation and terror of

N O T E S.

† This seems from *Luke* xxii. 66. to have been a second meeting of the sanhedrim after a short recess: But then, either the evangelist *Luke* placed the examination of Christ, about his being the Son of God, in a different order from the evangelists *Matthew* and *Mark*; or else, at the council's meeting again, they re-examined him upon that article, to see

whether he would stand to the answer that he had before given to their question about it.

† *Judas*, in all likelihood, hoped that Christ would have confounded his enemies, or miraculously made his escape, and that he himself should have got their money, without any damage done to his master.

went and hanged himself.

of his mind, threw down the money they had given him * in one of the chambers of the temple; and, overwhelmed with insupportable anguish and despair, retired into some solitary place, and there † was suffocated, and fell down headlong with such agony and violence, as to burst the rim of his belly, and let out his bowels. (Acts i. 18.)

6 And the chief priests took the silver pieces, and said, It is not lawful for to put them into the treasury; because it is the price of blood.

6 Upon Judas's leaving the money with the chief priests, they took it up; but † hypocritically pretended that it ought not to be put among the offerings for the temple, because it had been employed to procure the shedding of human blood: And, though they made no scruple of pursuing an innocent man to death, they were unwilling to take the silver again for their own use, lest they should thereby bring the load of guilt, and the odium of it, upon themselves, which was contracted by its having been the price that obtained the delivery of Jesus into their hands, in order to his being put to death.

7 And they took counsel, and bought with them the potters field, to bury strangers in.

7 But (3s) they contrived to ease their own consciences, and put a fair gloss upon what they had done, by disposing of the money in some public charity; accordingly they purchased with it a piece of ground, which was called, *The || potter's field*, to be a burying-plate for such proselytes of their religion as they thought were not worthy to be interred in the same places with themselves.

8 Wherefore that field was called, *The field of blood*, unto this day.

8 Therefore the name of that field was changed; and the providence of God so ordered it, for perpetuating the memory of their infamous crime; it being from that time forward called *Aceldama*, which signifies, *The field of blood*. (Acts i. 19.)

9 (Then was fulfilled that which was

9, 10 By these remarkable circumstances, that which was figuratively expressed by the prophet, was

N O T E S.

* It seems by his throwing down the money in the temple, that the sanhedrim were adjourned to their council-chamber, in an apartment of the temple, to finish their consultations against Jesus there. If so, the history stands in its due order; and there is no need of placing this fact after the condemnation of Christ by Pilate, as the Harmonists generally do.

† The expression here used, ἀνῆλθε, he hanged himself, or was suffocated; and that in Acts i. 18. ἐρρις γινόμενος ελακκῆς μεσος, he falling headlong, burst asunder in the midst; are easily accounted for, and reconciled, by supposing, either that he was strangled with grief, or by the power of Satan in him, and, fall-

ing down, his bowels gushed out; or that, if he hanged himself, the rope, or that to which it was fastened, broke, and so he fell down; and if this were at the top of some precipice, it occasioned the greater violence in the fall, and the more signally manifested the righteous judgment of God, in so uncommon a death of a matchless traitor.

‡ It is likely that they had taken it out of the treasury of the temple, to hire the traitor, under pretence that this was for the service of God.

|| This seems to have been a field owned by some potter, or used to supply potters-earth, or to receive broken pieces of pots.

was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him that was valued, whom they of the children of Israel did value;

10 And gave them for the potters field, as the Lord appointed me.)

11 And Jesus stood before the governor: and the governor asked him, saying, Art thou the king of the Jews? And Jesus said unto him, Thou sayest.

12 And when he was accused of the chief priests and elders, he answered nothing.

13 Then saith Pilate unto him, Hearst thou not how many things they witness against thee?

14 And he answered

was really accomplished in what these Jews did to Christ, where it is said, (Zech. xi. 12, 13.) || *They weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver, And the Lord said unto me, Cast it unto the potter: A goodly price that I was prized at of them! And I took the thirty pieces of silver, and cast them to the potter in the house of the Lord.*

11 When the Jews had brought Jesus before Pilate, they, knowing how jealous the Roman government were of all attempts to throw off their yoke, accused him of setting himself up for the Christ; which they interpreted to imply, that he set up for king of the Jews, to deliver them from Caesar's power. (Luke xxiii. 2.) And, as he stood arraigned under this charge at Pilate's bar, he interrogated him upon that head, saying, Do you indeed profess to be the king of the Jews? To which Jesus replied, It is as you say, in a certain sense of the words; though not so as to imply a temporal dominion, like the kingdoms of this world. (John xviii. 36.)

12 And while the chief priests and elders of the people multiplied clamorous accusations, he, knowing his own innocence, and the apparent weakness and inconsistency of their charges, and knowing that his time was come, took no care to answer them, but silently committed himself to him that judgeth righteously.

13 Then Pilate said, Do not you hear how your accusers depose, that you pervert the nation, forbid to give tribute to Caesar, make yourself a king, and incite the people to rebellion through all Jewry, and that, by their law, you ought to die, because you make yourself the Son of God? (Luke xxiii. 2, 5. and John xix. 7.) What have you to offer against all these charges? Why do not you clear yourself?

14 And yet, though he was thus pressed to answer,

N O T E.

¶ As these words are found only in Zechariah, and not in Jeremiah, some suppose they were first spoken by Jeremiah, or written in some apocryphal book of his, which is lost, and were afterwards repeated, as some other things were, by Zechariah; on which account the Jews used to say, that the spirit of Jeremiah was in Zechariah: Others suppose that the prophecy of Jeremiah was placed first in the volume of the prophets, and so was the running-title of all that volume: Others think that the ninth, tenth, and

eleventh chapters of Zechariah, were written by Jeremiah: Others observe that the Syriac and Persian versions read, *It was spoken by the prophet*, without naming by whom. And others suppose that the transcribers might mistake Ζεῖου for Ιερίου, as bishop Hall says he has seen these names abbreviated in an old manuscript. However, it is of little importance which of these ways we take, to account for this difficulty, since it does not affect the doctrine itself.

swered him to never a word, inasmuch that the governor marvelled greatly.

15 Now at that feast the governor was wont to release unto the people a prisoner, whom they would.

16 And they had then a notable prisoner, called Barabbas.

17 Therefore, when they were gathered together, Pilate said unto them, Whom will ye that I release unto you? Barabbas, or Jesus, which is called Christ?

18 For he knew that for envy they had delivered him.

19 When he was set down on the judgment-seat, his wife sent unto him, saying, Have thou nothing to do with that just man: for I have suffered many things this day in a dream, because of him.

20 But the chief priests and elders persuaded the multitude that they should

swer, he still continued entirely silent; so that Pilate was greatly amazed to think what might be the reason of this uncommon behaviour.

15 Now it was customary for the governor of Judea to gratify the people with the release of some prisoner, whom they should chuse, at every passover, in honour of that festival, which was a commemoration of their own deliverance out of Egypt.

16 And it fell out at this passover, that they had a notorious malefactor in prison, one Barabbas, who had headed several seditious persons in an insurrection, and been guilty of robbery and murder in the riot. (*Mark xv. 7.*)

17 When, therefore, the chief of the Jews were gathered together to demand judgment against Jesus, Pilate, supposing that they could hardly prefer so infamous a rogue as Barabbas to him, made a proposal to them, that, since he was to release some one prisoner at that feast, they should chuse which they pleased of the two whom he would mention; and they were, this abominable wretch Barabbas, and Jesus, whom many among them esteemed as their Messiah.

18 For the governor was well satisfied, by their management in the whole of this prosecution of Jesus at his tribunal, that it was envious and malicious, on account of the high reputation he had gained among the people, who, it might be hoped, would have appeared on the side of one that had been so great a favourite of many of them.

19 And he was the more confirmed in his good opinion of Jesus, and in his inclination to favour him, by a message that was brought from his wife whilst he was sitting in judgment on this cause: For she sent an earnest and solemn warning to him, saying, I beg of you not to pass any severe sentence upon that righteous man who is now before you; for I have been exceedingly terrified in an uncommon dream about him this morning; and am sorely afraid, lest he should be condemned, and you and your family should fall under the vengeance of God for it †.

20 But the more God seemed to appear for him, the more the chief priests and elders of the Jews set themselves against him; and, by their interest with the common people, took all possible pains

to

N O T E.

† This was a special appearance of Providence, to bear witness to Christ's innocence, whilst his enemies were loading him with unjust reproaches.

should ask Barab-
bas, and destroy
Jesus.

21 The gover-
nor answered and
said unto them,
Whether of the
twain will ye that
I release unto you?
They said, Barab-
bas.

22 Pilate saith
unto them, What
shall I do then
with Jesus, which
is called Christ?
They all say unto
him, Let him be
crucified.

23 And the go-
vernor said, Why,
what evil hath he
done? But they
cried out the more,
saying, Let him be
crucified.

24 When Pilate
saw that he could
prevail nothing,
but that rather a
tumult was made,
he took water, and
washed his hands
before the multi-
tude, saying, I am
innocent of the
blood of this just
person: see ye 20
it.

to prevail upon them to demand that *Barabbas* might be freed, and that Jesus might be put to death.

21 But *Pilate* being rather desirous to set Jesus at liberty, as being persuaded of his innocence, put the question a second time to the whole multitude, saying, Which of these two persons do ye insist upon being set at liberty? And they, under the influence of the chief priests and elders, answered, *Barabbas*.

22 Upon this the governor said to them, What then would ye have me do with Jesus, who is esteemed by many to be your Messiah? Shall I release him also? Or will ye leave it to me to do as I think proper with him? But they all answered, as with one consent, Let him be condemned to be crucified, and so suffer the most shameful death that can be inflicted upon him.

23 *Pilate* replied, Why do ye insist on his being crucified? What capital crime has he been guilty of to deserve it? I do not find that ye have proved any thing against him, for which, according to the *Roman* laws, he ought to die. (See the note on *Luke* xxiii. 22.) But, for want of evidence, they cried out with the greater fury and clamour, We hate him, and cannot endure the thoughts of his living; nothing less will satisfy us than that he be crucified.

24 The governor then finding it was in vain to strive against the stream, and that they grew more and more outrageous and desperate by all that he could say to convince or soften them, was in a great strait between his own judgment and conscience on one hand, and his fears of the people's rage on the other; and therefore, to stifle his own convictions, and at the same time quiet the multitude, he thought of an expedient, which he preposterously imagined would acquit himself from guilt, whilst he gratified them; and that was, to yield to their importunity, and yet protest against the fact: And so he called for a basin of water, and washing his hands*, in the presence of all the people, said, By this significative action I clear myself, and testify, before God and you, that I am not guilty of shedding the blood of this righteous man, whom ye force me to

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N O T E.

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* Some think that *Pilate*, having lived among the *Jews*, did this in conformity to a custom he had learned from them, according to *Deut.* xxi. 6, 7. and *Psal.* xvi. 6. But others suppose it was in

conformity to a rite of this nature among the *Gentiles*, as well as *Jews*, who, to cleanse themselves from the blood they shed, used to wash their hands.

condemn; ye alone shall be answerable for it to God and the whole world, whatever may be the consequence.

25 Then answered all the people, and said, His blood be on us, and on our children.

25 Then all the assembly, in the heat of their rage, replied, Be it so: We fear no guilt or danger on this score; if, as you imagine, there should be any, we acquit you, and take it all upon ourselves: Let it be revenged upon us and ours to the latest posterity. So rash and presumptuous were they, in entailing the most dreadful curse of God upon themselves, and upon their children yet unborn.

26 Then released he Barabbas unto them: and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified.

26 *Pilate* having got this poor salvo for his own conscience, and being over-awed by their tumultuous clamours, proceeded to discharge *Barabbas*, that notorious malefactor, whose crimes were so great and complicated, that it can hardly be thought he ever could have obtained a release, had he not been put in competition with the holy One, whom they wickedly abhorred: And when he had ordered Jesus to be severely † scourged, in hopes that such an ignominious and cruel punishment might have satisfied the people, but found that even this would not appease them, (*John* xix. 1. &c.) he, at last, passed sentence upon him, and delivered him up to the *Roman* officers to be crucified ||.

27 Then

N O T E S.

† Whipping or scourging, in criminal cases, was a punishment frequently used both by the *Jews* and *Romans*. The *Jews* commonly inflicted it by a whip of three cords, and limited the number of stripes to thirty-nine; (*1 Cor.* xi. 29.) and so they gave only thirteen strokes with the scourge of three lashes, that they might be sure not to exceed forty stripes, according to the law in *Duet.* xxv. 3. But the *Romans* most usual way of scourging was with such rods or wands as the lictors carried in a bundle before their chief magistrates: And they, not confining themselves to the *Jewish* number, were exceeding cruel in this sort of punishment, as appears from *Eusebius's* account of their inflicting it on the primitive martyrs; of whom he says, "All the spectators were astonished when they saw their flesh torn with scourges, even to their veins and arteries, so that their very bowels might be seen:" *Euseb. Eccles. Hist.* lib. iv. cap. 15. And as our Saviour was scourged at *Pilate's* order, it seems to have been done by his officers, after the *Roman* fashion, and to have been very severe, as well as disgraceful; for *Pilate* thereby intended to move the compassion of the *Jews* toward

him, in order to his being released, rather than to have him scourged in order to his being crucified, as appears from *Luke* xxiii. 15, 16, 22. *John* xix. 1,—6.: And so τὸν Ἰησοῦν φραγυλλώσας παρῶντων, &c. may be rendered, Having already scourged Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified.

|| When a person was crucified, he was nailed to the cross, as it lay upon the ground, through each hand extended to its utmost stretch, and through both the feet together; then the cross was erected, and the foot of it thrust, with a violent jog, into a hole prepared in the ground to receive it; and this jog disjointed the body, whose whole weight hung upon the nails, which went through the hands and feet, till the person expired by mere dint of pain. This kind of death, which was the most cruel, shameful, and cursed death that could be devised, was used only by the *Romans* for slaves, and the basest of the people, who were capital offenders: But Jesus was to endure this, that the very nature of the death itself might intimate, his bearing our sins in his own body on the tree, and being made a curse for us. *1 Pet.* ii. 24. and *Gal.* iii. 13.

27 Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the common hall, and gathered unto him the whole band of soldiers.

28 And they stripped him, and put on him a scarlet robe.

29 And when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put it upon his head, and a reed in his right hand: and they bowed the knee before him, and mocked him, saying, Hail, king of the Jews.

30 And they spit upon him, and took the reed, and smote him on the head:

31 And after that they had mocked him, they took the robe off from him, and put his own raiment on him, and led him away to crucify him.

32 And as they came out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name: him they compelled to bear his cross.

27 Then *Pilate's* guards seizing Jesus, dragged him into the common hall; and there they brought their whole company about him, inhumanly to insult him, and to make themselves merry with him; they being more disposed by their temper and profession, to fall in with the fury of the people, than with the timoroufness of the governor.

28 And as they had heard that he was profecuted under the character of the king of the *Jews*, they, in derision, pulled off his own clothes, and put upon him a red cloak, such as the soldiers used to wear, to mimic the scarlet robes of princes.

29 And, having wreathed a parcel of thorns into the form of a crown, they, to carry on the jest with barbarous mockery, set it upon his head, at once to ridicule and torment him; and putting a reed, or hollow cane, (*καλαμῶν*) into his right hand for a mock sceptre, answerable to his sham robes and crown, they, in a way of jeer and scorn, kneeled down before him, and used the form of salutation that was given to kings and emperors, saying, with a taunt, Hail, long live the king of the *Jews*.

30 And then, with indignation and contempt, they spit in his face; and, taking the cane out of his hand, struck with it upon the crown of thorns, that their points might the more painfully pierce his head*.

31 And after they had glutted themselves with making him their sport, and with abusing and putting all manner of indignities upon him, they stripped him of his mock robe, to signify that they had divested him of all his kingly authority; and put his own coat upon him again, that those soldiers might have their booty who were to be most immediately employed in his execution; and then, obliging him to carry his own cross, (*John* xix. 17.) they led him like a lamb to the slaughter, and hurried him away through the city to the place of his crucifixion, which was without the gates of *Jerusalem*, (*Heb.* xiii. 12.)

32 But fearing lest he should faint, and die under the burden, and so they should lose the opportunity of gratifying their cruelty in a public, shameful, and miserable execution; when, as they were going out of the city, they met with one *Simon*, a *Cyrenean*, who was coming that way out of the

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N O T E.

* As it seems from *John* xix. that some of these things were done to Jesus before *Pilate* had condemned him, we may suppose that they were afterwards acted

over again; or else, that this evangelist, and *Mark* (chap. xv. 16,—20.) recited them all together as things of a like nature.

country, they pressed this man to carry the cross after him †. (*Luke* xxiii. 26.)

33 And when they were come unto a place called Golgotha, that is to say, a place of a skull,

34 They gave him vinegar to drink, mingled with gall: and when he had tasted thereof, he would not drink.

35 And they crucified him, and parted his garments, casting lots; that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots.

36 And sitting down, they watched him there:

37 And set up over his head his accusation written, THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS.

33, 34 And when they came to a place, a little way out of the city, called in the *Hebrew* language, or *Syriac* dialect, *Golgotha*, which signifies, *The place of a skull**, instead of giving him a stupefying potion of spiced wine, as they used to do in compassion to malefactors when they were to be crucified, they gave him a cup of vinegar mixed with gall; (see the note on *Mark* xv. 23.) thereby literally, though undesignedly, fulfilling an ancient prophecy concerning him. (*Psal.* lxxix. 21.) And when he had tasted the sour and bitter potion, as much as was sufficient to give him the nauseous relish of it, he refused to drink it, that he might take nothing either to increase, or to make him insensible of, his pain.

35 Then they nailed his hands and feet to the cross, and reared it up, with his body hanging by the nails upon it; and, having stripped him at least of his upper garments, the four soldiers, that were his immediate executioners, divided some of his cloaths among them; and as the uppermost of all, being a mantle or cloak, was one piece of cloth without any seam, and would be spoiled by cutting it into pieces, (*John* xix. 23.) they cast lots for it; and therein likewise, without their own design, fulfilled another prophecy of him, (*Psal.* xxii. 18.) where it is said, *They parted my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture.*

36 And having done this, they set themselves down to watch and guard him, lest the people should take another turn whilst they saw him in this miserable plight, and should rise and rescue him.

37 They likewise fastened an inscription upon the top of the cross over his head, which *Pilate* had ordered, (*John* xix. 19.) viz. "*This is Jesus the king of the Jews,*" that all spectators might know who he was, and upon what accusation he was crucified:

N O T E.

† This *Simon* was probably suspected to be one of Christ's disciples; and he either carried one end of the cross, Christ going before, and still bearing the other, it being one part of the punishment and ignominy of them that were crucified, to carry their own cross; or else, Christ, having been fatigued by the foregoing watchings and abuses, was too faint to stand under any part of it; and so *Simon* carried it all, in the company after him, or at least, as some think, that piece of

wood which was to be fastened across the upright post, and which was all that used to be carried by the malefactor.

* This, in the *Greek*, is *Κρανιον*, which, according to its signification, is, (in *Latin*) *Calvary*, or, *The place of a skull*, *Luke* xxiii. 33.; and it was so called, either because criminals used to be executed there; or because there was the common charnel-house, or repository for dead mens bones and skulls.

cified: And so what they designed for his reproach, was over-ruled by Providence for his honour, as it was an assertion, not of any real crime, but of a glorious truth concerning him.

38 Then were there two thieves crucified with him: one on the right hand, and another on the left.

38 At the same time there were two highway-men (*λησται*) crucified on each side of him, he hanging in the middle, and one of them on his right hand, and the other on his left, that the multitude might be so much the more incensed against him, as if he were the worst of the three; and, in this manner, according to ancient prophecy, *He was numbered with transgressors.* (Isa. liii. 12.)

39 And they that passed by, reviled him, wagging their heads,

39 And as all these indignities were put upon him; so even the travellers, who passed by as strangers on the public road, by the side of which he hung, shook their heads in a scornful and insulting manner, and upbraided him, using taunts and jeers, even to blasphemy, (*βλασφημοῦν αὐτὸν*) saying,

40 And saying, Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself: if thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross.

40 Aha! what is become of your vain boasts now? You that pretended to such mighty feats as to pull down the temple and build it up again in three days time, let us now see whether you are able to save yourself from dying, or to deliver yourself out of the hands of justice: If, as you pretended, you really are the Son of God, now is your time to give us a proof of it, by loosening yourself from the cross, and going away: Come, let us see what you can do.

41 Likewise also the chief priests, mocking him, with the scribes and elders, said,

41 In like manner the chief priests, together with the scribes and elders of the people, whom education and good manners, and a consideration of their character, one would have thought, should have taught better, were so malicious and sordid as to deride and scoff at him, saying,

42 He saved others; himself he cannot save: if he be the King of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him.

42 He pretended to do wonderful miracles in delivering others from distempers and death, and to be the Saviour of *Israel*; but now, poor creature, he is not able to deliver himself: If he be indeed the Messiah, as he vainly boasted, let him now shew his divine power by coming down from the cross in our presence; and then it will be time enough for us to believe in him*.

43 He trusted in God; let him deliver him now if he will

43 He indeed put on a great air of sanctity, and pretended to high confidence in God, as his Father, calling himself his Son, whom he had sent; but if there

N O T E.

* This insulting demand intimated, as if all the unquestionable miracles he had wrought before, in healing the sick, and raising the dead, stood for nothing, and were not to be believed; unless he would

do that, which, in reality, would have been inconsistent with the great design of his coming into the world for the redemption of his people. See the note on *Luke xxiii. 35.*

will have him: for he said, I am the Son of God.

44 The thieves also which were crucified with him, cast the same in his teeth.

45 Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour.

46 And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?

there is any thing in all this, and God has any favour for him, or he has any interest in God, How comes it about that he does not deliver him, as ye see he does not? By this we may be sure that this man is an impostor.

44 Yea, so general was the run against Christ, that even one of the highwaymen likewise, who were fellow-sufferers with him, was so daring, amidst his own agonies, and just at the point of death for his own crimes, as to vent his spleen against him in vile reproaches, for pretending to be the Messiah and the Son of God, and not saving himself and them*.

45 Now, as Jesus was hanging on the cross, there was a miraculous eclipse of the sun, which continued from twelve o'clock to three in the afternoon, and spread darkness over all the earth ||, (*ἡ ἡμέρα ἦν ὀμίχλη*) to testify an abhorrence of the wickedness which was then in committing; and to intimate Christ's fore conflicts with divine justice, and all the powers of darkness, and the withdrawalment of all comfort from him.

46 And about three o'clock, after a long and silent conflict in his own soul, Jesus, being in the utmost agony, even unto death, cried out with a loud and doleful voice, which shewed the extremity of his pain and anguish, together with the strength and fervour of his spirit, saying, in the mixed dialect of Hebrew and Syriac, which was much used in those days, *Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani*; that is, as those words signify, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* Thereby, at once, expressing his faith and trust in God as his Father, and, at the same time, a most distressing sense of his delivering him up into the hands of his enemies, letting loose the powers of darkness upon him, withdrawing the comfortable discoveries of his delight in him, and impressing upon his soul a terrible sense of the wrath due

N O T E S.

* *Luke* xxiii. 30, 40. speaks of only one of the thieves who reviled our blessed Lord, while the other discovered a quite different temper, and rebuked his companion: But it is not unusual for the plural to be put for the singular number, where there are more of like characters spoken of than one: See several instances of this in the note on *Matt.* xxi. 7. However, some suppose that they both began at first to upbraid him; but that one of them, being soon convinced, by the grace and power of the dying Saviour, changed his tone, and spake honourably of him, *Luke* xxiii. 40, 41, 42.

|| It is reported, says *Suidas*, that *Dionysius* saw it in *Egypt*; and knowing that it could not be a natural eclipse, because it was at the time of the full moon, and lasted three hours together, he, though a heathen philosopher, said, *Either the Divinity suffers, or sympathizes with a sufferer; or the frame of the world is dissolved.* *Vid.* *Pol. Synop.* in *loc.* But were we to suppose, with others, that this darkness was only over all the land of *Palestine*, it was no less miraculous.

47 Some of them that stood there, when they heard that, said, This man calleth for Elias.

48 And straightway one of them ran, and took a sponge, and filled it with vinegar, and put it on a reed, and gave him to drink.

49 The rest said, Let be, let us see whether Elias will come to save him.

50 Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost.

51 And behold, the vail of the temple was rent in twain, from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent;

due to the sins of his people, which he was then bearing, to make an atonement for them.

47 He no sooner spake these words, than some of the by-standers hearing them, and either ignorantly or wilfully mistaking their meaning, said, He calls for the prophet *Elias* to come and help him: Though he pretended to be the Messiah himself, he now finds that God, whom he stiled his Father, fails him; and would now be glad of any relief from *Elias*, who, we own, is to come before the Messiah, to prepare his way.

48 And immediately one of them, instead of offering him a refreshing cordial, ran and filled a sponge with vinegar, and sticking it upon the top of a reed, or of a long stalk of hyssop, (*John* xix. 29. see the note there), put it to his mouth for him to suck it, designing thereby to abuse and tease him, and do all that might be distasteful to him.

49 In the mean while, there was a general cry among the people, in a way of derision and insult, saying, Ah, let him alone, he calls for *Elias*; let us see whether that prophet, or any one in heaven or earth, will come and deliver him; his case is desperate, none can help him.

50 Soon after this, Jesus cried out again with a strong voice, saying, *Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit*, (*Luke* xxiii. 46.) and that just as he was expiring; to shew, that, notwithstanding all the terrible things he had endured*, nature still retained so much strength and vigour, that his life was not forced from him, but that he freely resigned it up at his Father's command, because, as he knew, the finishing point of the great work of redemption was then come: And so, by his own consent, he immediately breathed out his last. (*John* xix. 30.)

51 And behold the surprising miracles that attended his death: The vail of the temple, which separated the holy of holies from the court of the priests, was, by an invisible power, rent quite through, from the top to the bottom, in the sight of the priests, who just then were ministering there, it being the time of the evening sacrifice: God thereby signifying, that the temple at Jerusalem was no longer to be regarded as the sanctuary of the Lord; that all the mysteries pertaining to it were

N O T E.

* When nature fails, it incapacitates one to speak, in the very article of death, with a loud voice; and *Pilate* wondered at our Lord's being so soon dead, *Mark* xv. 44.

were unfolded and fulfilled; that the partition-wall was broken down, and *Jews* and *Gentiles* were admitted to equal privileges in the new dispensation of grace, founded on the death of Christ; and that a way was opened, through the vail of his flesh, for all true believers to enter into the holiest of all, even heaven itself. (*Heb. x. 19, 20.*) There was likewise so great an earthquake, as not only made the ground shake and tremble by its mighty shock, but split even the rocks themselves: God hereby signifying his detestation of the horrible wickedness of Christ's crucifiers, and the great alterations he was making in the church and the world, for the destruction of the power of Satan, and advancing of the kingdom of his dear Son.

52 And the graves were opened; and many bodies of saints which slept, arose,

53 And came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many.

52, 53 The sepulchres also of the dead were by this earthquake shattered, and laid open; and, after Christ's resurrection, the bodies of many holy persons which lay interred in them, were raised by his power out of the sleep of death, (see the note on *John v. 25.*) and came forth from their tombs: And, for the proof of this remarkable fact, they going into *Jerusalem*, (which for many ages was called the holy city, because of God's special residence in his temple there,) shewed themselves alive to many of the people †, who might be acquainted with them before: God hereby signifying, that Christ, by his crucifixion and resurrection, had conquered death and the grave; and that, in the virtue thereof, all the saints, of which these were a sample, should rise again at the last day.

54 Now when the centurion, and they that were with him, watching Jesus, saw the earthquake, and those things that were done, they feared greatly, saying, Truly this was the Son of God.

54 Now when the *Roman* captain and his soldiers, that were upon guard at the execution of Jesus, saw some of the awful prodigies which appeared at his death; though they were heathens, and, like soldiers, hardened in their tempers, and had just before insulted and reviled him, they were in the utmost consternation and fear, and even constrained to give an honourable testimony to him, saying, Certainly, whatever has been said or thought to the contrary, this person was indeed the Son of God, as he professed to be; otherwise, God would never have thus concerned himself about him, and shewn his displeasure, in this terrible manner, at his being put to death.

55 And many women

55 There were likewise a company of women standing

N O T E.

† Some suppose that these saints were the *patriarchs*; others, that they were the Old Testament *martyrs*; but it seems more natural to apprehend that they were such as *Simon*, *Zecharias*, and *John the Baptist*, and others, who believed in Christ, and were known to many in *Jerusalem*.

women were there, (beholding afar off,) which followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering unto him :

56 Among which was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joses, and the mother of Zebedee's children.

57 When the even was come, there came a rich man of Arimathea, named Joseph, who also himself was Jesus' disciple :

58 He went to Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus : then Pilate commanded the body to be delivered.

59 And when Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth,

60 And laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the

standing among the spectators at a distance from the cross, and looking upon their crucified Lord with weeping eyes and aching hearts, who, out of their great love to him, and desire to hear the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth, came along with him as far as from Galilee, the best part of an hundred miles, or more, and who cheerfully ministered of their own substance to him for his accommodation in the way ; but now, alas ! could do nothing toward his relief or comfort.

56 Among these were *Mary Magdalene*, out of whom he had cast seven devils, (*Mark* xvi. 9.) and *Mary*, the mother of † *James the less*, and of *Joses*; and *Salome*, (*Mark* xv. 40.) the mother of *Zebedee's* two sons, viz. *James* and *John* ; all faithful disciples, who stuck by him, as well as they could, to the last, and were eye-witnesses of every thing that passed.

57 Now in the evening, a little before sun-set, the Sabbath then drawing near, there came a certain rich man, *Joseph of Arimathea* by name, an honourable counsellor, (*Mark* xv. 43.) and a religious holy man, who was likewise one of *Jesus's* disciples, well affected in his heart toward him, though he had been too shy of publicly owning him, for fear of the sanhedrim, of which he was a member. (See the note on *Luke* xxiii. 50, 51.)

58 This great man, being spirited, on the present occasion, to give an open testimony of his regard to Christ, went boldly to *Pilate*, who, as chief magistrate, had the disposal of the bodies of those that had been crucified ; and begged leave to have the burying of the body of *Jesus*, that he might prevent its being ignominiously thrown into the earth with the two malefactors that were crucified with him : *Pilate* immediately granted his request, and accordingly sent a warrant for the body to be delivered to him.

59, 60 By this authority, *Joseph* took it down from the cross ; and, having it in possession, wrapped it round in a clean linen cloth, according to the common custom of decent funerals among the *Jews* ; and then put it into a new sepulchre, which he had ordered to be cut out of a solid rock, and in which no corpse had ever been laid before ; and, having blocked up the passage into it with a great stone,

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NOTE.

† He was called *James the less*, to distinguish him from the other *James*; the brother of *John*, because, as is most likely, he was less in stature than the other. See *Hammond* on *Mark* xv. 40.

the rock; and he rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulchre, and departed.

61 And there was Mary Magdalene, and the other Mary, sitting over against the sepulchre.

62 Now the next day that followed the day of the preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees came together unto Pilate,

63 Saying, Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise again.

64 Command therefore that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day, lest his disciples come by night, and steal him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead: so the last error shall be worse than the first.

stone, to complete the interment and secure the body, he returned home.

61 And *Mary Magdalene*, with the other *Mary*, the mother of *James* and *Yoses*, followed Jesus, like true mourners, to his grave, and placed themselves over against it, to indulge their sorrow, and to take notice where his remains were disposed of; that, as soon as the Sabbath should be past, they might testify their affection and respect by an embalment. (*Luke xxiii. 56*)

62 Now the next day, which was the *Jews* sabbath in their passover week, being the day after that in which they used to prepare for it, the chief priests and *Pharisees*, who at other times seemed to be the most scrupulous, and even superstitious observers of its ceremonial rites, and often quarrelled with Christ for his acts of divine power and mercy on that day, assembled together, and went in a body to *Pilate*. with a petition, saying,

63 Sir. || we well remember, that this impostor (as they blasphemously called the Amen, the faithful and true witness) said, whilst he was living, That, though he should be crucified, he would rise again from the dead † in three days.

64 We. therefore, entreat the favour of you to order a sufficient number of soldiers to guard the sepulchre, till the three days be expired; lest, to carry on the deceit, his disciples should go in the night and steal away his corpse, and then report among the people, that, according to his own prediction, he is risen from the dead: For, if this should happen, the last error, in not taking effectual care to prevent the trick, would be of more mischievous consequence than the first, which we have been guilty of in suffering him to live and preach so long: This will be thought a mighty confirmation of his character; and the people will be in more danger of being seduced by the doctrine he taught, than ever.

65 *Pilate*

N O T E S.

|| Christ often said this to his disciples: But I do not find any account of his declaring it expressly to the common people, or the rulers of the *Jews*: unless when he spake of the temple of his body. *John ii. 19, 21.* And if they here refer to what he then said, how perverse and iniquitous was their construction of these words, as relating to the temple at *Jerusalem*, when he was upon his trial before the council? *Chap. xxvi. 61.*

† *After three days*, signifies, after the commencement of the third day; *Luke ii. 44, 45, 46.*: And so it is of the same import with, *in three days*, and *on the third day*; the expressions being used promiscuously, one for the other, *Matt. xvi. 21. Mark viii. 31. Luke ix. 22.* and *John ii. 19.* And our language is a-kin to this, when we call that a *tertian* ague, which comes every other day. See the note on *Matt. xii. 40.* and *Bishop Pearson's* note on art. 5. of the Creed.

65 Pilate said unto them, Ye have a watch: go your way, make it as sure as you can.

65 *Pilate*, to gratify the ridiculous fears they pretended to have about such a vain and hazardous attempt of the poor timorous disciples, replied, Ye have a guard of your own in the tower of *Antonia*, for the service of the temple; go and detach from them as many soldiers as ye please, and such as ye yourselves can most depend upon; set them to watch the sepulchre, and use all the precautions ye are capable of to secure it, that ye may be sure whether he rises again to life or not.

66 So they went and made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone, and setting a watch.

66 Accordingly they went and did their utmost to make all things safe, sealing the stone, and placing a band of soldiers there to observe and guard it*.

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

The hideous nature of sin may be seen in the treachery of *Judas*; in the invidious false accusations of the high priest and others; in the unrighteous judgment of *Pilate*, against the convictions of his own conscience; in the vile abuses of the officers, soldiers, and mob, all combining against our blessed Lord; and in the whole of the complicated sufferings he endured to make reconciliation for iniquity. Oh what is man! how fickle, wicked, and vain! one day crying, *Hosanna to the Son of David*; and a few days after, *Crucify him, crucify him; release to us not this man, but Barabbas!* But whoever were the criminal instruments of cruelty, and whatsoever were the righteous terrors of God against him, the transgressions of his people were the procuring cause of all. Had it not been for their sins, he had never been falsely accused, reproached, and insulted, crowned with thorns, scourged, spit upon, and crucified, and had never been filled with bitter anguish under his Father's desertions: But the prophecies of a suffering Saviour were then to be fulfilled in him; and God over-ruled and ordered all things, to accomplish the eternal counsel of his will, for the redemption of the church, and, at the same time, to give an honourable testimony to Christ's personal innocence and excellence, and to his character as his Son, and the true Messiah. This he did, by the mouths of his enemies themselves; by the astonishing miraculous indications of his own abhorrence of them, and approbation of him; and by an exact accomplishment of scripture prophecies in him: And oh with what submission, patience, and willingness, did he yield to the worst that befel him, according to his Father's will! With what undaunted courage did he witness a good confession, when called to it! and what care did Providence take to turn his enemies over-solicitous precautions into means of making it more unquestionably evident that he is truly risen from the dead! How should we detest all iniquity, and every thought of preferring a *Barabbas*, or any thing else, to Christ! and how should we dread interpreting, or entailing God's curse upon us, like the *Jews*; or being left to *Judas's* repentance, and to the terrible vengeance that followed it!—How dear should a dying Saviour be to us! And how patient should his disciples be under all injuries for his sake, who suffered so many for theirs! And, like the good women, that abode by him to the last, how resolutely and faithfully should we follow him through all difficulties and dangers, and shew our affection to him all our days!

N O T E.

* They set *Pilate's* signet, or the public seal of the sanhedrim, or some other seal, upon a fastening which they had put to the stone: And all this uncommon caution was over-ruled, by the providence of God, to give the strongest proof of the reality of Christ's ensuing resurrection; since there could be no room

for the least suspicion of a deceit, when it should be found, that his body was raised out of a new tomb, where there was no other corpse, and this a tomb hewn out of a rock, the mouth of which was secured by a great stone, under a seal, and a guard of soldiers.

C H A P. XXVIII.

Christ's resurrection, 1,—8. His appearance to the women, 9, 10. The ridiculous contrivance of the Jews to stifle the belief of his resurrection, 11,—15. His appearance to the eleven, and giving them their commission, 16,—20.

TEXT.

IN the end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn towards the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene, and the other Mary, to see the sepulchre.

2 And behold, there was a great earthquake; for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it.

PARAPHRASE.

NOW after the Jewish sabbath was ended*, early in the morning of the first day of the week, about break of day, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, having brought sweet spices, (*Mark xvi. 1.*) set out to see whether the sepulchre were as they left it; and, if opportunity offered, to embalm the body of Jesus.

2 And while they were consulting in the way, (*Mark xvi. 3.*) how to get the heavy stone removed, which they had seen rolled against the mouth of the sepulchre, behold a surprising event! There was an exceeding great concussion of the earth †, resembling what will be at the general resurrection; and God gave testimony to his Son, to his justice's being satisfied by his sufferings and death, and to his legally discharging him from the prison of the grave; for a glorious angel was dispatched, as an officer from heaven, with a commission, not to raise him from the dead, which was done by his own and his Father's power, but to roll back the stone, as an evidence that God and angels approved of his discharge: And when the angel had done this, he sat in a visible form upon the stone, ready to comfort and encourage the women, who, as well as the watch, (*ver. 4.*) saw him sitting there ‡.

3 The

N O T E S.

* Christ was buried on the latter part of the sixth day of the week, (*chap. xxvii. 62.*) lay in the grave all the seventh day, and rose on the morning of the first day of the following week, which, reckoning from four o'clock on the Friday evening, to four on the Lord's-day morning, was thirty-six hours after he had been buried, and which answered his own and some other predictions about the time of his resurrection on the third day. This was long enough to prove, undeniably, that he was really dead; but not so long as to necessitate the putrefaction of his body, which was not to see corruption, *Psal. xvi. 10.*; or as to suffer the thoughts and discourse about his death to begin to die among the people before he should rise again. And such is the

wisdom and grace of God, that he would not have the glorious fruits and consequences of this grand event delayed, after his justice was fully satisfied by the death of his Son.

† How could the soldiers be supposed to continue sleeping, amidst such a terrible commotion as this, if they had been asleep before, as was afterwards pretended, *ver. 13.*?

‡ The evangelists, *Luke xxiv. 4.* and *John xx. 12.* speak of two angels that appeared on this occasion; but it seems as if only one of them appeared sitting on the stone, without the sepulchre, and then going into it, was seen with another angel, sitting one where the head, and the other where the feet of the body of Jesus had lain.

3 His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow.

4 And for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men.

5 And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified.

6 He is not here: for he is risen, as he said: come, see the place where the Lord lay.

7 And go quickly, and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead; and behold, he goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him; lo, I have told you.

8 And they departed quickly from the sepulchre, with fear and great joy, and did run to bring

3 The countenance of this angel was exceeding illustrious, glittering like the brightness of lightning, and his garments shone with a light which made them appear as white as snow.

4 And the soldiers, who were set to watch the sepulchre, were so amazed at the sight of this heavenly messenger, that they trembled, and were struck with such terror, as overwhelmed their stout hearts, and made them look as pale and spiritless as dead men.

5 And as the good women were likewise frightened at the sight, (*Mark xvi. 5.*) the angel immediately spake, in a tender and encouraging manner, to them, saying, Do not ye give way to any fears; there is no reason why ye should be terrified, like the soldiers, or should apprehend any danger; for I know that ye are hearty friends to Jesus, and are come hither with a good design, to seek for him, and to testify your affection to him, who was crucified.

6 He is no longer here, in the state of the dead, as ye sorrowfully suppose; for he is really risen to life again, according to what he told you, whilst he was with you: Come along with me ||, examine the sepulchre, and behold with your own eyes, that there is no corpse in the place where the body of your Lord and ours lay.

7 And as his word, and your own eye-sight according to it, are plain evidences of his resurrection, go with all possible speed, and let his disconsolate disciples know that he is certainly risen from the dead; and, for the further confirmation of this to yourselves and them, observe, and be sure to tell them, (*Mark xvi. 7.*) that he will go before, and appear to them in *Galilee*, at a great distance from *Jerusalem*, where he used to converse with them, and where they may meet together without fear of danger from their enemies; there shall they all see him: Remember, I have faithfully discharged my trust in assuring you of this, and see that ye discharge yours in reporting it to them; it shall surely come to pass according to my word.

8 Then the women, recollecting what Christ had said about his resurrection, (*Luke xxiv. 8.*) immediately went from the sepulchre, with awful surprise at what they had seen, and with abundance of

N O T E.

|| Dr. *Clarke* very probably conjectures, that at the angel's speaking these words, he rose up, and, going before the women into the sepulchre, said, Come

and see the place where the Lord lay; which plainly reconciles what *St. John* relates, *John xx. 12.* this being one of the two angels there mentioned.

bring his disciples word.

9 And as they went to tell his disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, All hail. And they came, and held him by the feet, and worshipped him.

10 Then said Jesus unto them, Be not afraid: go tell my brethren, that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me.

11 Now when they were going, behold, some of the watch came into the city, and shewed unto the chief priests all the things that were done.

12 And when they were assembled with the elders, and had taken counsel, they gave large money unto the soldiers.

13 Saying, Say ye, His disciples came by night, and stole him away while we slept.

14 And if this come

of joy at what they had heard, and made all the haite they could to carry the glad tidings to the disciples. (But see the note on *John* xx. 2.)

9 And, as they were going upon this errand, Jesus himself unexpectedly met them in the way, and saluted them saying, All happiness attend you; rejoice and be exceeding glad: And they, being satisfied that it was Jesus, fell down before him with prostrate reverence, took hold of his feet to express their humble affection to him, and earnest desire not to let him go, and paid him their solemn adorations as their risen Saviour.

10 Then Jesus encouraged and comforted them, saying, Do not be surprised, nor apprehend any danger or delusion; but, as the angel ordered you, go to my disciples, whom I still own as my brethren, though they so lately disowned and forsook me, and bid them make the best of their way out of *Judea* into *Galilee*; and there I will appear to them, that they may have an ocular demonstration of my being risen indeed.

11 Now as soon as the women departed from the sepulchre, behold how the providence of God ordered the very enemies of Jesus to bear witness to his resurrection! Some of chief note and authority among the soldiers, who were appointed to watch the sepulchre, went into *Jerusalem*, and acquainted the chief priests how terribly they had been frightened with the earthquake, and with the appearance of an angel; and that the stone was rolled away from the mouth of the sepulchre, and the body of Jesus was gone.

12 Upon this, the chief priests and elders met together, and instead of yielding to conviction, and repenting of their horrible crime in crucifying Christ, they were so desperately hardened in their wickedness, that they consulted how to sham the evidence; in order to which, covetous as they were, they spared no cost, but bribed the soldiers with a great sum of huth money, and put a ridiculous lie into their mouths, saying,

13 "Conceal the account of what ye saw and heard, and give it out, that, while ye happened to fall asleep, the disciples of Jesus came in the night, and stole his body away: Little considering that this story confuted itself, since, if they were all asleep, they could not know what was doing in the mean time; and if any of them were awake, they would soon have alarmed the rest, and prevented such an attempt.

14 And that the soldiers might venture to make this

come to the governor's ears, we will persuade him, and secure you.

this report, without fear of punishment for their neglect of duty, in sleeping while they were upon guard, the chief priests and elders, who, had this story been true, would have been the forwardest of all others to get them severely punished, promised, that, in case it should reach *Pilate's* ears, and he should go about to call them to an account for it, they would undertake to stand their friends, would use all their interest with him, which was very great, to pass it by, and would certainly save them harmless.

15 So they took the money, and did as they were taught: and this saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day.

15 Accordingly the soldiers, who had lately seen what an ascendancy they had over him in the prosecution of Jesus, accepted the bribe, and strictly obeyed these orders, though they had been so terrified just before at the earthquake, and vision of the angel: And this senseless story of the disciples stealing away the body of Jesus by night, was so industriously propagated, and encouraged by the sanhedrim, and the unbelieving *Jews*, that it became a common report among them for many years, though they never attempted to prove it upon the disciples, or to prosecute them on that account, or to object this to them, when they came to preach a risen Saviour.

16 Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them.

16 While these things were transacting at *Jerusalem*, the eleven apostles followed their instructions, and took a long journey to a mountain in *Galilee* †, where Jesus had appointed a general rendezvous of his disciples, that he might shew himself to them all together.

17 And when they saw him, they worshipped him: but some doubted.

17 And, when they saw him, they knew him to be the very same person whom they had used to converse with before his death; and being thereby satisfied of the truth of his resurrection, and of all that he had ever said of himself as the Son of God, and the Saviour of *Israel*. they, in a solemn manner, paid divine worship to him: but there were some among them, whose faith, at first, was weak and wavering, and who could not immediately persuade themselves that he was risen from the dead.

18 And Jesus came, and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto

18 And Jesus, for their further satisfaction, drew near, and speaking to the apostles in a familiar, though authoritative manner, said, God, my Father, has now fully veiled me in all the powers of my office,

N O T E.

† This was most probably mount *Tabor*, where he had been before transfigured; and it seems to have been here that he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once. 1 Cor. xv. 6.

unto me in heaven
and in earth.

19 Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost ;

20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you : and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

fice, as the Messiah ; he has given me, under that character, universal and absolute authority over all persons and things, both in heaven and earth, as the reward of my sufferings, and in pursuance of my great design of *giving eternal life to as many as he has given me.* (John xvii. 2.)

19 Go ye therefore, spread yourselves abroad by virtue of my commission, and with a dependence on my power and grace ; and disciple all the nations of the earth, *Gentiles* as well as *Jews*, by preaching the gospel to them wherever ye go ; introduce them as subjects into my kingdom †, and as scholars into my school, by a sacred rite of mine own appointment, to be continued through the gospel-dispensation, baptizing them with water *in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*, i. e. baptizing them by the authority, and into the faith, profession, and worship, of the eternal Father, Son, and Spirit, to whom they are to be devoted equally, and alike, as three divine Persons, and the one God of the Christian religion, whose name, answerable to their nature, is one, in opposition to all other Gods.

20 And further, to complete their discipleship, lead them into the full extent of their privileges and obligations, according to my gospel ; teaching them to observe, and (*την*) carefully to preserve, in faith and practice, all the doctrines and duties, both moral and positive, and none but those, which I have given you in charge to make known to them, and to enjoin upon them : And though, as to my corporal presence, I am leaving this world, and going to the Father ; yet, while ye thus keep close to my commission, as God was with *Moses*, so am I, by my spiritual presence, with you, and will be so at all times, wherever ye may be, to protect, counsel, assist, and succeed you ; and I will continue to be present with you, and your successors, in the gospel-ministry, through all ages, to the end of the world :

So

N O T E.

† It seems some, that *μαθητευσαι παντα τα εθνη*, *disciple all nations*, relates to the whole design of Christ's commission for making disciples to him ; and that *βαπτισουσιν*, and *διδασκουσιν αυτους*, *baptizing*, and *teaching them*, are mentioned as particular branches of that general design, the order of which was to be determined by the circumstances of things : And these, indeed, made it necessary, that, in discipling adult *Jews* and *Hea-*

thens, they should be taught before they were baptized : But other circumstances, in the settled state of the gospel-kingdom, make it as necessary, that, in discipling the children of believers, they should be first baptized, and afterwards taught, as the children of *Jews*, and of profelytes to their religion, were first circumcised, and when they grew up, were instructed in the faith of the God of *Israel*.

So it shall be *; and so let all faithful ministers expect it to be, as they cannot but desire that it may be.

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

As Christ was delivered for our offences, so he was raised again for our justification. His resurrection was as evident as could be necessary: God himself bore witness to it by a miraculous earthquake; angels and men, friends and enemies, who could not be deceived in so plain a case, united in their testimony to it; and nothing but the most silly, loose, and self-contradictious pretence, for want of a better, was ever offered against it, by the most inveterate enemies of that age, among the *Jews*: Yea, the backwardness of Christ's own disciples to give credit to it, till their unbelief was overcome by irresistible evidence, is a further confirmation of it. The unquestionable proof of this fact is a high demonstration that the whole scheme of Christian religion is divine; that all the glorious characters, offices, and powers, which Christ ever claimed, were his due; that God's justice is satisfied; and that our faith and hope may be securely placed in him: This is the safety and joy of them who seek Jesus; but will be the terror and confusion of his enemies.—How happy are they whom Christ will own for his brethren! How gracious are his visits, how rich his consolations to them under all their troubles! and how mercifully does he condescend, even to the most doubting among them! On the other hand, to what surprising lengths of folly and hardness, wickedness and falsehood, do they run, who set themselves against him, and are abandoned of him!—But behold the blessed tidings of gospel-grace to sinners of all ranks and nations! The crucified and risen Jesus has all power in his hands for saving work; and has sent forth his servants with his commission to proclaim it, and with his promise to assist, and succeed them in it: Let them observe his charge, and hope in his word; and let their hearers learn, and yield to his authority, look for his presence in the ways of his own appointment, and devote themselves and theirs to the sacred Three, as the one eternal God, in whose name they ought to be baptized; and let us all fall down and worship him, saying, Amen.

N O T E.

* It is uncertain whether *Amen* be Christ's or the evangelist's word; and therefore the paraphrase takes in the sense which both the suppositions require.

A P R A C T I C A L

A PRACTICAL EXPOSITION

OF THE EVANGELIST MARK,

IN THE FORM OF A PARAPHRASE.

C H A P. I.

John the Baptist's office, 1,—8. Christ's baptism, 9,—11. His temptation and preaching, 12,—15. His calling disciples, 16,—20. The people's astonishment at his doctrine, 21, 22. His miracles, in curing a possessed man, 23,—28. ; and Peter's mother-in-law, with all that came to him, 29,—39. ; and a leper, 40,—45.

TEXT.

THE beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ the Son of God ;

2 As it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.

3 The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

4 John did baptize in the wilderness,

PARAPHRASE.

THIS sacred history begins with an account of the doctrine of Jesus Christ, the anointed Saviour, who was the only begotten Son of God ;

2 The ushering in of whose appearance and preaching was by the ministry of *John the Baptist*, according to ancient predictions of the prophets : For *Malachi* represents God the Father as speaking of him, and saying, (chap. iii. 1.) *Behold, I send my messenger*, whose special office, like that of a fore-runner, is, to go just before thee ; (meaning the Messiah) *and he*, by his doctrine and baptism, *shall prepare the way* for thy appearing. (See the note on *Matt. xi. 10.*)

3 And the evangelical prophet *Isaiah*, long before, speaking of the same person, said, (chap. xl. 3.) *The voice of one*, who will hereafter *cry in the wilderness*, shall be in this manner, " Let my doctrine and baptism be entertained, relating to the Messiah's kingdom, that ye may be ready to receive him, who is the Lord Jehovah, and is just at hand to appear in the flesh among you ; and that ye may lay aside the perverse prejudices which would oppose his access to your hearts."

4 According to these prophecies, *John the Baptist* began his ministry in the less populous parts of *Judea*,

ness, and preach the baptism of repentance, for the remission of sins.

5 And there went out unto him all the land of Judea, and they of Jerusalem, and were all baptized of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins.

6 And John was clothed with camels hair, and with a girdle of a skin about his loins: and he did eat locusts and wild honey:

7 And preached, saying, There cometh one mightier than I after me; the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose.

8 I indeed have baptized you with water: but he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost.

9 And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth

Judea, (Mat. iii. 1.) a little before Christ was to enter on his public office; and he preached to the people the doctrine of repentance, upon the encouragement of the approaching dispensation of grace, in order to their obtaining forgiveness of sins, through the Saviour, who was coming to set up his kingdom among them; he likewise baptized them with water, that he might signify all this by a visible sign, might lay the baptized under a special obligation of regarding it, and might raise their hopes of finding mercy in this way.

5 And the general expectation of the Messiah's appearing in those days brought vast multitudes to him, from all the cities, towns, and villages of Judea, and from Jerusalem itself; and all that professed repentance for their sins, were publicly baptized by him in the river called Jordan, they going a little way into its shallows, for the greater convenience and expedition of John's applying the water to them. (See the note on Mat. iii. 6.)

6 Now this John lived and behaved answerable to the doctrine he preached: He wore the habit of a mortified prophet, which was a coarse garment made of camels hair, and was girt about his waist with a leathern girdle; and his common diet was of the meanest sort, such as locusts and wild honey, which were plentifully found in that wilderness. (See the note on Mat. iii. 4.)

7 And the great point he aimed at in his preaching, was to assure the people, that not he himself, but another, then ready to appear, was the promised and expected Messiah, saying, There is one of far superior authority, power, and dignity to myself, whose forerunner I am, with whom I do not deserve to be once compared, and for whom I am utterly unworthy to perform even the meanest offices, such as untying his shoes, or carrying them after him: And as his person, so his administrations are every way more excellent than mine.

8 I indeed am come to baptize you with water, as an external sign of inward purity; and this is all that I can do: but the incomparably more excellent Person, who comes after me, shall baptize many of you with an efficacious effusion of the Holy Spirit, to confirm his doctrine, and to sanctify and cleanse you from your iniquities.

9 While John was in this manner preaching and baptizing, Jesus himself took an opportunity of coming from the place of his usual abode in Nazareth, a city of Galilee, and was baptized by him at Jordan,

reth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan.

10 And straight-way coming up out of the water; he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon him.

11 And there came a voice from heaven, saying Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

12 And immediately the Spirit driveth him into the wilderness.

13 And he was there in the wilderness forty days tempted of Satan, and was with the wild beasts, and the angels ministered unto him.

14 Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God,

15 And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.

dan, (* *ως του Ισραηλ*) that he might fulfil all righteousness by an entire compliance with every ordinance of God.

10 And immediately, as he was coming up the ascent from the water, (*απο του υδατος*) he beheld the heavens parted asunder, as when it lighteneth, and the Holy Spirit coming down, and hovering over his head like a dove, (*ωστι περιστεραν*) to distinguish him from all others, by a special miraculous testimony of God's favour from heaven, and in token of his being then anointed with the Holy Ghost. (See the note on *Mat. iii. 16.*)

11 And, together with this extraordinary appearance, there was an audible voice, directed to Christ, from the excellent glory, saying, Thou art, by way of eminence and peculiarity, my dearly beloved Son, in whose person and undertakings I am greatly delighted, and in whom I graciously accept all that believe in thee, being well pleased with thee for thine own sake, and with all that are in thee, for thy sake too.

12 Presently after he was thus baptized, and owned, and filled with the Holy Ghost, this good Spirit moved him, by a powerful impulse, to retire into a still less inhabited part of the wilderness.

13 And he continued there forty days and forty nights, assaulted with various temptations of Satan, which he overcame; and surrounded with savage beasts, of which he remained unhurt; and at length the blessed angels, who are his servants, came to congratulate him upon his glorious victories, and to supply him with proper food, after his great conflicts and long fasting. (*Matth. iv. 2.*)

14 While *John the Baptist* continued publicly to exercise his ministry, our Lord shewed himself but little to the world: But as soon as *Herod* had shut up *John* in prison, and stopped his mouth, Jesus would not suffer the word of God to be bound; but came himself into *Galilee*, publishing, through all that country, the holy gospel of the spiritual kingdom, which he was come to set up in the world.

15 And, to shew the harmony between his own and *John's* ministry, he began with saying, The set time appointed of God, promised to the fathers, predicted by the prophets, pointed out by *John*, expected by the *Jews*, and longed for by the faithful in *Israel*, is now come, for the manifestation of the Messiah: The Judaical rites and ceremonies, carnal ordi-

N O T E.

* The preposition *ως* very commonly signifies *as* as well as *in*.

ordinances, and worldly sanctuary, are in a little while to cease; and a spiritual, holy, and heavenly kingdom is to be set up, in all its purity and glory, as the last dispensation of mercy to sinful men: According, therefore, to the design, and by the grace of this kingdom, which can never be moved, repent of your violations of God's law, and of all your false confidences in yourselves; and embrace the blessed doctrine of salvation, by believing in me, as made known therein, for the remission of your sins, and obtaining eternal life.

16 Now as he walked by the sea of Galilee, he saw Simon, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: (For they were fishers.)

17 And Jesus said unto them, Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men.

18 And straightway they forsook their nets, and followed him.

19 And when he had gone a little further thence, he saw James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, who also were in the ship mending their nets.

20 And straightway he called them: and they left their father Zebedee in the ship with the hired servants, and went after him.

16 Now as he was travelling about to preach the gospel, and was passing by the lake of *Genesareth*, he took notice of two men, *Simon* and *Andrew*, who were brethren, and, being fishermen, were casting their net into the lake. (See the note on *Luke v. 2.*)

17 And Jesus, designing to make them apostles, spake to them, saying, Follow me, by submitting to my authority, embracing my doctrine, and imitating my example; and I will employ you in a more excellent and noble work than that of catching fish out of the sea; ye shall have the honour and the pleasure of fishing for immortal souls, and of being instrumental in drawing them out of a state of sin and misery into an estate of salvation.

18 And his words were with such power, that they, in obedience to his call, immediately left their fishing trade, and became not only his disciples*, but, from that time forward, his constant attendants, devoted to his service for the good of souls.

19 Then, going a little further, he observed two more, who were likewise fishermen and brethren, viz. *James* and *John*, the sons of *Zebedee*, who were also employed in their secular trade, being in a boat mending their nets.

20 And he spake in like manner with divine energy to their hearts, by which he made them a willing people: And immediately, without conferring with flesh and blood, or consulting their temporal interests, they, leaving their father *Zebedee* and the hired servants in the boat, and giving up all the profits of their trade, went a-shore, and became Christ's constant followers, to receive his instructions, and do his will.

21 All

N O T E.

* They had believed in him, and on occasions followed him, as his disciples before; *John i. 40, 41, 42.* But now they were called to be his constant fol-

lowers, in order to his training them up for the apostleship; and, therefore, they quitted their secular business, and devoted themselves entirely to his service.

21 And they went into Capernaum; and straightway on the Sabbath day he entered into the synagogue, and taught.

22 And they were astonished at his doctrine: for he taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes.

23 And there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit, and he cried out,

24 Saying, Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the holy One of God.

25 And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him.

26 And when the unclean spirit had torn him, and cried with a loud voice, he came out of him.

27 And they were all amazed, inasmuch that they

21 All these went along with Jesus, as his disciples, to *Capernaum*; and the first Sabbath after they entered that great city, he went into one of their synagogues, or places of public worship, and preached the gospel of his kingdom there. (See the note on *Luke* iv. 16.)

22 And the common people were amazed at the excellence of his discourse: For such was the nature of his doctrine, and the manner of his delivering it, that they thought he spoke evident and important things, with surprising majesty and divine-like authority, and not uncertain traditions, according to the trifling, formal custom of their rabbies.

23 Now, among others in the synagogue, there was a man possessed of an evil spirit, which gave our blessed Lord a proper opportunity of confirming his glorious gospel, by a remarkable miracle; for the devil, making use of this man's organs of speech, cried out aloud, like one filled with consternation and terror, at the thoughts of Christ's power over him,

24 Saying, in a style of reproach, and yet in a way of dread, O thou Jesus of *Nazareth*, do not exert thy power against us, the infernal spirits, to disturb or dispossess us; we are no match for thee, and do not care to have any thing to do with thee; What! art thou come to destroy our dominion over men, which we have so long been in possession of, and are still permitted to exercise in this world? I too well know, that thou art the Messiah, the Son of God, and am contented to own this, if thou wilt but let us alone.

25 But, as Jesus would not be soothed by the devil's flatteries, nor receive testimony from him, as if he were in confederacy with him, he exerted his divine power and authority; and, with a severe reprimand, ordered him to say no more about what he was, but to quit possession of the man, though ever so much against his will.

26 The evil spirit no sooner heard this, but was filled with rage to think that he must be forced to yield; and, immediately throwing the poor man into terrible convulsions, as if he would have torn him to pieces, he made a hideous outcry, to express his own reluctance, and to frighten the people; and so came out of the man, who, in that instant, was perfectly healed.

27 And all the multitude were struck with astonishment to such a degree, that they could not forbear saying one to another, What a surprising power over

questioned among themselves, saying, What thing is this? what new doctrine is this? for with authority commandeth he even the unclean spirits, and they do obey him.

28 And immediately his fame spread abroad throughout all the region round about Galilee.

29 And forthwith, when they were come out of the synagogue, they entered into the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John.

30 But Simon's wife's mother lay sick of a fever, and anon they tell him of her.

31 And he came and took her by the hand, and lift her up: and immediately the fever left her, and she ministred unto them.

32 And at even, when the sun did set, they brought unto him all that were diseased, and them that were possessed with devils.

33 And all the city was gathered together at the door.

34 And he healed many that were sick of divers diseases, and cast out many

over devils is this? And what divine and heavenly doctrine must it be which this Person teaches beyond all that we ever heard, and which he thus confirms beyond all that we ever saw before? For he does not pray like a dependent, nor use a great many ceremonies like our exorcists, in casting out evil spirits; but speaks like a sovereign, with the authority and majesty of a God; and such power goes along with his commanding words, that the devils themselves are forced to obey him!

28 And this so wonderfully raised his reputation among them, that they presently spread the fame of his extraordinary doctrine and miracles, through all *Galilee*, and the neighbouring countries round about.

29 Immediately after this, Jesus coming out of the synagogue with his disciples *Peter* and *Andrew*, *James* and *John*, they went into the house, at *Capernaum*, where *Peter* and his brother *Andrew* dwelt.

30 And *Peter's* wife's mother being at that time sick of a fever, some of the company acquainted Jesus with it, begging that he, who had done so great things for others, would please to shew his compassion in healing her. (*Luke* iv. 38.)

31 Thereupon, going into the room where she lay, he took hold of her hand, and raised her up; and his divine power wrought so effectually at the same time, that the fever immediately ceased, and she was in an instant restored to such a degree of health and strength, that she went about the business of the house, and managed the entertainment which was made for him and the family, as if nothing had ailed her before.

32 And after sun setting, when the Sabbath was ended, according to the *Jewish* way of computing it from evening to evening; the people then thinking themselves at liberty to carry about their sick, and meeting with no obstruction to it from the *Pharisees*, brought abundance of diseased persons, and such as were possessed with devils, that he might heal them.

33 And there was a vast concourse of people from all parts of the city, who were gathered about the door of *Peter's* house, where Jesus was, to lay their sick before him, and see what he would do unto them.

34 And in the greatness of his power and goodness, he, like the sovereign Lord of life and health, perfectly cured great multitudes, that were sick of various kinds of diseases; and dispossessed many devils,

many devils, and suffered not the devils to speak, because they knew him.

35 And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed.

36 And Simon, and they that were with him, followed after him.

37 And when they had found him, they said unto him, All men seek for thee.

38 And he said unto them, Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also: for therefore came I forth.

39 And he preached in their synagogues throughout all Galilee, and cast out devils.

40 And there came a leper to him, beseeching him, and kneeling down to him, and saying unto him, If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.

41 And Jesus, moved with compassion, put forth his hand, and touched him, and saith unto him, I will, be thou clean:

vils, and would not permit those evil spirits to speak in a way of opposition to him, no, nor to proceed in their declarations that they knew him, (*οτι ηδυνασαν αυτου*) he not needing their testimony, nor being willing to encourage it, lest any should make a bad construction of it, as if he acted in concert with them.

35 Very early the following morning, long before break of day, Christ got up, and went into a solitary place for retirement; where, being alone, free from all company, he spent some time in secret prayer. (See the note on *Luke iv. 42.*)

36 Then Peter and the other disciples, his companions, perceiving that Jesus had withdrawn himself, went out to search after him.

37 And upon their finding him, they told him that, whilst he was retiring there, a great multitude of people were inquiring after him, with earnest desire to see him again, and enjoy more of his blessed company.

38 He replied, I must not, for the present, return to abide with them; come with me to the neighbouring towns and villages, where I may likewise preach the gospel, as well as at *Capernaum*: For my commission from my Father is not restrained to one particular city, but I am sent to go about doing good, by my doctrine and miracles, whilst I continue on earth.

39 Accordingly he, travelling through all *Galilee*, preached in their synagogues, wherever he came; and confirmed his excellent doctrine, by casting out devils, as well as performing many other miraculous cures.

40 And among the rest, while he was in this country, (*Luke v. 12.* see the note there,) a certain leprous person came to him; and, kneeling down in all humility before him, earnestly besought his mercy, saying, Such is thy power, and so great and many are the wonderful cures which thou hast wrought, that I am fully persuaded, desperate as my case is, if it seem good unto thee, thou canst easily heal me.

41 And Jesus, being full of tender compassion toward this miserable creature, immediately stretched out his hand, and laid it upon him, to shew that he was a prophet, and even Lord of the law, who was not bound by its ceremonial rites, which forbid the touching of a leper; and said unto him, I am as willing as I am able, or as you can wish me to be: I will that your desire be fulfilled; I say unto thee, Be thou cleansed from thy leprosy.

42 These

42 And as soon as he had spoken, immediately the leprosy departed from him, and he was cleansed.

43 And he straitly charged him, and forthwith sent him away;

44 And saith unto him, See thou say nothing to any man; but go thy way, shew thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing those things which Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them.

45 But he went out, and began to publish it much, and to blaze abroad the matter, insomuch that Jesus could no more openly enter into the city, but was without in desert places: - and they came to him from every quarter.

42 These words were no sooner pronounced, but they became effectual; what he spake was done; in that very instant the leprosy was removed, and the man was thoroughly healed.

43 Upon this, Jesus gave him a strict charge to behave suitable to the signal mercy he had received, lest a worse evil, than the leprosy from which he was cleansed, should come upon him; and so dismissed him.

44 And, to decline every thing that looked like ostentation, or raising a tumult, as also to prevent the rage and envy of the *Pbarisees*, as far as possible, Jesus said to him, Do not divulge among the people what I have done to you; but, as the law directs, (*Lev. xiii. 2, &c.*) go and present yourself to the priest, that he may examine and give judgment in your case; and, upon his acknowledging you to be clean, offer the sacrifice of divine appointment, in the writings of *Moses* for purification, in token of your thankfulness to God. (*Lev. xiv. 4, &c.*) He commanded him to take this course, as an unexceptionable evidence to the *Jews* of the reality of the miracle, of his own divine power in working it, and of his observing the law of *Moses*; and as a testimony against them who afterwards should reject him.

45 But the man was so transported with joy at the surprising mercy he had received, that, forgetting one part of Christ's charge, he could not tell how to forbear proclaiming the cure, wherever he came, for the honour of his kind Benefactor, who was indeed worthy to be praised. And the people, upon knowing of it, came in such prodigious multitudes to see, and hear, and be healed by Jesus, (*Luke v. 15.*) that, for a considerable time, it was so inconvenient for him to go publicly into any town, and gave so much umbrage to his enemies, as put him upon retiring into solitary places, where he spent much of his time in prayer, (*Luke v. 16.*) but wherever the people heard he was, they travelled from all parts, far and near, to come to him.

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

The law and the prophets were till *John*, whose ministry was the dawn of the gospel-day; O glorious day of light and joy to lost sinners! The sum of the evangelical doctrine concerning Christ is, that he is the anointed Saviour, and the Son of God; and the sum of what it calls us to is, repentance toward God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ. How fully are these blessed truths established by many witnesses! By Christ's own and *John's* preaching; by his Father's testimony, his Spirit's notification, and his own divine miracles, and baptizing with the Holy Ghost; by his victory over Satan; by angels ministering to him; and by the concurring testimony of the evangelists, who agree in their report about these things! And the great design of all is, to prepare the way of the Lord, that he may be received into the heart. How is he to be admired of all that are about him!

They, that know his name, will think well of him, and follow hard after him. And oh with what majesty and power does he speak, by his word and Spirit! How easily can he reach the heart, dethrone the devil, and heal the leprosy and sicknesses of our souls! How cheerfully do his people yield, and how is Satan forced to fly, in the day of his power! Nothing is too hard for him to do: And we need not go far to seek him now, as many were forced to do in the days of his flesh; but may find him spiritually present wherever we are, whether engaged in the lawful business of life, as the disciples were when he called them; or in secret prayer, after his own example; or in assemblies together in his name, to speak to him, and hear from him: And we should follow him for whatever we want; for faith will ever find him as willing, as he is able to help us: And when he has shewn us mercy, how should we remember to own and honour him, by obeying his commands!

C H A P. II.

Jesus heals one sick of the palsy, 1,—12. Calls Matthew from the receipt of custom, and vindicates his own conduct in eating with publicans and sinners, 13,—17. Justifies his disciples not fasting for the present, 18,—22.; and their plucking ears of corn on the Sabbath-day, 23,—28.

TEXT.

AND again he entered into Capernaum, after some days, and it was noised that he was in the house.

2 And straight-way many were gathered together, insomuch that there was no room to receive them, no not to much as about the door: and he preached the word unto them.

3 And they come unto him, bringing one sick of the palsy, which was borne of four.

4 And when they could not come nigh unto him for the press, they uncovered the roof where he was:

PARAPHRASE.

OUR blessed Lord, having continued for some time in places remote from populous towns, privately returned to Capernaum; but a rumour was soon spread through the city, that he was come to the house of Peter, where he had been before. (Chap. i. 29.)

2 And presently crowds of people flocked thither; so that not only the house was too little to contain them, but many could not so much as get near to the door: And Christ, making no distinction of places for religious worship, published the gospel to as many of them as could come within hearing.

3 And while he was preaching, his miracles having made him very famous, there came four men, carrying upon their shoulders a paralytic in his bed, whose distemper had so lamed and enfeebled him, that he was unable to help himself.

4 And finding the crowd so great, that there was no possibility of pressing through it, and in that way to get near to Jesus, they contrived another method to come at him: And, in the eagerness of their desire to obtain a cure, they spared no pains; but † got up on the outside of the house, and uncovered

N O T E.

† As the houses of the Jews were usually low-built, with a flat roof, and they often had stairs, or fixed ladders, on the outside; so, for the convenience of going up and down within side of the house, they, it seems, had a trap-door, or

a lattice with a covering (2 Kings i. 2.) on the flat of the roof: And so the friends of this sick man might carry him up thither, and, forcing open the door, which was fastened within, might convey him through this break of the roof, into the room

was: and when they had broken it up, they let down the bed wherein the sick of the palsy lay.

5 When Jesus saw their faith, he said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, thy sins be forgiven thee.

6 But there were certain of the scribes sitting there, and reasoning in their hearts.

7 Why doth this man thus speak blasphemies? who can forgive sins but God only?

8 And immediately, when Jesus perceived in his spirit, that they so reasoned within themselves, he said unto them, Why reason ye these things in your hearts?

9 Whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk?

10 But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (he saith to the sick of the palsy,)

11 I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house.

vered the top of it, and then let down the sick man in his bed through the roof, into the room where our blessed Lord was preaching to the multitude.

5 When Christ perceived the extraordinary faith of the paralytic, and of his friends, that broke through such great difficulties, and proceeded with such resolution, to lay him at his feet for healing; he, to shew his approbation of it, said, with wonderful majesty and mercy, to the man sick of the palsy, Son, be of good comfort, thy sins are forgiven; and it shall be unto thee according to thy faith.

6 But, as soon as he spake these gracious words, some of the *Jewish* doctors, then present, perversely cavilled in their own minds, reasoning after this manner against them:

7 What horrid blasphemy is this man guilty of, in pretending to such a power as is undoubtedly the peculiar prerogative of Deity! For who but God himself, can forgive sins? It is only his right, which cannot be communicated to any creature whatsoever.

8 Then Jesus, as perfectly knowing in himself what were the most secret murmurings of their hearts, as if they had spoke them out ever so plainly in his hearing, immediately said to them, Why do ye entertain such injurious and malicious reasonings in your thoughts against me, as if I were guilty of blasphemy in saying this?

9 Let me ask you, Which is easiest? to forgive this man's sins, that are the original cause of all distempers; or to take off their effect, by healing his desperate disease, and, by an absolute power in myself, enabling him to rise and walk with such strength as to carry his own bed? Cannot he who does one of these, as easily do the other likewise?

10, 11 But, to give you an evident proof that I, who am truly a man, and the promised Messiah, have absolute power and authority in myself, even whilst I am on earth, to forgive sins, I will take off this effect of sin, in such a sovereign manner as is peculiar to God: Then, turning to the man sick of the palsy, he spoke in the following strain, with all the majesty and power of a divine person, I say unto thee, Arise this instant; and, to shew that thou art perfectly healed at once, take up thy bed, in the presence of all this company, and carry it home.

N O T E.

room where Jesus was preaching to the people. See the notes on *Matt. x. 27.* and *xxiv. 17.*; and *Lightf. Hor. Hebr. in loc.*

home. (See the notes on *Mat. ix. 2.* and *Luke v. 23.*)

12 And immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went forth before them all, inasmuch that they were all amazed, and glorified God, saying, We never saw it on this fashion.

12 And he no sooner commanded, but it was done : The man immediately arose in full strength, took up his bed, and carried it away, pressing through the crowd. (*σπασσας παρτω*) And Christ managed this cure in such an absolute god-like way, as astonished all the people, who could not but own that there was something divine in his words and actions ; upon which they gave glory to God, with acknowledgments that they never saw any thing like it before ; though, through their prejudices, they did not readily comprehend how by this proof it appeared that he was God.

13 And he went forth again by the sea-side, and all the multitude resorted unto him, and he taught them.

13 After this, Jesus went out of *Capernaum* again to the shore of the lake of *Gennesareth* ; and great multitudes flocked to him there, where he as readily preached the gospel to them, without any scruple, as if he had been in one of their synagogues.

14 And as he passed by, he saw Levi, the son of Alpheus, sitting at the receipt of custom ; and said unto him, Follow me. And he arose and followed him.

14 And, walking by the sea-side, he observed a certain man in his way, whose name was *Levi* †, the Son of *Alpheus*, and who was sitting at the toll-booth to receive the tribute that was to be paid for importations and exportations ; and, though he was in an office of ill repute, Christ, to shew the riches and the sovereignty of his grace, said to him, Follow me : And these words were attended with such a divine power upon his soul, that he immediately quitted his scandalous, though profitable post, and became one of the disciples and constant followers of our Lord.

15 And it came to pass, that as Jesus sat at meat in his house, many publicans and sinners sat also together with Jesus and his disciples : for there were many, and they followed him.

15 And, this man's heart being moved with pity towards his former sinful companions, he invited them, together with Jesus and his disciples, to an entertainment at his house, that they might have the advantage of hearing and conversing with him : And such was the gracious condescension of our Lord, that, when he and his disciples sat down to eat, he admitted of many tax-gatherers, and other men of ill character, to sit and eat with him.

16 And when the scribes and Pharisees saw him eat with publicans and sinners, they said unto his disciples, How is it that he eateth and drinketh

16 And when this was observed by some of the *Jewish* doctors and *Pharisees*, who were men of a self-conceited and censorious spirit, they took offence at it, and disputed with his disciples about it, saying, How can your master, who pretends to be a holy prophet, justify his so familiarly keeping company with such detestable people, as tax-gather-

ers,

N O T E.

† *Levi* is called *Matthew* ; (*Matt. ix. 9.*) and all circumstances shew, that they were two names which belonged to the same person, as *Saul* was also called *Paul*.

eth with publicans and sinners?

17 When Jesus heard it, he saith unto them, They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

18 And the disciples of John and of the Pharisees used to fast; and they come, and say unto him, Why do the disciples of John and of the Pharisees fast, but thy disciples fast not?

19 And Jesus said unto them, Can the children of the bride-chamber fast, while the bridegroom is with them? as long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast.

20 But the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken away

ers, and the vilest of men, whom we refuse to converse with, that we may not be defiled by them.

17 But Jesus, hearing how invidiously they charged him, replied, I am not a companion of sinners, to countenance them in their wickedness, but a spiritual Physician to heal them? And they who, like you, have a vain conceit of their own righteousness, as if they needed no better, will not value one of my character as of any use to themselves; but they who, like these notorious sinners, have no such opinion of themselves, are more easily brought to a conviction of their sin, and of their need of a Saviour. Now the principle design of my coming was not to reform a righteous world; nor is my gospel likely to be effectual among those who think they are holy enough already; but I am come to bring them to repentance unto life who are the greatest of sinners, and are sensible of their sin and danger, and would be glad of a recovery.

18 There were, likewise, exceptions made against Christ by some disciples of *John the Baptist*, and of the *Pharisees*, who, under their respective teachers, had been trained up to frequent fastings †. They, wondering that the followers of Jesus were not under some austere discipline, came and asked him, saying, What is the reason that, notwithstanding the solemn doctrines you preach, your disciples are not ordered to keep days of fasting, as we do, in obedience to the obligations laid upon us severally?

19 In answer to this, Jesus said, I am, as *John* himself declared concerning me, (*John* iii. 29.) the spiritual Bridegroom to whom the church is espoused; and my disciples are, at present, to be considered as the children of the bride-chamber, or the guests of the marriage-feast, that are to rejoice with me: How improper, then, would it be for these, my wedding-guests, to be dull in my immediate presence, and to fast on these joyful days? It would be very unseasonable for them to do this, whilst I am with them under that character.

20 But, in a little while, I shall depart from them, and they will be exposed to many difficulties and troubles; and then will be their time for solemn humiliation and fasting, as it now is for those

N O T E.

† The *Pharisees*, besides such fasts as were of divine institution, added many others of traditional, and of their own appointment; and placed so much religion in them, that one of that sect vainly boasted of his *fasting twice a-week*,

Luke xviii. 12. And as *John the Baptist* betook himself to an austere, abstemious way of life; so his disciples multiplied fasts, in imitation of their master, and of the custom of the *Pharisees*.

way from them, and then shall they fast in those days.

21 No man also seweth a piece of new cloth on an old garment; else the new piece that filled it up, taketh away from the old, and the rent is made worse.

22 And no man putteth new wine into old bottles, else the new wine doth burst the bottles, and the wine is spilled, and the bottles will be marred: but new wine must be put into new bottles.

23 And it came to pass, that he went through the corn-fields on the Sabbath-day, and his disciples began, as they went, to pluck the ears of corn.

24 And the Pharisees said unto him, Behold, why do they on the Sabbath-day that which is not lawful?

25 And he said unto them, Have ye never read what David did, when he had need, and was an hungred, he, and they that were with him?

of you that are the disciples of *John*, your master being lately taken away from you, shut up in prison, and in danger of his life.

21, 22 But for them to keep days of fasting in their present circumstances, would be as unsuitable as to go about to mend an old rotten garment with a piece of new cloth, which would look uncomely, and the first stretch would make a bigger hole than before: (See the note on *Mat. ix. 16.*) Or it would be as improper as to put new fermenting wine into old and decaying bottles, made of † leather or of skins, (*αρξους*) which endangers the bursting of the vessels, and the loss of the wine; but, in common prudence, people use to put new wine into new and strong bottles, that both may be preserved. So religious fastings are to be suited to the circumstances of things, and to proper seasons and occasions for them; or else you lose all their excellence and advantage, and do more harm than good by them: And days of mourning and fasting would be as disagreeable to the present joyful circumstances of my disciples, whilst I, the Bridegroom, am with them, as the holy liberty and spiritual comforts of the gospel are to the servile temper and taste both of the *Pharisees* and of *John's* disciples.

23 At another time, as our Lord, on a Sabbath-day, was walking in a path that lay through a corn field, (see the note on *Luke vi. 1.*) his disciples were with him; and being hungry, plucked some of the ears, and, rubbing out the corn with their hands, began to eat it for present refreshment.

24 As soon as the superstitious and captious *Pharisees* observed this, they cavilled with Christ about it, as a violation of the Sabbath, saying, See what your disciples are doing: Why do you, who pretend to preach holy doctrines, suffer them to take such a sinful liberty of profaning the Sabbath-day? (See the note on *Luke vi. 2.*)

25 To which Jesus replied, How can ye pretend that this is a breach of the Sabbath, since hunger must be satisfied, and works of necessity are allowed to take place even of God's own appointment of ceremonial rites, relating to the observation of his law, and much more of your human traditions about them? Have ye never read what *David* and his company did, in a case of like necessity?

26 Do

N O T E.

† Wine used to be put into vessels of goat-skins, for carriage from one place to another; and the bottles of those days were made of leather.

26 How he went into the house of God in the days of Abiathar the high priest, and did eat the shew-bread, which is not lawful to eat, but for the priests, and gave also to them which were with him?

27 And he said unto them, The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath:

28 Therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath.

26 Do not ye know how in the days of *Abiathar*, who soon after was high priest †, *David* went into the tabernacle, and he, together with his company, being hungry, eat of the shew-bread, which, in common cases, none but the priests were, by the law, allowed to eat? Why then do ye find fault with my disciples for such a trifle as plucking and eating a few ears of corn, to satisfy their hunger on the Sabbath-day? Surely necessity makes this as lawful as that, which neither God nor you have ever blamed.

27 And as this instance shews, that ceremonial circumstances, and especially the strained niceties of men about them, must give way to necessary duties of moral obligation: So it is to be remembered, that a great part of the morality of the Sabbath lay in its being made for the good of man; chiefly for the spiritual benefit of the soul, that it may be at liberty to serve God, and have holy communion with him; and partly for the relief of the body, that it may have rest from the fatiguing labour of the week: And it is plain, that, as man was created the day before the institution of the Sabbath, he was not made for the Sabbath, nor could be bound by its law to abstain from what is necessary to the support of his life.

28 † The Messiah therefore has undoubtedly a divine right to order what he thinks for the good of man, in subservience to the great design of a Sabbath; and my disciples are not to be blamed for using the liberty which I gave them, to eat a little corn, for the refreshment of the body, and fitting it for the holy services of the day. (See the note on *Mat. xii. 8.*)

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

What is the great design of all our attendances on Christ, but that we may honour him, and receive a blessing from him; that he may speak to our hearts, and give us

N O T E S.

† It appears from 1 *Sam. xxi. 6.* that this was in the days when *Abimelech*, the father of *Abiathar*, was high-priest: But as *Abiathar* was more noticed, and more remarkably concerned in *David's* affairs, than *Abimelech*, as appears from 1 *Sam. xxii. xxiii. and xxx.*; and as he, soon after this fact, became high-priest, and perhaps, at this very time, acted as his father's deputy in that office, it is no great wonder that it should be recited as done in his days, rather than in *Abimelech's*: And if we only admit of an easy supposition, that Christ here speaks of the days in which that more famous man was well

known, and not of the days of his high-priesthood, it seems to me, that all the laboured criticisms are needless, which many learned men have used, to rack this passage, and reconcile it to the history.

† By the *Son of man* some here understand man in general. But as this was a known character of the Messiah, *Dan. vii. 13.*; so it is constantly used, and that almost ninety times, by our Lord, with a peculiar reference to himself. This is a sufficient reason with me, why, in this place only, it should not be taken in another sense. See *Whitby's* note on *Mat. xii. 1.* and *Hammond's* on *Mat. xii. 8.*

us the faith which approves of him, and is approved of by him; and that he may heal all our diseases, and forgive our sins? His divine power and grace, for these purposes, are worthy of our admiration and praise: And humble souls, who by faith receive him, will prize and honour him, to their own salvation; while proud and prejudiced hearts are ever objecting against him, to their own perdition. He came to save the chief of sinners; and will reject none that see their need of him, and are willing to be saved in his own way. And oh with what wisdom and tenderness does he deal with his disciples! How beautiful are his appointments of every duty in its season; and how indulging is his proportioning our duties to our circumstances! He calls his followers sometimes to rejoice, and at others to fast and mourn; his presence fills them with joy, and his absence with grief: But as their day is, so their strength shall be: Let his word be our rule, and his authority our obligation, in observing sabbaths, and in all other duties of the Christian life: and let his grace make us prize his service, and encourage us in it, since all is designed for our own advantage.

C H A P. III.

Christ heals a withered hand, and many other diseases, 1,—12. Chuses twelve apostles, 13,—21. His answer to the blasphemous cavils of the scribes, 22,—30. And preferring his disciples to his nearest relations, 31,—35.

TEXT.

AND he entered again into the synagogue; and there was a man there which had a withered hand.

2 And they watched him, whether he would heal him on the Sabbath-day, that they might accuse him.

3 And he saith unto the man which had the withered hand, Stand forth.

4 And he saith unto them, Is it lawful to do good on the Sabbath-days, or to do evil? to save life, or to kill? but they held their peace.

PARAPHRASE.

OUR Lord returning to *Capernaum*, went again, (chap. i. 21. and ii. 1.) according to his usual custom, into the synagogue to preach on the Sabbath-day; and there was a certain man, whose hand was sinew-shrunk, and wasted to skin and bone.

2 And the *Pharisees*, suspecting that the melancholy circumstances of this man might move Christ's compassion toward him, had their eyes upon our Lord, to see whether he would go about to heal him, though it were the Sabbath-day; that if he should, they might accuse him as a Sabbath-breaker, who deserved to be put to death.

3 But (*καί*) Jesus knowing their malicious thoughts, and designing to vindicate such a merciful act from the false imputation of a breach of the Sabbath; ordered the man, whose hand was lame, to come forth from the company, and stand before him.

4 And turning himself to the *Pharisees*, he said, Pray answer me this plain question: Which is most pleasing to God, and most suitable to the design of a Sabbath? to do an act of necessity and mercy on that day, or to neglect it when opportunities and occasions offer for it; to preserve life and the usefulness of it, or to suffer a man to languish and die, when it might easily be prevented? (See the note on *Luke* vi. 9.) And they were so confounded with

with the question, being at a loss how to answer it, without either justifying him, or exposing themselves to the rage of the people, that they thought it best to make no reply at all.

5 And when he had looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts, he saith unto the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched it out: and his hand was restored whole as the other.

5 Then having cast his eyes about, and looked upon them, with holy anger in his countenance at their perverse and unreasonable opposition to him, and with grief at the obstinate blindness of their minds, and hardened temper of their hearts, he, in their hearing, applied himself to the cripple, ordering him to stretch forth his lame hand: And such divine power attended the word of command, that the poor wretch was instantly enabled to do it; and his withered hand became as sound, and plump, and well, as the other.

6 And the Pharisees went forth, and straightway took council with the Herodians against him, how they might destroy him.

6 Upon this the *Pharisees* being baffled, and vexed to think what credit he gained among the people, in spite of all their attempts to defame him, went and consulted with some of the *Herodian* sect, what pretence they might make, and what measures they might concert, with the greatest safety and success, for putting him to death.

7 But Jesus withdrew himself with his disciples to the sea: and a great multitude from Galilee followed him, and from Judea,

7 But Jesus, knowing their wicked design, and that the time for resigning his life was not come, left the city, and went with his disciples to the shore of the sea of *Galilee* †: And the common people had so high an esteem of him, that, having learned whither he was gone, vast numbers flocked after him from the countries of *Galilee*, and of *Judea*.

8 And from Jerusalem, and from Idumea, and from beyond Jordan; and they about Tyre and Sidon, a great multitude, when they had heard what great things he did, came unto him.

8 And great multitudes went to him from the city of *Jerusalem*, and even from so far as *Idumea*, and the regions beyond *Jordan*, and from the coasts of *Tyre* and *Sidon*; being induced to it by the fame of his great miracles, which was spread among them.

9 And he spake to his disciples, that a small ship should wait on him, because of the multitude, lest they should throng him.

9 And at length, the throng increasing, he ordered his disciples to provide him a boat, that he might have the convenience of going into it, and of putting off a little way from the shore; and so might preach to the people, without danger of being pressed, and incommoded by the crowd.

10 For he had healed many, insomuch that they pressed

10 For, since he had been at this place, he had cured so many of their diseases, that all who had any distempers made up to him as well as they could of themselves, or by the assistance of their friends, every one trying to get near enough to

L 1 2

touch

N O T E.

† From this lake or sea, which was about eight leagues in length, and five in breadth, *Galilee* lay toward the north; *Judea*, *Jerusalem*, and *Idumea*, toward the south; the parts beyond *Jordan*, toward the east; and *Tyre* and *Sidon*, toward the north-west.

pressed upon him for to touch him, as many as had plagues.

11 And unclean spirits, when they saw him, fell down before him, and cried, saying, Thou art the Son of God.

12 And he straightly charged them, that they should not make him known.

13 And he goeth up into a mountain, and calleth unto him whom he would: and they came unto him.

14 And he ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach:

15 And to have power to heal sicknesses, and to cast out devils.

16 And Simon he surnamed Peter,

17 And James the son of Zebedee, and John the brother of James, (and he surnamed them Boanerges, which is, The sons of thunder.)

18 And Andrew, and Philip, and

touch some part of his body or clothes, that they also might be healed, as they believed they should, if they could but touch him.

11 And such as were possessed by evil spirits, as soon as they saw him, prostrated themselves before him; and the devils were forced to confess that he was a divine Person, and the true Messiah, saying, Thou art the Son of God, before whom we are not able to stand.

12 But that there might not be the least appearance as if Jesus acted in confederacy with Satan, according to the malicious suggestion of his enemies, (ver. 22.) he charged the evil spirits to be silent, and not say what they knew concerning him. And that he might not so much as seem to affect the applause of men, he ordered those, whom he had healed, not to divulge what he had done for them; his works, which were wrought before many witnesses, friends and enemies, being sufficient to speak for themselves.

13 After this, Jesus went up an high hill, where he spent a whole night in prayer by himself; and in the morning, (*Luke vi. 12, 13.* see the notes there,) he, like the sovereign lord and disposer of his own gifts, called from among his professed disciples such as he pleased, and they drew near to him.

14 And he appointed twelve of them to be the constant attendants of his person and service; to be witnesses of his doctrine, life and miracles; and to go forth with commission, as his apostles, to preach the gospel.

15 And, for the confirmation of its doctrine, and of their commission to preach it, he invested them with miraculous powers, that by his authority, and by virtue derived from him, they might heal all manner of diseases, and cast out devils wherever they should go.

16,—19 Now the names of the twelve, whom he chose to be his apostles, and conferred these powers upon, were, first, *Simon*, to whom he added the name of *Peter*. Secondly, *James*. Thirdly, *John* his brother; both being the sons of *Zebedee*, to whom Christ gave the name of † *Boanerges*, which, in the Jewish language, signifies *Sons of thunder*. Fourthly, *Andrew*. Fifthly, *Philip*, of *Bethsaida*. Sixthly, *Bartholomew*. Seventhly, *Matthew*, who was likewise called *Levi*, and had been

N O T E.

† They were, probably, so called, to denote their remarkable warmth and zeal, and the fervent manner of their preaching.

and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and James the son of Alpheus, and Thaddeus, and Simon the Canaanite,

19 And Judas Iscariot, which also betrayed him: and they went into an house.

20 And the multitude cometh together again, so that they could not so much as eat bread.

21 And when his friends heard of it, they went out to lay hold on him: for they said, He is beside himself.

22 And the scribes which came down from Jerusalem, said, He hath Beelzebub, and by the prince of the devils casteth he out devils.

23 And he called them unto him, and said unto them in parables, How can Satan cast out Satan?

24 And if a kingdom be divided against itself, that kingdom can not stand.

25 And if a house be divided against

been a publican. Eighthly, *Thomas*, surnamed *Didymus*. Ninthly, another *James*, who was the son of *Alpheus*, and was called *James the less*. Tenthly, *Thaddeus*, who was also called *Lebbeus* and *Jude*, and was the brother of *James*. Eleventhly, *Simon the Canaanite*, who was also called *Zelotes*. And twelfthly, *Judas Iscariot*, who proved an infamous traitor to his Lord. (See the notes on *Mat. x. 3, 4.*) And all these went with Jesus † into an house to attend him, and to receive instructions from him, in order to their being fitted for the apostleship.

20 And, as soon as the common people understood that he was there with his disciples, they gathered together again, and came thither with earnest desires to hear and see more of him, so that he and the twelve could hardly find time to eat enough for their necessary refreshment.

21 Then his relations and friends, hearing how the people crowded so fast about him, came with great hurry and concern to get him away from them: For they said one to another, His zeal surely transports him too far, and he will † faint through excessive fatigue, and for want of spirits, and of due refreshment.

22 At another time, when, by his divine authority, he commanded deliverance to one who was possessed with a devil, (*Mat. xii. 22, 24.*) some Pharisees and doctors of the law, who came thither from Jerusalem, maliciously reproached him, saying, That he himself was possessed and acted by *Beelzebub*; and that, by the power and authority of this chief of the devils, he forced them out of persons, whenever he dispossessed them.

23 Upon which he desired these revilers to draw near; and, to confute their malicious suggestion, by similitudes, said, How preposterous and self-contradictious is it to suppose that one devil would dispossess others, and so destroy their own interest!

24 If any nation or kingdom is divided into factions, and fights against itself, such a civil war, in its own bowels, must necessarily bring it into confusion and desolation.

25 And if any family is divided into parties, which oppose and endeavour to turn one another out of doors,

N O T E S.

† This seems to have been the house ordered *Judas* to take the bag into his custody, for the use of the family. *Mat. iv. 13.*; and from this time forward, the twelve may be looked for as his domestics; and, probably, now it was that he

ordered *Judas* to take the bag into his custody, for the use of the family. † Εξίστα signifies one that faints, and one transported to excess, as well as one that is beside himself.

against itself, that house cannot stand.

26 And if Satan rise up against himself, and be divided, he cannot stand, but hath an end.

27 No man can enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he will first bind the strong man; and then he will spoil his house.

28 Verily I say unto you, All sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewithsoever they shall blaspheme:

29 But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost, hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation:

30 Because they said, He hath an unclean spirit.

doors, it is impossible that such a family should long subsist.

26 And thus it must be, with respect to the devil's kingdom and family, if what ye suggest were true: For if one devil sets himself to dispossess others, and that for the confirmation of doctrines which, like mine, are directly contrary to their own designs, it is impossible their interest should maintain its ground; they are too great politicians not to know this; and therefore ye may be sure that they would never act in concert, after such a manner, to ruin the common cause which they are all engaged in.

27 Again, If a strong man has got possession of an house, it must be owned that no other can forcibly break into it and take away his goods, unless, by a superior power, he first overcome and bind him, or some way defeat his resistance; then indeed, and not till then, he will easily carry off his goods: It is therefore a plain case, that so powerful a being as Satan is, would never, in any instance, quit possession at my command, who am come to destroy his work, and to deliver wretched creatures out of his hands, unless he were forced to it, by my irresistible power over him.

28 I assuredly tell you, by way of caution against the greatest crime that can be committed, and ye are running into, That all other sins and blasphemies, of what nature or kind soever, which any man can be guilty of, are within the reach of pardoning grace, and shall be forgiven to him that believes in me.

29 But, as what I have now done is by the Spirit of God; and as the last and highest dispensation of mercy is approaching, in which the miraculous illuminations and powers of the Holy Ghost, for the confirmation of the gospel, will appear with still more evident demonstration; whosoever shall continue to be so obstinate and spiteful then, as to ascribe his wonderful and divine operations to the devil, shall never be capable of forgiveness; but shall be exposed to everlasting destruction, without remedy, since no other means of conviction and recovery shall ever be afforded him. (See the note on *Mat. xii. 31.*)

30 The reason of his speaking in this awful manner was, because the scribes and Pharisees (*ver. 22.*) had maliciously and blasphemously represented him as possessed by *Beelzebub*; and had affirmed, that what he did by the Spirit of God, in casting out devils, was done by the power of their chief.

31 But

31 There came then his brethren and his mother, and, standing without, sent unto him, calling him.

32 And the multitude sat about him, and they said unto him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren without seek for thee.

33 And he answered them, saying, Who is my mother, or my brethren?

34 And he looked round about on them which sat about him, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren:

35 For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother.

31 But to return to what was hinted; (ver. 20, 21.) While Jesus was preaching to the multitude round about him, *Mary* his mother, and some of his other nearest kindred, (see the note on *Mat.* xii. 46.) fearing lest he should overspend himself, and not being able to get near, because of the crowd, desired some of the company to let him know that they wanted to speak with him.

32 Accordingly one and another of the people, that sat near, said to him, Observe how your mother and brethren call to you, who, not being able to get through the crowd, wait without to speak with you.

33 But he replied to them that told him of this, What concern have I with my kindred according to the flesh, whilst I am about my Father's business? And who do ye think I esteem as my nearest and dearest relations, even as my mother and my brethren?

34 No sooner had he spoke these words, but turning to his disciples, who sat about him, and looking and pointing to them, he said, Behold, these are they whom I have taken into the nearest relation to myself, whom I as affectionately love, as if they were my natural mother and brethren according to the flesh, and whose eternal welfare lies so near my heart, that no consideration of earthly kindred can make me desist from doing what is necessary to promote it †.

35 For whoever he be, that shall heartily believe and practise the will of God, as revealed in his word, and as particularly relating to me, he is the person whom I account my dearest relation, in a spiritual sense, and will treat with all the affection and regard that are due to a brother, a sister, and a mother.

R E C O L L E C T I O N S .

Sabbaths are to be sanctified by acts of piety and mercy; and how remarkably exemplary was our blessed Lord for both these! How justly did the people admire, and crowd about him; and how many are the blessings he came to bestow; and yet, how great was the envy and malice of his obstinate enemies against him! He, nevertheless, was tenderly touched at the hardness of their hearts; and, to melt them, proclaimed the riches of divine forgiveness for the worst of sins, excepting that against the Holy Ghost: And how solemnly did he warn his most wilful and inveterate enemies to take heed of this sin, that they might not entail unavoidable damnation upon themselves! His interests and designs are directly opposite to the kingdom of darkness, as devils know; whatever some, under their malignant influence,

N O T E .

† Christ, in this preference of his true disciples to the virgin *Mary*, considered merely as his mother, according to the flesh, not only shews high and tender affection to them, but seems designedly to guard against the excessive and idolatrous honours, which, he foresaw, the *Parents*, in after ages, would pay to her.

fluence, may blasphemously suggest to the contrary: And, therefore, he hath granted commissions to many servants to publish his holy gospel; and has given us the strongest assurances, that he will most affectionately embrace, and treat all those as his dearest relatives, who shall believe in him through their word. May this Saviour be ours: and may we never reject him through unbelief.

C. H A P. IV.

The parable of the sower, 1,—9. Its explication, 10,—20. Its application, 21,—25. The parable of the corn which grows insensibly, 26,—29. The parable of the grain of mustard-seed, with a general account of Christ's parables, 30,—34. His laying a storm at sea, 35,—41.

TEXT.

AND he began again to teach by the sea-side; and there was gathered unto him a great multitude, so that he entered into a ship, and sat in the sea, and the whole multitude, was by the sea, on the land.

2 And he taught them many things by parables; and said unto them in his doctrine,

3 Hearken, Behold, there went out a sower to sow;

4 And it came to pass as he sowed, some fell by the way-side, and the fowls of the air came and devoured it up.

PARAPHRASE.

AFTER the foregoing discourse, Jesus returned again to the shore of the sea of Galilee, that the multitude might have an opportunity of hearing: Accordingly such vast numbers thronged after him, that, for the convenience of being heard, and of freeing himself from the pressings of the crowd, he got into a boat; in which he sat down, according to the usual custom of the Jewish doctors, to preach another sermon, while the people stood as auditors on the land.

2 And, in this discourse, he went into a very familiar and instructive way of teaching them many important doctrines, by comparisons taken from earthly things, which they themselves were well acquainted with: Accordingly he began to represent the preaching of the gospel, and its different effects upon various sorts of persons, in the following manner. (See the note on *Mat. xiii. 3.*)

3 Attend to what I say, and observe it as a matter of the greatest consequence: "A certain husbandman went into his field to sow his corn:"—Thereby intimating that he was come by his person and ministry, and the ministry of his servants, to spread abroad the gospel of the kingdom among the people.

4 "And it happened, that, as the husbandman was sowing his corn, some of the grains fell upon a common beaten path in the field, where, lying on the surface of the ground, without any earth to cover it, the birds came and eat it up:"—So the gospel is preached to some heedless hearers, who never seriously consider or reflect on what they hear; and the devil soon juffles it out of their thoughts.

5, 6 "Ano-

5 And some fell on stony ground, where it had not much earth, and immediately it sprang up, because it had no depth of earth.

6 But when the sun was up, it was scorched; and because it had no root, it withered away.

7 And some fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up, and choked it, and it yielded no fruit.

8 And other fell on good ground, and did yield fruit that sprang up and increased, and brought forth some thirty, and some sixty, and some an hundred.

9 And he said unto them, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

10 And when he was alone, they that

5, 6 "Another part of the seed was cast upon a stony soil, which had but a thin covering of earth; and there it quickly began to sprout; but no sooner did the sun shine with its scorching beams, which were strongly reflected from the bed of stone just underneath, than it withered away, having no root sufficient to keep it alive."—So there are other hearers, who do indeed attend to the word, and are affected with it, and, under present impressions, have some good desires and resolutions answerable to it: But this goes no deeper than a superficial touch upon their passions; and when the heat of temptation and persecution for righteousness-sake, beats upon them, their stony hearts give such force to those trials, that they cannot stand against their terrors; and, for want of a rooted principle of grace in the soul, all the promising appearances soon come to nothing.

7 "There was likewise some of this seed which fell on a piece of ground all over-run with young briars and thorns; and these, out-growing the corn, smothered and destroyed it; so that it never brought forth fruit to any perfection."—In like manner there are others, who hear the word with great attention, and seem to make some progress in their notions and profession of the gospel; but their hearts are so overcharged with the hurries, cares, riches, and pleasures of this world, that all these hopeful beginnings are stifled in the birth, and never produce any holy effects to the glory of God, and their own salvation.

8 "Lastly, another part of the seed was sown in a good soil; where it took root, sprung, and grew up regularly, and brought forth corn with a fine increase, from thirty to an hundred fold."—So there are other hearers, whose hearts are fitted and inclined, by divine grace, to mix the word with faith, and to receive the truth in the love of it; who understand, consider, and believe what they hear, and that with a reference to themselves; and who, yielding the obedience of faith, bring forth fruits of righteousness, more or less, all the days of their lives.

9 "And, to intimate the great importance of these things, Jesus added in the close, Whoever he be that is capable of hearing and desirous of instruction, let him seriously weigh, and lay to heart what I have been saying.

10 Our Lord having delivered this parable without any explanation; as soon as the people were dismissed, and the twelve apostles, with some others of his

that were about him, with the twelve, asked of him the parable.

11 And he said unto them, Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but unto them that are without, all *these* things are done in parables:

12 That seeing they may see, and not perceive, and hearing they may hear, and not understand; lest at any time they should be converted, and *their* sins should be forgiven them.

13 And he said unto them, Know ye not this parable? and how then will ye know all parables?

14 The sower sowed the word.

his disciples, were with him alone, they intreated him to interpret it to them; seeming, at the same time, to shew some surprize and concern that the multitude were left in the dark about it. (*Mat.* xiii. 10.)

11 And in reply, he said to them, God in the wise and holy dispensations of his grace, has given, and will further give, a plain discovery of the great truths of the gospel to you, whom, in his sovereign pleasure, he has made his peculiar favourites: But as to those, who, by their obstinate impenitence and unbelief, exclude themselves, like heathens †, from the blessings of my kingdom; and do not so much as desire my instructions, but wilfully shut their eyes against what light they have, and thereby forfeit further vouchsafements; I deliver myself to them only in parables,

12 That, according to an ancient prophecy, (*Isa.* vi. 9, 10.) which is fulfilled in them, they seeing my undoubted miracles, may not, through their own wilful blindness of mind, be convinced by them; and that, hearing my spiritual and heavenly doctrine, they, under the power of their own inveterate prejudices, may not inquire after its true meaning, nor embrace it; being righteously given up to the chosen infidelity and obstinacy of their own hearts, that they may never be enlightened to their conversion, nor obtain remission of sins to their salvation.

13 Having thus accounted for the reason of his treating his own disciples with more peculiar favour than others, he said, by way of gentle reproof to them for the dulness of their apprehension, What! are ye at a loss about the meaning of so plain a similitude as this, which represents things that ye are already acquainted with? How then will ye be able to understand and receive other parables, which I shall deliver, to represent things that ye have at present no notions of †?

14 Then he particularly explained to them the parable of the sower after this manner, saying, By the seed was meant the word of God; the husbandman, who sowed it, signified the preacher of it; and

N O T E.

† Here seems to be an allusion to the *Jews* way of speaking concerning the Heathens, as *οὐκ εἶσθε* those who are without; and to intimate, that, for their infidelity, they should be cast out of Christ's kingdom, *Luke* xiii. 25, 28.

† Christ may herein refer to such parables as relate to the more spiritual and

sublime doctrines of the gospel, that depended on his death and resurrection, and to the casting off of the *Jews* and the calling of the *Gentiles*, which the disciples prejudices, in favour of their own nation, would render very obscure and difficult for them to take in.

15 And these are they by the way-side, where the word is sown, but when they have heard, Satan cometh immediately, and taketh away the word that was sown in their hearts.

16 And these are they likewise which are sown on stony ground, who, when they have heard the word, immediately receive it with gladness:

17 And have no root in themselves, and so endure but for a time: afterward when affliction or persecution ariseth for the word's sake, immediately they are offended.

18 And these are they which are sown among thorns: such as hear the word,

19 And the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful.

20 And these are they which are sown on good ground, such as hear the word, and receive it, and bring forth fruit, some thirty fold, some sixty, and some an hundred.

21 And he said unto

and the ground, on which the seed fell, represented the hearers of the word.

15 || The common beaten path, where there was no earth to cover the seed, signified such careless hearers of the gospel as do not regard or retain it; but, through the hardness of their own hearts, and the subtilty of Satan, it is soon thrown out of their minds, and they are deprived of all saving advantage by it.

16, 17 The stony soil, which had but a thin covering of earth, where the seed soon began to sprout, but presently grew sick, and died away by the heat of the sun, for want of a root sufficient to keep it alive, represented many hearers, who at first indeed are affected with the glad tidings of the gospel, as with a pleasant song, and for some little time give an assent to them; but not having received them by a true and lively faith in their hearts, nor being rooted and grounded in love, they lose their first slight and flashy impressions, and turn utter apostates, as soon as a day of trial by reproaches, losses, and persecutions for the gospel, comes upon them.

18, 19 And the ground over-run with briars and thorns, which, growing up, smothered and destroyed the corn, signified such hearers as attend to the preaching of the gospel, and seem to love it, and to make a good proficiency in their observation and profession of it; but hurries, and solicitous cares about the things of this world, the false enticements of its riches, and eager desires after its pleasures, get such a power over the heart, as nip the promising appearances in the bud, and render them ineffectual to holy and saving purposes.

20 And to conclude: The good soil, where the seed took root, sprung, and grew up regularly, and produced good corn, in a thinner or more plentiful crop, represented those hearers of the word, who, under divine influence, heartily believe and entertain it, and produce excellent fruits of holiness, though some twice or thrice as much as others, as long as they live in the world.

21 Our blessed Saviour, having thus explained the parable to his disciples in all its parts, proceeded to make the following application of it: As a

M m 3 candle,

N O T E.

|| As, in common language, sometimes seed, and at others, the ground on which it is cast, is said to be sown; so, in this interpretation of the parable, we are to understand it with relation to the differ-

ent sorts of ground on which the seed is sown, since it is designed to represent different sorts of hearers, and the different entertainment they give to one and the same preaching of the gospel.

unto them, Is a candle brought to be put under a bushel, or under a bed? and not to be set on a candlestick?

22 For there is nothing hid which shall not be manifested: neither was any thing kept secret, but that it should come abroad.

23 If any man have ears to hear, let him hear.

24 And he said unto them, Take heed what ye hear: with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you: and unto you that hear, shall more be given.

25 For he that hath, to him shall be given: and he that hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he hath.

26 And he said, So is the kingdom of

candle, when it is lighted, should not be whelmed under a vessel, or concealed under a bed, or any other dark covering; but be set up in a candlestick, to give light to all about it:—So the light, which I communicate to you, my disciples, by a clear explication of this and other parables, and by the whole of my instructions, is not to be confined to yourselves, and concealed from others; but ye ought to shine as lights in the world, by shewing forth the power of these truths upon your own hearts and lives, and by preaching them to others for their conversion, edification, and salvation.

22 For none of my doctrines are to be thus suppressed and hid; but they shall be published in all their truth, excellence, and importance: Nor have I concealed any thing, for the present, from this people, whose prejudices resist the light, with a design that it should never be publicly made known in the clearest manner possible; but that, in due time, it should be preached openly, by the ministrations of my servants, to all nations, for the obedience of faith.

23 Observe therefore what I say; and let every one of you, who is capable of hearing and receiving these things, reflect upon them, and lay them to heart, that he may behave accordingly.

24 He furthermore said unto them, The things I have been speaking of are matters of the utmost consequence: Attend therefore to what ye hear, that it may have its proper influence upon you; and take heed that ye do not give ear to any doctrines inconsistent with these; but try the spirits, whether they be of God: (1 *John* iv. 1.) And remember, that in proportion to your care and faithfulness in receiving and improving the advantages which have been already communicated to you for the good of others, as well as of your own souls, still further instructions and assistances shall be given, that your profiting may appear unto all men.

25 For every one, who cordially receives and acts according to the endowments which God has freely bestowed upon him, for propagating the interest of his Son, and of true religion in the world, shall have further vouchsafements of light and assistances for it: But every one, who has no heart to make a due improvement of them for these valuable purposes, shall be deprived even of those privileges which before he had been favoured with. (See the note on *Luke* viii. 18.)

26, 27 After this, Jesus taught the people by several other comparisons; and said, with a particu-

of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground,

27 And should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how.

28 For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear.

29 But when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come.

30 And he said, Whereunto shall we

lar reference to such fruitful hearers of the word as had been represented by the good ground, "The state of the gospel-kingdom is like an husbandman's sowing seed in a good soil: Though, after he has sown it, he takes his rest by night, and goes about his other affairs by day, it nevertheless, continually and insensibly grows up and increases, in a manner which neither he, nor any man else can give an account of."—So when the word of God becomes effectual, and a principle of grace is planted in the heart; though the preacher, who was instrumental in sowing it, takes no further pains about it, but, committing it to the blessing of God, applies himself to other parts of his work; yet it lives, and prospers in the soul, while the manner in which its principle operates to produce the increase, surpasses all conception of human minds.

28 "For as the earth, after it has been sown with seed, brings it to maturity by imperceptible degrees, first in the blade, then in the ear, and at last in the ripe corn; and does all this by virtue within itself, under the influence of the heavens:"—So when once the heart is seasoned with grace, the precious seed flourishes, and brings forth fruits of righteousness, by virtue of its vital principle in the soul, under the special influence of the Spirit of God.

29 "But as, at the time of harvest, when the corn is fully ripe, the husbandman reaps it with his sickle:"—So at the end of the world, they, who ministered under the great Lord of the harvest, in sowing the seed, shall find their converted hearers to be their joy and crown of rejoicing, in the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ at his coming; when they shall reap the fruit of their labours with joy, in presenting them to him †.

30 Then said he, By what further similitude shall I represent the doctrine of the gospel, and the state of

N O T E.

† Several parts of this parable are incapable of being applied to Christ himself, who searches the reins and hearts, has a comprehensive knowledge of all that is doing in the souls of his people, and is continually maintaining and increasing his work in them, by various means, and fresh supplies of his grace; and therefore, I have rather chosen to consider it with relation to the ministers of the gospel, to whom I think all its parts may fairly be applied, as in the paraphrase: But if, as is generally thought, the scope of this parable be only to shew,

that the work of God increases, by secret and insensible degrees, we know not how; in that general scope, it may be applied to Christ himself, and, perhaps, may have a particular reference to the fruits of his personal ministry on earth, though he was to leave this world, and go to the Father, and would no more visibly appear, to manage the affairs of his kingdom amongst us; till he shall come at the end of time, and send forth the angels, his reapers, to gather the good seed into his heavenly kingdom.

we liken the kingdom of God? or with what comparison shall we compare it?

31 It is like a grain of mustard-seed, which, when it is sown in the earth, is less than all the seeds that be in the earth :

32 But when it is sown, it groweth up, and becometh greater than all herbs, and shooteth out great branches, so that the fowls of the air may lodge under the shadow of it.

33 And with many such parables spake he the word unto them, as they were able to hear it.

34 But without a parable spake he not unto them : and when they were alone, he expounded all things to his disciples.

35 And the same day, when the even was come, he saith unto them, Let us pass over unto the other side.

36 And when they had sent away the multitude, they took him, even as he was in the

of my kingdom in the world? Or by what further comparison shall I describe it to you?

31 "It may be fitly said to resemble a grain of mustard seed, which, at the time of its being sown, is indeed one of the least of all the seeds that are cast into the earth :—So my gospel, the work of grace in the heart, and the state of my kingdom in the world, make but a little figure, and are scarcely discernible in their first beginnings.

32 "But as a grain of this seed grows up to be one of the largest sized plants among all herbs, and shoots its branches to such height and strength, that the birds of the air may shelter themselves in it : (see the note on *Mat.* xiii. 32.)—So my gospel and my grace shall grow and spread to such a degree, that however they may be despised, or not discerned at first, they shall in a little while diffuse, with great power and delight, through the whole soul, and extend themselves far and wide, that *Gentiles*, as well as *Jews*, may find rest and comfort in them.

33 To these comparisons, for the illustration of spiritual things, Jesus added many others; by which he instructed the people, though with obscurity, and by degrees, yet in a way as plain and familiar to them, as they were capable of understanding and receiving.

34 But, as he knew the prejudices they were generally under, he only delivered the similitudes themselves, without any explanation; that they, who were desirous of instruction, might reflect upon them in their own minds, and gather some useful hints from them, about things which afterwards they might more clearly understand, upon seeing them come to pass: And when he and his disciples were together alone, he took opportunities to unbosom himself to them, with great familiarity and friendship, in clear explications of his mind and will therein.

35 Now Jesus, having work to do among the *Gadarenes*, ordered his disciples, as soon as it grew night, to row him over to the other side of the lake of *Gennesareth*, toward *Gadara*, (chap. v. 1.) that he might lose no time.

36 Accordingly, the great crowds of people being dismissed, his disciples immediately carried him in the same vessel, from which he had been preaching to the multitude; and several other boats attended him*.

37 And

NOTE

* These boats probably carried companies of people, who were desirous to hear more of his doctrine, and see more of his miracles, and to follow him wherever he went.

the ship; and there were also with him other little ships.

37 And there arose a great storm of wind; and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full.

38 And he was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow: and they awake him, and say unto him, Master, carest thou not that we perish?

39 And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still: and the wind ceased, and there was a great calm.

40 And he said unto them, Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith?

41 And they feared exceedingly, and said one to another, What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?

37 And while they were crossing the lake, a terrible storm of wind || beat so fiercely upon them, and raised such boisterous and swelling waves, that, in a little time, the vessel was almost full of water, and in the utmost danger of being lost.

38 In the mean while, Jesus, having been fatigued with the labour of the preceding day, lay fast asleep on a pillow at the stern of the vessel; and his disciples, being frightened at their danger, ran and awaked him, saying, all in a hurry, Lord, we are just upon the point of being cast away. What! canst thou sleep, and not mind this dreadful storm? Hast thou no compassion for us? And wilt thou suffer us all to be drowned?

39 Then he got up, and, like the sovereign Lord of the universe, commanded the wind to cease, and the waves of the sea to be calm and quiet, and not to roar and rage any longer; and he no sooner spake, than it was done: The wind immediately fell, the surface of the water became smooth, and the noise of the sea and of the waves were stilled. (*Psal.* lxxv. 7.)

40 He likewise, turning to the disciples, reproved them for their distrustful fears, saying, How strange and unbecoming is it, that after all the experience ye have had of my divine power, and affectionate regards to you, ye should still question either my ability or my will to save you? and that when ye need most faith, ye should seem to have none at all!

41 And as before they had been greatly terrified at the storm; so now they had an awful fear of his Majesty, who had, in such a Godlike way, rebuked the winds and waves, and reproved them for their distrust of him in their danger: And all the company were wonderfully amazed, saying to each other, What a surprising sort of person is this, who, by his own authority, and with such an air of sovereignty, commands the winds and waves, and they immediately obey him! Surely he must be more than a man, who hath thus *gathered the wind in his fists.* (*Prov.* xxx. 4.)

R E C O L L E C T I O N S.

It is melancholy and alarming to think how many unfruitful sorts of hearers there are, and how few that mix the word with faith, and entertain the truth in the love of it, to their own salvation. What need have we to watch carefully against Satan, and against the snares that arise from the affluence and pleasures, cares and

N O T E,

|| *Ααιλαψ* signifies any violent storm, or tempest; and so there might be a terrible rain, as well as wind.

terrors, of this world ! How should we look well to our own hearts, that they may be upright and sincere ; and, at the same time, look upwards for divine grace, to enable us to take heed how we hear, and what improvement we make, lest we provoke God to leave us to ourselves, and to take away the privileges which we already have ! — And oh what a blessing is it to be among the objects of distinguishing grace, to whom it is given to know the secrets of God's covenant, to whom Christ imparts his mind and will, as to his friends, and whom he enables to bring forth good fruit in its season ! The more experience we have of this, the more thankful we should be for it, and the more concerned to improve it, that we may have still more abundance. And, blessed be his name, the least beginnings of his work in our souls shall be preserved, and gradually increased and perfected ; and the smallest appearances of it in the world, shall, in due time, break out, and spread with light and power, and fill the earth. Christ is concerned for his cause, and never will neglect it ; and, whilst he is present with his people, they are safe, whatever storms or mischiefs may threaten them ; a word from his mouth will silence all our fears and troubles, and secure us amidst surrounding dangers : He is the mighty God, and the Prince of peace ; we, therefore, need not doubt of his power, or his will, to save to the uttermost all that come unto him ; and to the Father, by him. Lord, help our unbelief.

C H A P. V.

Christ casts out a legion of devils, and suffers them to enter into the swine, 1,—20. He heals a woman of the bloody-flux, in his way to Jairus's house, 21,—34. And raises Jairus's daughter from the dead, 35,—43.

TEXT.

AND they came over unto the other side of the sea, into the country of the Gadarenes.

1 And when he was come out of the ship, immediately there met him out of the tombs, a man with an unclean spirit,

3 Who had his dwelling among the tombs ; and no man could bind him, no not with chains :

4 Because that he had been often bound with fetters and chains, and the chains had been plucked asunder by

PARAPHRASE.

OUR blessed Saviour having laid the storm which arose as he and his company were passing over the sea of *Galilee*, they soon after landed on the eastern side, in the country of the *Gadarenes*, who were mostly *Gentiles*.

2 And he was no sooner got ashore, than a man possessed of the devil, that vile and malicious spirit, came out from among the tombs, where he used to wander about ; and it was providentially ordered that he should meet with Jesus.

3 This poor miserable creature was so hurried by the power of the devil, that he would not dwell in any house, nor wear any clothes ; but roved about naked for a long time, (*Luke viii. 27.*) like a madman, in solitary places, among the sepulchres of the dead, which increased his own terror, and the terror of all who came that way ; (*see the note on Mat. viii. 28.*) and so great was his strength and rage, that no human power or art could tame him, or get chains strong enough to hold him.

4 For he had often been clogged with fetters, and bound with chains, but he snapped them asunder like a twined thread ; so that he continually broke loose, and was so untractable, that nobody knew

by him, and the fetters broken in pieces: neither could any man tame him.

5 And always night and day, he was in the mountains, and in the tombs, crying, and cutting himself with stones.

6 But when he saw Jesus afar off, he ran and worshipped him,

7 And cried with a loud voice, and said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of the most high God? I adjure thee by God, that thou torment me not.

8 (For he said unto him, Come out of the man, thou unclean spirit.)

9 And he asked him, What is thy name? And he answered, saying, My name is Legion; for we are many.

knew how to manage him, or to keep him under restraint.

5 And, in this forlorn and frightful manner, he ran, both night and day, like a wild man, up and down the mountains, and among the tombs, making hideous outcries, and cruelly wounding and gashing himself with stones.

6 But as soon as † this fierce and ungovernable creature saw Jesus at a distance, the devil, who possessed him, was so over-awed at Christ's appearance, that he was even forced to carry him toward the Saviour; so that he ran with all speed, and falling down at his feet, paid him solemn homage.

7 And the evil spirit, knowing who Jesus was, cried out aloud, with horror and dread of his divine majesty and power, O thou Saviour of men, I own that thou art indeed the Son of the most high God, and that I am no match for thee; but, as I have no interest in thee, I beg that I may have nothing to do with thee: And, as I suppose, the season appointed of God for shutting me up in prison, and completing my miseries, is not yet come, Why shouldst thou confine and distress me now beforehand? I earnestly beseech thee, by the truth of God, who has given me time to punish mankind till the final judgment, that thou wouldst not compel me to retire from this world into the place of torment.

8 The reason of his expoistulating with Christ in this manner, was because he had said, Thou vile spirit, I command thee to quit possession of the man. (See the note on *Luke* viii. 29.)

9 And, upon the devil's going into this remembrance, Jesus, to make the company the more sensible of the poor man's calamitous condition, and of the exceeding greatness of his own power and mercy in delivering him, publicly asked the evil spirit, By what name he called himself? To which he replied, My name is Legion*; and that very justly, for

N O T E.

† *Matthew* (chap. viii. 28.) mentions two of these miserable creatures; and, it is probable, that this, so particularly spoken of here, was the most remarkably fierce and ungovernable; and perhaps he was a *Heathen*, and the other a *Jew*, and therefore more notice is taken of this than of him. See *Lightfoot's* *Hor. Hebr.* on *Mark* v. 1.

* The number which constituted a legion of *Roman* soldiers, was, like our regiments, uncertain; some reckon them at 6000, and others at 12,500: How-

ever, the devil's giving himself this name, intimates, that those only, who possessed this man, were very numerous; and, being united in their malicious designs, were very powerful and warlike, under the government of a chief who is emphatically called *Satan*, the *old serpent*, the *prince of devils*, and the like: and, therefore, the evil powers that possessed this man, are sometimes spoke of in the singular, and at others, in the plural number.

for a vast number of spirits, under my command, have taken possession of this man.

10 And he besought him much, that he would not send them away out of the country.

10 Then the chief devil, and the whole legion, (*Luke viii. 31.*) joined in importunate entreaties, that, as they were not in *Judea* among God's own people, but in a Heathen country, he would permit them to continue to act their pleasure there, where they had reigned, among the Heathens and apostate *Jews*, like the rulers of the darkness of this world, and, by their long experience of that people's temper and behaviour, knew how to manage their temptations the more dexterously against them.

11 Now there was there nigh unto the mountains, a great herd of swine feeding.

11 Now it happened at this time, that there was a great herd of swine feeding about the mountains at some distance. (*Mat. viii. 30.*)

12 And all the devils besought him, saying, Send us into the swine, that we may enter into them.

12 All the evil spirits therefore united their earnest request, saying, If thou wilt not suffer us to keep possession of this man, yet let us at least be permitted to take possession of those swine; hoping thereby to prejudice their owners against Christ, and to maintain their own dominion still in their hearts.

13 And forthwith Jesus gave them leave. And the unclean spirits went out, and entered into the swine, and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the sea, (they were about two thousand,) and were choked in the sea.

13 And Jesus, for wise and holy reasons, (see the note on *Mat. viii. 32.*) readily intimated, that he would not restrain them from taking their own course with those brute creatures: Whereupon the devils, departing from the man, went into the herd of swine; and had such a malignant influence upon them, that they all presently ran mad, and were furiously hurried down a precipice into the sea, where they perished in the waters, being in number about two thousand.

14 And they that fed the swine fled, and told it in the city, and in the country. And they went out to see what it was that was done.

14 Then the keepers of the herd, being surprised and terrified at this sight, ran to the city and parts adjacent, telling what they knew of the surprising story about the man and the swine, wherever they came: And great multitudes hastened away to this place, that they might be satisfied how far it was true.

15 And they come to Jesus, and see him that was possessed with the devil, and had the legion, sitting, and clothed, and in his right mind: and they were afraid.

15 And when they came up to Jesus, and saw that the man, by whom they had often been terrified, whilst he was possessed with a legion of devils, under the command of one of their chiefs, was now come to himself; and that, sitting with his cloaths on, he behaved in a regular and decent manner; they were greatly astonished at the miracle, and filled with an awful dread of the power which Jesus had so remarkably exercised over the devils themselves on this occasion.

16 And they that saw it, told them how it befel to

16 And they who were eye-witnesses of all that had passed, related to these people the particular circumstances both of the recovery of the miserable de-

to him that was possessed with the devil, and also concerning the swine.

17 And they began to pray him to depart out of their coasts.

18 And when he was come into the ship, he that had been possessed with the devil, prayed him that he might be with him.

19 Howbeit, Jesus suffered him not; but saith unto him, Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee.

20 And he departed, and began to publish in Decapolis, how great things Jesus had done for him: and all men did marvel.

demoniac, and of the devil's entering into, and destroying their swine, by Christ's permission.

17 This made them so much the more afraid of Jesus, lest they should suffer some further loss and damage by his means: And as they were more concerned about their temporal than their spiritual interests, and were more affected with vexation and fear at the destruction of their hogs, than with joy and hope at the signal mercy which had appeared in the cure of this dangerous, raving, and distressed man; they all, with one consent, intreated him to go out of their country, little thinking what a blessing they thereby put away from themselves.

18 Jesus, justly offended at their folly and wickedness, took them at their word; and when he re-imbarked in the vessel to go back again over the lake, the man, who had been freed from the diabolical possession, was so affected with the mercy, that he earnestly desired leave of his great Deliverer to suffer him to attend him, that he might enjoy his blessed company, and continue under his protection to secure him against the return of evil spirits, and under his instruction to lead him into the knowledge of a still better salvation from sin, and the wrath to come.

19 However, as Jesus could both preserve and teach him at a distance as well as if he were personally present, and taking him along with him might have seemed to favour of ostentation; and as it might be more for the advancement of his interest and kingdom, to leave such a standing monument of his power and compassion in that country, he would not consent to his coming away with himself, but ordered him to return home to his friends and acquaintance, and to let them see and hear what a miraculous deliverance the Lord Jesus had wrought for him, and what affecting and encouraging pity he had therein extended to him. (See the note on *Luke* viii. 39.)

20 Accordingly the healed man obeyed Christ's command, and, in a transport of gratitude and joy, spread the report of his power and mercy toward him in all the towns and villages of *Decapolis**; and all the people in those parts, knowing what this man had been, and seeing what a happy change was made upon him, easily credited his account, and were astonished at the power of Jesus, who had

N n 3

N O T E.

* *Decapolis* was a country containing ten cities, which were chiefly inhabited by the *Gentiles*, and of which *Gadara* was one.

exercised such authority over devils, and wrought such a surprising deliverance for him.

21 And when Jesus was passed over again by ship unto the other side, much people gathered unto him: and he was nigh unto the sea.

22 And behold, there cometh one of the rulers of the synagogue, Jairus by name; and when he saw him, he fell at his feet,

23 And besought him greatly, saying, My little daughter lieth at the point of death, I pray thee, come and lay thy hands on her, that she may be healed; and she shall live.

24 And Jesus went with him; and much people followed him, and thronged him.

25 And a certain woman which had an issue of blood twelve years,

26 And had suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse,

27 When she had heard of Jesus, came in the press behind, and touched his garment.

28 For she said, If I may touch but his clothes, I shall be whole.

29 And straightway the fountain of

21 In the mean while, Jesus having crossed the sea of Galilee back again in the boat, and landed on the western shore, abundance of people, who waited for tidings of his return, flocked about him when they found him by the sea-side.

22 And, observe a most remarkable occurrence! Soon after this, there came a person of considerable figure and authority among the Jews, whose name was *Jairus*, one of the rulers of their synagogue; (see the note on *Mat. ix. 18.*) and when he saw Jesus, he kneeled down, prostrating himself at his feet, in a posture of great humility and reverence, to testify his faith in him.

23 And earnestly intreated him, saying, My young daughter lies dangerously sick, if not already dead, at my house; I humbly beg your compassion on her behalf; for I verily believe, that if you would please to go home with me, and but touch her, she would certainly be restored to health, how desperate soever her case now may be.

24 And though there was weakness in this faith, which intimated, as if our Lord could not have cured her without going and laying his hand upon her; yet, as he knew it to be sincere, he, for its further encouragement, readily went along with this ruler, being attended with his disciples, and vast crowds of people, who pressed upon him on all sides, from the eagerness of their desire to see the event.

25, 26 Now among these there was a woman who had been grievously afflicted, for twelve years past, with a dangerous discharge of blood, and had tried all possible means within her reach for a cure; in so much that she had gone through tedious courses of physic, and reduced herself to poverty by the great expence; but all to no good purpose, she still growing rather worse than better.

27 She therefore, despairing of all other relief, and hearing much of the mighty power and goodness of Christ, got into the crowd, next to him, among those that followed him; and, being too modest to mention her case, she privately put her hand out and touched his clothes.

28 For such was her faith, that she thought within herself, If I can but get near enough to touch his garment, though it be only its utmost border, I shall as certainly be healed of this disease as others have been of theirs.

29 And her faith and hope were fully answered: For she no sooner had done this, but a miraculous altera-

of her blood was dried up: and she felt in her body that she was healed of that plague.

30 And Jesus immediately knowing in himself, that virtue had gone out of him, turned him about in the press, and said, Who touched my clothes?

31 And his disciples said unto him, Thou seeest the multitude thronging thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me?

32 And he looked round about to see her that had done this thing.

33 But the woman fearing and trembling, knowing what was done in her, came and fell down before him, and told him all the truth.

alteration was made upon her at once; and, from that very moment, she sensibly found herself to be as perfectly cured of her distemper as if she had never sinned any thing at all.

30 In this manner she was healed without the privacy of any of the people about her, and she thought that no notice would have been taken of it: But as our Lord himself knew what he had done, by * a free emanation of that divine power, which he had in himself, and could exert whenever, and in what way he pleased; so he thought proper to discover it, for the manifestation of his own and his Father's glory, and for the encouragement not only of this woman's, but likewise of *Jairus's* faith, who was then with him; and, in order thereunto, he turned round in the crowd to look behind him, and asked, Who it was that had touched his garment? meaning, with a design of getting a cure from him.

31 His disciples, not understanding his drift, were surpris'd at this question; and replied with too much pertness, How can it be otherwise, whilst, as thou seeest, the great crowd is pressing upon thee on every side? Strange! that in such circumstances thou shouldst say, Who touched me?

32 However, Jesus, taking no notice of their amazement at it, continued looking about among them that were near him, like one that would see what might occur to discover the person who, as he said, had touched his clothes.

33 Hereupon the poor woman being conscious of what she had done, and of what a wonderful cure she had received, and finding that it would be in vain for her to think of hiding it any longer, was afraid that she had presumed too far, and that Christ was angry with her, either for taking a wrong method of obtaining her cure, or for endeavouring afterwards to conceal it; and therefore she came with a trembling heart before him, who could as easily kill, as save alive; and, humbly prostrating herself at his feet, openly declared the whole affair, just as it was, in the hearing of all the people.

34 And

N O T E.

* It is never said of the apostles, as it is here, and *Luke* vi. 19. viii. 46. &c. of our Lord, that (*δυναμις*) power or virtue went out of them for healing: They, on the contrary, disclaimed it, ascribing the entire efficacy to Christ, *Acts* iii. 12, 16. Nor could this be said of any, but of the sovereign Lord and Disposer of life and death, and of sickness and health: But

Jesus, as God, had power residing in himself, which he could exert at pleasure, and by which alone he could heal all sorts of diseases, and chase away every unclean spirit; his dispossessing of which, may be reckoned among the cures he wrought by the virtue that went out of him, *Luke* vi. 18, 19.

34 And he said unto her, Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace, and be whole of thy plague.

35 While he yet spake, there came from the ruler of the synagogue's house, certain which said, Thy daughter is dead; why troublest thou the master any further?

36 As soon as Jesus heard the word that was spoken, he saith unto the ruler of the synagogue, Be not afraid, only believe.

37 And he suffered no man to follow him, save Peter, and James, and John, the brother of James.

38 And he cometh to the house of the ruler of the synagogue, and seeth the tumult, and them that wept and wailed greatly.

39 And when he was come in, he saith unto them, Why make ye this ado, and weep? the damsel is not dead, but sleepeth.

40 And they laughed him to scorn: but when he had put them all

34 And Jesus as openly encouraged and comforted her, saying, Thou daughter of *Abraham*, and child of God, thy faith has honoured me, and I both have and will put an honour upon it; thou art blessed, and art welcome to the mercy thou hast found; go home as one made glad with God's salvation, and be assured that thy distemper shall never return upon thee more.

35 Whilst our Lord was speaking these words, there came some messengers from *Jairus's* house, to let him know that his daughter was actually dead; and that therefore it would be to no purpose to give the great prophet any further trouble, by desiring him to come thither to do any thing for his child.

36 Jesus, perceiving that, at this message, the tender father was mightily grieved and discouraged, spoke comfortably to him, saying, Do not give way to distressing and despairing thoughts at these melancholy tidings; only believe in my power and goodness, that I am able and ready to raise your daughter even from the dead, and it shall be unto you, according to your faith.

37 Then, to avoid all appearance of seeking his own honour, he ordered that none of the multitude, nor even of his own disciples, should go with him into the house, excepting *Peter, James, and John*, that, by these three witnesses, the truth of the miracle he was going to work might be sufficiently testified; but, together with these, he admitted the father and mother of the young damsel to be present, who were most concerned in the affair. (ver. 40.)

38 And, as soon as he entered the house, he found a company of mourning friends, neighbours, and relations, gathered together; and some playing dismal tunes, upon musical instruments, (*Mat. ix. 23.*) according to the custom of those days on such occasions, (which took its rise from the Heathens, and was designed to excite dolorous passions,) with weeping and bitter lamentation for the death of this young person.

39 But Jesus, observing this, said, What means this tumultuous noise, and excessive lamentation? The young creature, is not, as ye imagine, so dead as not to revive; but is like one fallen into a state of insensibility and rest, out of which she shall immediately awake again.

40 At this their mourning was turned into a scornful laughter, as if he talked like a weak, or delirious person, they being all fully satisfied that she was really dead: However, he, taking no notice of

all out, he taketh the father and the mother of the damsel, and them that were with him, and entereth in where the damsel was lying.

41 And he took the damsel by the hand, and said unto her, *Talitha cumi*; which is, being interpreted, *Damsel, (I say unto thee,) arise.*

42 And straightway the damsel arose, and walked; for she was of the age of twelve years: and they were astonished with a great astonishment.

43 And he charged them straitly, that no man should know it; and commanded that something should be given her to eat.

of their jeers, ordered the room, where the young virgin lay, to be cleared of all the company of scorers; and thereupon went into it, with only her father and mother, and the three disciples before-mentioned.

41 And, in the presence of all these, he went up, and, taking hold of her hand, spoke to her, with an air of divine majesty and sovereign authority, in words of the *Syriac* language, which were well known to signify, *Young woman, arise.*

42 He spake, and it was done; divine power went forth with his words; and immediately, her soul returning into her body, she got up, and, to shew that she was not only restored to life, but likewise to perfect health and strength in that instant, she walked about the room; for she was so far advanced in age as to be capable of this, being about twelve years old: And her parents, being eye-witnesses of all this, were exceedingly affected with, and amazed at, the greatness of so miraculous a favour.

43 Then, having ordered them to give her proper food, for the further sustenance of that life which he had restored, to shew that she still retained animal nature; he strictly forbade their divulging this miracle, that he might avoid every appearance of vain-glory, might prevent too great a resort of people to him, and might not enrage the scribes and Pharisees against him; the time for his death, and for the full manifestation of his glory, being not yet come. But it could not be concealed. (*Mat. ix. 26.*)

R E C O L L E C T I O N S.

What a cruel tyrant is Satan over all his vassals! how tormenting to them, and how unwilling to quit his hold of them! and yet how unable to stand before the power of our blessed Lord, whenever he comes to dethrone him! The Saviour's compassion is as great as the devil's malice is implacable; and yet, he sometimes suffers that mischievous enemy of mankind to exert his furious rage against our persons or property, for the trial of our love and obedience, or for the punishment of our iniquities. But how great is their wickedness and folly, who prefer any secular interests to him, and who, from their inordinate love to this world, desire him to depart from them! If he takes them at their word, how dismal is the consequence! But while some reject him, he will find out others to receive him; and when he withdraws from his own people, it is but for a season: He will surely return again, and honour the faith that honours him; and whatsoever difficulties or infirmities attend their trust in him, he is ready to encourage and relieve it. He heals by his own divine power, which resides in himself, and comforts those whom he heals: And if his mighty acts are sometimes to be only the subjects of private admiration and praise; yet how cheerfully should they be proclaimed, whenever it may be most seasonable, and subservient to his own and his Father's glory, and to the good of others.

C H A P. VI.

Jesus being contemned by his own countrymen for the meanness of his parentage, works but few miracles among them, 1,—6. He sends forth twelve apostles, 7,—13. The opinion of Herod and others concerning him, 14,—16. The occasion and manner of John the Baptist's death, 17,—29. The apostles return to Jesus, and give an account of the success of their ministry, 30,—34. He feeds five thousand with five loaves and two fishes, 35,—44. Walks on the sea, 45,—52. And heals all that touch him, 53,—56.

TEXT.

AND he went out from thence, and came into his own country; and his disciples follow him.

2 And when the Sabbath-day was come, he began to teach in the synagogue; and many hearing him, were astonished, saying, From whence hath this man these things? and what wisdom is this which is given unto him, that even such mighty works are wrought by his hands?

3 Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James and Joses, and of Juda, and Simon? and are not his sisters here with us? and they were offended at him.

4 But Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honour, but in his own country, and among

PARAPHRASE.

WHEN our Lord had wrought the forementioned miracles, he returned to the city of Nazareth in Galilee, the place of his conception and education, where many of his acquaintance, and relations still resided; and took his disciples along with him thither.

2 And there, upon the first return of the Sabbath, he repairing, according to his custom, to their stated place of public worship, explained the law and the prophets to the people, and discoursed about the things of his kingdom; and this he did with such wisdom and authority, that many of them were exceedingly amazed, and could not forbear discovering it, saying, How is it possible, that a man of his low life and education should preach at this rate, and do the things he talks of? How surprising is it, that he should be master of so much knowledge and elocution, and that such remarkable miracles should be performed by him, in confirmation of his doctrine!

3 Is he not the son of one Joseph, who is known to have been only a poor carpenter in this town? And did not he himself, for many years, work at his father's trade? (See the note on Luke ii. 51.) Was not Mary his mother? Were not James and Joses, Judas and Simon, all mean and obscure people, his chief relations? And are not some of his nearest female kindred poor women, who are still living in low circumstances amongst us? (See the note on Mat. xii. 46.) And their prejudices arose so high, that they despised him; and, disdainful to be his disciples, were ashamed to own him.

4 But, in answer to their offence at him on these accounts, Jesus told them, that a sort of proverbial saying was then plainly verified with regard to him, viz. That a teacher sent of God is ordinarily more honoured and better received among such as never

among his own kin, and in his own house.

5 And he could there do no mighty work, save that he laid his hands upon a few sick folk, and healed them.

6 And he marvelled because of their unbelief. And he went round about the villages, teaching.

7 And he calleth unto him the twelve, and began to send them forth by two and two; and gave them power over unclean spirits;

8 And commanded them that they should take nothing for their journey, save a staff only: no scrip, no bread, no money in their purse:

9 But be shod with sandals; and not put on two coats.

never knew him before, than amongst his own townsmen and old acquaintance, kindred and family, who, under the power of envy, are apt to form their judgment of him, not by his real worth, and the excellence of his life and doctrine, but by worldly considerations of his person and parentage, and by the meaner appearances he formerly made in private life.

5 And therefore, though, if he pleased, he could have worked as many miracles at this place as at any other; yet he had no ordinate or moral power for it; he judging it absolutely unfit to throw away his miracles upon those whose obstinate perverseness would turn them into arguments of greater enmity and envy against him, as well as into higher aggravations of their own guilt and condemnation. Nevertheless he cured a few sick people that were brought to him, and had faith to be healed, by only laying his hands upon them; which was sufficient to confirm his doctrine, to leave that people without excuse, and to shew them what greater benefits they lost by their contempt of him.

6 Then he removed from *Nazareth*, like one greatly amazed at their obstinacy in rejecting both him and their own mercy, merely on account of the meanness of his family; and, taking a circuit through other parts of *Galilee*, he preached in all the little country-towns and villages there, where he had been less known.

7 About this time, Jesus, designing, by degrees, to spread his gospel in several places where he could not go in person to preach it, called together the twelve, whom he before had chosen to be his apostles, (chap. iii. 1, 4, &c.) and began to employ them, sending them out by pairs to preach in the cities of *Judea*, that their testimony might have the more weight, and that they might mutually assist and encourage one another in their work: And, for the confirmation of their doctrine, he conferred upon them a power of working miracles, even to the casting of devils out of possessed persons.

8, 9 And to the instructions which he gave his apostles about the doctrines they should preach, he added others relating to their behaviour; expressly ordering, that they should make no provision for their suitenance, or defence, in their journey; nor incur themselves with, or be anxious about, victuals, or cloaths, or even money to defray their expence; but that they should set out, just as they were, with only one walking staff, one coat, and one pair of shoes or sandals; thereby intimating,

that their present progress would be but for a little while, that the labourer is worthy of his hire, that God would raise them friends in his providence for all needful supplies, and that they were to live by faith upon him for it.

10 And he said unto them, In what place soever ye enter into an house, there abide till ye depart from that place.

10 He likewise said to them, Whenever ye go into any city or town to preach my gospel, and shall meet with an agreeable family that is willing to hear your words, and give you proper entertainment; fix your quarters there, without shifting them, till ye leave its neighbourhood, that ye may not put any damp upon the affection of your friends, nor seem to be whimsical, or to want to pamper sensual appetites.

11 And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear you, when ye depart thence, shake off the dust under your feet, for a testimony against them. Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrhah in the day of judgment, than for that city.

11 And if ye go to any place where the people will neither admit you into their houses, nor regard the message of salvation with which I send you, withdraw from thence to some other town; and, at your departure from them, shake off the dust of your feet, as a signal of the abhorrence which God, and ye yourselves have of their provoking obstinacy and infidelity, and as an intimation that they deserve to be trodden under foot, and that ye will take no further pains with them, but leave them to his strict and righteous judgment: (See the note on *Luke ix. 5.*) I assuredly tell you, that the punishment of the sinners in such a town or city shall be more abundantly severe, in the great day of account, than that which *Sodom* and *Gomorrhah* suffered, when God rained fire and brimstone from heaven upon them to consume them, or than that which the wicked inhabitants of those ancient cities shall suffer at the final judgment; in as much as these sin against greater light, and mercies, and obligations, than they did.

12 And they went out, and preached that men should repent.

12 With these directions and powers the apostles went forth, two and two, to execute their Lord's commission; and, wherever they came, they preached upon the nature, the necessity, and the motives of repentance, with reference to, and by arguments taken from, the blessings of the Messiah's kingdom, which was just ready to appear among them.

13 And they cast out many devils, and anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them.

13 And, to prove the divine authority of their commission, they cast out great numbers of devils in Christ's name, and miraculously cured many persons that were afflicted with various kinds of diseases, using only anointing with oil, as an external symbol, and as an ordinance for the faith of them that were healed*.

14 The

NOTE

* Anointing with oil was used by the apostles, not as means of healing; for then the cures would not have been miraculous, as these evidently were: But oil being

14 And king Herod heard of him; (for his name was spread abroad:) and he said, That John the Baptist was risen from the dead, and therefore mighty works do shew forth themselves in him.

15 Others said, That it is Elias. And others said, That it is a prophet, or as one of the prophets.

16 But when Herod heard thereof, he said, It is John whom I beheaded; he is risen from the dead.

17 For Herod himself had sent forth and laid hold upon John, and bound him in prison for Herodias' sake, his brother Philip's wife; for he had married her.

18 For John had said unto Herod, It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother's wife.

19 Therefore Herodias had a quar-

14 The apostles doing all these things in the name of Jesus, spread his fame with increasing honour, till at length it reached the ears of Herod the tetrarch: (see the note on *Mat. xiv. 1.*) And when he came to hear of the mighty works that were done by Jesus and by his disciples, he was struck with great surprise and terror, saying, under a consciousness of guilt, Surely this is that great prophet and holy man *John the Baptist*, whom I wickedly put to death, and whom God has righteously restored to life; and therefore these wonderful works are wrought by him, to prove his innocence and his divine mission, and to bring vengeance upon me for beheading him.

15 Others had different opinions about him: Some supposed him to be *Elijah the Tishbite*, whom the Jews, misled by a mistaken notion of a prophecy in *Malachi iv. 5.* expected to appear just before the coming of the Messiah; others took him to be one of the ancient prophets, raised again from the dead; and others thought he was some new prophet sent of God, like those of old.

16 But, whatsoever were their various conjectures concerning him, Herod, whose guilty conscience needed no accuser, could not be beat out of it, but that *John the Baptist*, whom he had murdered, was raised from the dead, and that it was he who appeared with so much reputation and power among the people.

17 For Herod, a good while before this, (see the note on *Mat. xiv. 6.*) had ordered *John* to be taken up, committed to jail, and loaded with irons, till at length he put him to death; all which was done, in a way of revenge upon him, for the censure he had passed upon Herod's incestuous marriage with *Herodias* his own brother *Philip's* wife.

18 For *John* had plainly and freely told him, that it was absolutely unlawful for him to take away his brother's wife, and to make her his own, as he had done; *Philip* himself not being then dead, and having had children by her. (See the reference in *Mat. xiv. 4.*)

19 *Herodias* was so highly incensed against *John* for this, that she prevailed upon *Herod* so far to gratify

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being a known symbol of health and joy, the apostles used it in the name of the Lord, (*Jam. v. 14.*) as an external sign of what he would do, in that, as certainly as their bodies were anointed with it, their health should be restored: And this shews the vanity of *Popish* pretences to

the sacrament of *extreme unction*, which they use for the remission of the sins of dying persons, that their souls may be saved in the world they are going to; whereas the apostles used it only as a sign of restoring the sick to health.

quarrel against him, and would have killed him, but she could not.

20 For Herod feared John, knowing that he was a just man, and an holy, and observed him, and when he heard him, he did many things, and heard him gladly.

21 And when a convenient day was come, that Herod on his birth-day made a supper to his lords, high captains, and chiefestates of Galilee :

22 And when the daughter of the said Herodias came in, and danced, and pleased Herod, and them that sat with him; the king said unto the damsel, Ask of me whatsoever thou wilt, and I will give it thee.

23 And he sware unto her, Whatsoever thou shalt ask of me, I will give it thee, unto the half of my kingdom.

24 And she went forth, and said unto her mother, What shall I ask? And she said, The head of John the Baptist.

25 And she came in straightway with

tify his own and her resentments, as to clap him up in prison, but could not get him to yield to her further desire and solicitations for putting him to death.

20 For how willing soever he might be to please her, and get rid of *John*, he durst not venture upon such a bold stroke, not only because it might too much incense the people, who universally admired *John* as an holy messenger from God; but likewise because his own conscience restrained him: For, from what he himself knew of *John*, he could not but look upon him, and have a secret veneration for him, as at least an honest, pious, good man; and, at times, he had heard him preach with a great deal of pleasure, and had been so far influenced by it, as to comply with many duties, which he inculcated, though, his heart not being effectually changed, he would by no means yield to his advice in a case that lay so directly contrary to his own lusts.

21 However, *Herodias*, keeping this point still in view, found at length a suitable opportunity to bring about her barbarous design in the following manner: Upon the return of *Herod's* birth-day, he, according to the ancient custom of eastern kings, celebrated it with feasting and public rejoicings; at which were present the nobility, the chief officers of the army, and the principal magistrates and counsellors of *Galilee*.

22 And, on this jovial occasion, the daughter of this same *Herodias*, whom she had by her husband *Philip*, came into the room, and danced in such a manner as was extremely diverting to the king and all his guests; and, being in a merry mood, he spoke to the young miss, saying, I am so exceedingly pleased with you, that I must have you ask some favour of me; and, whatever it be, I promise you, before all this company, it shall be granted.

23 And still further to encourage her, and to assure her that he was in earnest, he bound his promise with a rash oath to this effect, Whatsoever your request may be, I will certainly fulfil it, even to the value of one half of my dominions.

24 Upon this, the young creature, not knowing what to say, went out of the company to her mother, and desired that she would please to tell her what she had best ask of the king; and her mother, finding she had now an opportunity to glut her cruel revenge, ordered her to beg the head of *John the Baptist*.

25 Accordingly the daughter immediately returned, and presented her petition to *Herod* the king,

with haste unto the king, and asked, saying, I will that thou give me by and by in a charger, the head of John the Baptist.

26 And the king was exceeding sorry; yet for his oath's sake, and for their sakes which sat with him, he would not reject her.

27 And immediately the king sent an executioner, and commanded his head to be brought; and he went and beheaded him in the prison.

28 And brought his head in a charger, and gave it to the damsel: and the damsel gave it to her mother.

29 And when his disciples heard of it, they came and took up his corpse, and laid it in a tomb.

30 And the apostles gathered themselves together unto Jesus, and told him all things, both what they had done, and what they had taught.

31 And he said unto them, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while: for there were many coming and going,

king, saying, Encouraged by your majesty's promise and oath, the favour I have to ask is, That you would graciously condescend now, without delay, to present me with the head of *John the Baptist*, commanding it to be served up to me in a dish.

26 This was such a shocking request, especially at a birth-night feast, as the king little expected; and he was extremely troubled at hearing it: However, having so publicly sworn to grant any petition she should present, and being ashamed to appear before the whole court, either rash in making, or fickle and inconstant in not performing his promise and oath, he would not revoke them by rejecting her; but rather chose to violate conscience, together with all principles of true honour, righteousness, and goodness, and even of humanity itself, than be exposed to the contempt of persons, whose applause was really a reproach.

27, 28 And therefore, under the power of the vilest passions, he, like a merciless, arbitrary tyrant, ordered an officer to go directly to the prison where *John* was confined, and to cut off his head, and bring it away forthwith: The officer accordingly went, in obedience to his lord's unjust and absolute will, and took off this holy man's head; and, bringing it in a dish, presented it to the young woman; and she immediately carried it to her mother, who triumphed in her barbarous spite, and feasted her eyes with the horrid spectacle.

29 And when *John's* disciples heard of this tragical death, they came, and obtained leave to dispose of their master's body, which was left in prison without its head; and honourably buried it in a sepulchre, to testify their great respect to him, who had suffered such public injury and disgrace.

30 Now, to return from this digression; In a little time the twelve apostles, having executed their present commission, by publishing the gospel in the towns and cities of *Judea*, came back again to Jesus, and gave him a particular account, as every one must for himself at the great day, of all that they respectively had said and done in the several places where they had been, and of what success they had met with in their preaching.

31 And, after they had made their report, he ordered them to retire with him, apart from other company, into a certain solitary place, that he might give them further instruction, and that they might rest and refresh themselves for a little time, after their late fatigue; for such crowds of peo-

ing, and they had no leisure so much as to eat.

32 And they departed into a desert place by ship privately.

33 And the people saw them departing, and many knew him, and ran a-foot thither out of all cities, and outwent them, and came together unto him.

34 And Jesus, when he came out, saw much people, and was moved with compassion toward them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd: and he began to teach them many things.

35 And when the day was now far spent, his disciples came unto him, and said, This is a desert place, and now the time is far passed:

36 Send them away, that they may go into the country round about, and into the villages, and buy themselves bread: for they have nothing to eat.

37 He answered, and said unto them, Give ye them to eat. And they say unto him, Shall we go and buy two hundred pennyworth

ple resorted to him where he then was, that they could hardly get time enough to eat their necessary food.

32 Accordingly they got into a boat, which lay in the lake of *Gennesareth*; and, putting off, they landed in as private a manner as possible at a desert part of the country, near the city of *Bethsaida*. (Luke ix. 10.)

33 But when the people saw them making off, and observed which way they steered their course, many of them who knew Jesus, and guessed whither he was going, fetched a compass by land, and made such haste, that they got to the place to which the vessel was bound, before he came ashore; and many others, having heard where he was, went out of adjacent towns and cities to meet him.

34 When Jesus, therefore, came out of the boat, he found a vast multitude waiting for his arrival: And, though they thereby prevented his desirable retirement with the apostles; he, according to the greatness of his mercy, as kindly received them as usual, and took compassion upon them, because he knew their ignorance, wants, and dangers, and that many of them were, as sheep, desirous of spiritual food and guidance, but had no faithful and able teachers among the *scribes* and *Pharisees* to instruct them; and therefore he set himself to acquaint them with many things relating to his kingdom of grace and glory, and healed such sick persons as were brought to him. (Luke ix. 11.)

35 And when he had taken up so much time in these kind offices, that the evening drew on apace, the apostles came up to him, and taking notice that they were in a lonesome, uninhabited part of the country, and that day-light would quickly be shut in,

36 They desired that he would be pleased to dismiss the multitude before it grew dark; and order them to go to the nearest towns and villages, to provide themselves victuals, as well as lodging, because they had no food to refresh them.

37 Our Lord replied, What need is there for that? and, for the trial of their faith, said, Give ye them something for their sustenance, that they may not faint by the way. But the disciples, instead of looking to him, and trusting in him, to enable them to do what he commanded, answered with surprise, How is it possible that we should supply such a prodigious multitude as this? Where should we get provision, or find money enough to buy it for them, which,

worth of bread, and give them to eat?

38 He saith unto them, How many loaves have ye? go and see. And when they knew, they say, Five, and two fishes.

39 And he commanded them to make all sit down by companies upon the green grass.

40 And they sat down in ranks, by hundreds, and by fifties.

41 And when he had taken the five loaves, and the two fishes, he looked up to heaven, and blessed, and brake the loaves, and gave them to his disciples to set before them; and the two fishes divided he among them all.

42 And they did all

which, to say the least, would cost two hundred pence †, if we were only to give every one of them a little.

38 Hereupon he said unto them, Go and see what quantity of food ye have among you: And, when they had made enquiry, according to his order, they returned and told him, that they had only five barley-loaves, and two small fishes; which were next to nothing for satisfying the hunger of so many. (*John vi. 9.*)

39 Then, having bid them bring these loaves and fishes to him, he, like the Master of the family, ordered his disciples to tell the whole multitude, that he would have them sit down on the green sward, in distinct rows, as might be most convenient for receiving the entertainment he was about to give them.

40 Accordingly the people, without going into the unbelieving question, How can he furnish a table in the wilderness? readily seated themselves in ranks ‡, which consisted of fifty persons one way, and an hundred the other.

41 And when they were thus placed, he took the five loaves and two fishes, and looking up to heaven with great solemnity, asked a blessing upon the food, giving thanks to his heavenly Father for it, according to his custom at ordinary meals. (See the note on *Mat. xiv. 19.*) Then he broke the bread, and delivered it together with the fish, his own creating power, at the same time, multiplying the store, to be distributed through the disciples hands among the several ranks; thereby procuring respect to them from the people; and intimating, that spiritual blessings should be ordinarily communicated, not in an immediate, but in a mediate way, by the ministrations of his servants.

42 And the apostles having observed their Lord's

NOTES.

† This was a round sum, often, says Dr. *Lightfoot*, in the mouths of the *Jews*; and reckoning their penny at sevenpence-halfpenny of our money, it amounted to six pounds five shillings sterling.

‡ They seem to have been placed, not in separate companies of fifty, or an hundred a-piece, as is more generally thought, but all in one company, ranged like soldiers, in rank and file, either an hundred in length, and fifty in depth, or fifty in length, and an hundred in depth, which made exactly five thousand. In this manner it was easy to place and

number them with expedition, and the food might be commodiously distributed among them, they, at the same time, having the fairest opportunity of hearing Christ and seeing that there was no fraud, in the management of the miracle, in the front. And this plainly reconciles the account here given, with that in *Luke ix. 14, 15.* where it is said, they all sat down by fifties in a company: For, according to this method, every one sat in a rank of fifty, as well as of an hundred, either in depth or breadth. See *Pierce's fifth dissertation annexed to the Hebrews.*

all eat, and were filled.

43 And they took up twelve baskets full of the fragments, and of the fishes.

44 And they that did eat of the loaves, were about five thousand men.

45 And straightway, he constrained his disciples to get into the ship, and to go to the other side before unto Bethsaida, while he sent away the people.

46 And when he had sent them away, he departed into a mountain to pray.

47 And when even was come, the ship was in the midst of the sea, and he alone on the land.

48 And he saw them toiling in rowing; (for the wind was contrary unto them:) and about the fourth watch of the night, he cometh unto them, walking upon the sea, and would have passed by them.

Lord's order in distributing the food among the people, just as they received it from him; every one of this vast multitude eat, till he was fully satisfied.

43 And, after all, there was so much to spare, that the disciples gathered together as many scraps of the broken bread and fish as filled twelve baskets, which were reserved for after-use, that nothing might be wasted: So wonderful was the power of Christ to increase this small pittance, the remainder of which was more than the first provision! (See the note on *Mat. xiv. 20.*)

44 And yet the number of those who had thus eat to the full, was about five thousand men; which were as many thousands as there were single loaves, besides the women and children that were present, and partook with them. (*Mat. xiv. 21.*)

45 Then, as soon as all this was dispatched, our blessed Lord insisted that his disciples, though much against their own inclination, should go into the boat by themselves, and pass over the lake of *Genesareth* toward *Bethsaida*, leaving him behind to dismiss the people, before it should be quite dark, and thereby prevent their design, which the disciples themselves were but too likely to fall in with, of forcing him to assume the character of a temporal king. (See the note on *John vi. 15.*)

46 And when he had prevailed with the multitude to depart, he, according to his frequent custom, went up an hill, for better retirement, to spend some time in secret prayer.

47 In the mean while, the latter evening came on, which, according to the *Jewish* way of reckoning, is after sun-set; (see the note on *Mat. xxvi. 20.*) and the disciples in the boat were got to the midst of the lake, Jesus himself continuing still alone on the land.

48 Then the wind rising on a sudden, and blowing full in their teeth, caused the water to be exceeding rough and dangerous; and Jesus saw them tossed about with surging waves, and labouring hard to row against the strong gale. However, he suffered them, for the trial of their faith and patience, to remain in great extremity, till it began to be morning; (see the note on *Mat. xiv. 25.*) at which time he went toward them, walking as readily upon the surface of the rolling floods as if they had been dry ground, according to what is said of the great God, that he *treads upon the waves of the sea*: (*Job ix. 8.*) And, by the manner of his progress, it seemed, to the disciples, as if he intended to have gone by them.

49, 50 But

49 But when they saw him walking upon the sea, they supposed it had been a spirit, and cried out.

50 (For they all saw him, and were troubled.) And immediately he talked with them, and faith unto them. Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid.

51 And he went up unto them into the ship, and the wind ceased: and they were sore amazed in themselves beyond measure, and wondered.

52 For they considered not *the miracle* of the loaves; for their heart was hardened.

53 And when they had passed over, they came into the land of Genesareth, and drew to the shore.

54 And when they were come out of the ship, straightway they knew him,

55. And ran through that whole region round about, and began to carry about in beds those that were sick, where they heard he was.

56 And whithersoever he entered, into villages, or cities, or country, they laid the sick in the streets, and besought him that they might touch, if it were but the border of his garment: and

49, 50 But their fears were greatly alarmed, when they discerned one in human shape walking upon the water, they imagining that it was an apparition; upon which they shrieked out in great surprize; for there was light enough for them to discern something of his form, and they were terribly frightened: But, as our extremity is God's opportunity, and when fears are highest, deliverance is often nearest, the compassionate Saviour, who waited to be gracious, immediately spoke to them in his usual free and friendly manner, saying, It is I, your Lord and Master, who am come for your relief; take courage, rejoice in my presence, and in my salvation; let no further fears distress you.

51 And, having thus laid the storm within their own minds, he went into the boat to them, and instantly the wind and waves sunk into a perfect calm; at all which they were exceedingly struck with awful wonder and astonishment, as if he had even outdone himself.

52 For though they had but the day before seen the amazing miracle by which he fed five thousand men, besides women and children, with so small a quantity of bread and fishes; (ver. 44.) yet they were so dull of understanding, and slow of heart to believe, that they did not reflect upon the plain demonstration which he then, as well as at several other times, had given of his eternal power and Godhead.

53 Jesus being now with the disciples in the boat, it soon arrived at the port it was bound for; where, having crossed over the lake, they went ashore, not far from *Capernaum*, (John vi. 17.) in the country of *Genesareth*, which gave name to this lake.

54 And as soon as they were landed, the inhabitants of that neighbourhood knew him to be Jesus, whose fame was raised among them by what he had formerly done thereabouts. (*Mat. viii. 1, — 17.*)

55 Upon this, they ran from place to place, to spread notices in all those parts, that the great Physician of soul and body was come thither; so that multitudes continually flocked to him, bringing with them sick persons in their beds, that they might present them to him for healing, wherever they heard he might be met with.

56 And so great and universal was his reputation, that, to whatsoever city, town, or country-village, he went, the people brought out their sick, and laid them before him, in the streets, as he passed along, intreating the favour of his permitting them to touch his clothes, though it were but the

as many as touched him, were made whole.

hem of his garment : And all that could get near enough, only just to touch him, with faith, were perfectly cured, whatsoever their diseases had been.

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

Who could have thought that there should be so much perverseness and obstinacy, in human nature, against God, such contempt of the only Saviour, such savage cruelty toward the best of men, and such impetuous lusts and passions to break through all obligations and restraints, had not some of Christ's own countrymen, and a *Herod* and *Herodias*, been flaming instances of them, in their behaviour toward him, and *John the Baptist*! And ah, how many may be astonished and affected at the word of God, who are not savingly changed by it, and whose unbelief shuts them out from its rich advantages! Yea, they may reverence the preacher, and hear him gladly, and yet continue wicked men and hypocrites. But ministers are to execute their Lord's commission, whether the people will hear or forbear: And as he, who sends them on his errand, will furnish them for it, own them in it, and make it the duty and inclination of his people to honour and support them, for their work's sake; so they, like the apostles, should commit their subsistence, and labours, and all their successes, to him, and not intangle themselves with the affairs of this life, nor fear the faces of men, but be faithful to Christ and souls, whatsoever may be the event. But how great is the peril of those that hear the gospel, if they reject it; since the heaviest judgments are denounced against them, and none can share in the blessings of the Messiah's kingdom, but those that are brought to embrace him, and to turn from sin to God, through him! And how deplorable is their case, who are under the conduct of blind and unfaithful guides! But Christ's compassion is toward them that want to be led in a right way; and they shall not seek after him in vain. His goodness and power are infinite, and unwearied, to instruct and heal them, and to supply all their wants of soul and body: He can feed them in a wilderness, and come over floods for their help: And though he may stand at a distance, and suffer his own people to be in great distress, for a time, he observes it all, and will come in proper season for their relief, even when they least expect it; and his saying to the soul, *It is I, be not afraid*, is enough to silence every fear, and comfort under every trouble. But when once he shews his power and his glory, and speaks peace, let us not turn again to folly, or give way to unbelief.

C H A P VII.

The Pharisees find fault with Christ's disciples for eating with unwashen hands, 1,—5. He reproves their hypocrisy, and states the true notion of what does, and does not defile a man, 6,—23. He casts out an unclean spirit from the daughter of a Syrophenician woman, 24,—30. And heals a deaf and dumb man, 31,—37.

TEXT.

THEN came together unto him the Pharisees, and certain of the scribes, which came from Jerusalem.

2 And when they saw some of his disciples eat bread with defiled (that is to say, with

PARAPHRASE.

WHILE our Lord was exercising his ministry, and performing his miracles in the land of *Gennesareth*, several *Pharisees* and doctors of the law came thither from *Jerusalem*, and attended him, to observe his words and actions, that they might pick a quarrel with him.

2 And, soon after their coming into those parts, they took notice of some of his disciples who neglected to wash their hands immediately before they sat down to eat; this, they superstitiously called eating

with unwashen) hands, they found fault.

3 For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, except they wash *their* hands oft, eat not, holding the tradition of the elders.

4 And *when they come* from the market, except they wash, they eat not. And many other things there be, which they have received to hold, *as* the washing of cups and pots, brazen vessels, and of tables.

5 Then the Pharisees and scribes asked him, Why walk not thy disciples according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unwashen hands?

6 He answered, and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with *their* lips, but their heart is far from me.

7 Howbeit, in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.

eating with defiled, or impure hands, and thereupon took occasion to charge them with irreligion and profaneness.

3 For all the *Jews*, and especially the *Pharisees*, by virtue of certain traditions, handed down to them from their ancestors, were wont commonly to wash their hands, just before they eat, thinking it unlawful to sit down to a meal without it.

4 And so exact were they in using this ceremony, that if they had been at market, or in any public company, they would eat nothing till they had first washed their hands, for fear that, unawares, they might have touched something which they accounted unclean. And many other such sort of rites they were as scrupulous in observing, and laid as much stress upon, as if they were things of necessary and eternal obligation, because they were delivered to them, by tradition, from some former heads of sects among them, though neither the law of *Moses*, nor any other part of the word of God ever enjoined them: As for instance, They insisted on (*βαπτισμους*) some sort of washing of cups, and pots, and brazen vessels, and tables, or (*κλιων*) beds, on which they used to lie, or sit at their meals, that they might cleanse them from an imaginary defilement.

5 On this account, therefore, the *Pharisees* and doctors of the law, who, of all the *Jews*, were the most superstitious, demanded of our Lord, How he, who made such high pretences to holiness, could excuse his disciples from observing the laws of ancient and authentic tradition, whilst, in direct contradiction thereunto, they were so wicked as to sit down to eat, without first washing their hands?

6 Our Lord, who knew their hearts, and all their evil designs, replied, God, by the prophet *Isaiab*, (xxix. 13.) has given a just and exact description of such hypocrites as ye are, in words of the following import: This people make hypocritical pretences of honouring me with fair speeches, and outward shews of purity and devotion; but their hearts do not go along with their words and professions, and it is the least of their concern to glorify me by a sincere regard to pleasing and exalting me.

7 But as their fairest appearances of religion are only lip, and not heart service; and they observe, teach, and impose certain doctrines, upon the foot of human authority, in preference and contradiction to my express commands; all their devotions

are of no account with me, nor of any avail to themselves.

8 For, laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do.

8 This is an exact description of you, *scribes* and *Pharisees*: For whilst, in doctrine and practice, ye shamefully neglect the most important commands of God, relating to righteousness, mercy, faith, and truth, ye are mighty zealous for, and lay the greatest stress upon, such vain and trifling traditions of men, as relate to the necessity of washing pots, and cups, and hands, just before eating, with several other such useless and superstitious ceremonies, in which there really can be no religion.

9 And he said unto them. Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition.

9 And, to bring the matter still closer to them, he added, Ye not only prefer the orders of men to those of God, but, (*καλως*) in your plausible way, ye utterly subvert, and act in direct contradiction to, the plainest commands of God, whenever they stand in competition with the traditions of your elders, that ye may preserve and enforce these.

10 For Moses said, Honour thy father and thy mother: and whoso curseth father or mother, let him die the death.

10 As, for instance, *Moses*, or rather God by him, expressly commanded children to honour both their parents; (*Exod. xx. 12.*) and such stress is laid in the law upon this important duty, that whoever speaks or acts contemptuously and injuriously against either father or mother, he is sentenced to death. (*Chap. xxi. 17.*)

11 But ye say, If a man shall say to his father or mother, *It is Corban*, that is to say, a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me: *he shall be free.*

11 But, in opposition to this holy law of God, the doctrine which ye teach, by human authority, is, That if any man devote the money to God and the service of the temple, which was necessary for the relief of his parents, and which ye call *corban*, or a gift consecrated to God; then he is discharged from all obligation of using it for their comfort or support, be they ever so indigent, sickly, or aged.

12 And ye suffer him no more to do ought for his father or his mother;

12 Yea, by this means, ye lay such a restraint upon him, as if it were a sin for him to apply any part of the devoted riches to the relief of the most necessitous father or mother, though shewing that sort of piety at home, is evidently a principal part of the honour, which, by the law of God, all are obliged to pay to their parents, when need requires it:

13 Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye.

13 And so by this device of the *Jewish* elders, which ye impose upon your followers, and by other such like iniquitous traditions, ye explain away the true sense of God's own law, and evidently defeat its obligation, under hypocritical and specious pretences of the most sacred reverence of his name, and of his sanctuary.

14 And when he

14 Then our blessed Lord, turning from the *scribes*

he had called all the people unto him, he said unto them, Hearken unto me, every one of you, and understand.

15 There is nothing from without a man, that entering into him, can defile him: but the things which come out of him, those are they that defile the man.

16 If any man have ears to hear, let him hear.

17 And when he was entered into the house from the people, his disciples asked him concerning the parable.

18 And he saith unto them, Are ye so without understanding also? Do ye not perceive, that whatsoever thing from without entereth into the man, it cannot defile him;

19 Because it entereth not into his heart, but into the belly, and goeth out into the draught, purging all meats?

20 And he said, That

scribes and Pharisees, applied himself to the common people; and, ordering them all to draw nigh, said, Listen attentively to what I am about to deliver, and reflect seriously upon it, that ye may understand things which differ, and may approve of those which are most excellent.

15 Whatever occasions of sin may arise from external things, none of them make a man unclean, or less acceptable to God, any further than they have a bad influence upon the soul itself: And, therefore, whatsoever is originally without the man, though it touch him, and be afterwards eaten or drank, and so received into the body; yet, if it do not affect his mind and heart, it cannot render him morally polluted. But the unlawful dispositions, thoughts, and designs, which are found in his own corrupt heart, and vent themselves in the words and actions of his life, are the only things that can properly be said to make him filthy and abominable in God's sight.

16 Whoever is willing and desirous to know the truth for his own direction and advantage, let him seriously reflect on what I have been saying.

17 Christ, having finished his discourse to the multitude, retired into an house, taking only his disciples with him; and when he was with them alone, they intreated him, by *Peter* as their mouth, (*Mat. xv. 15.*) that he would please to give them a particular explanation of the foregoing parable.

18 He replied, with an air of surprize at their stupidity, Are ye, who have been so much and so long with me, and whom I have sent to preach to others, so ignorant and dull as not to take in the meaning of so plain a thing as this? Do not ye easily apprehend, that it is impossible for a man to be morally defiled or rendered unclean before God, by the nature or quality of any thing he eats or drinks without intemperance, which is a vice of the mind? The reason of this is so exceeding evident, that one would think ye could not miss of it.

19 For the meat or drink which a man swallows, being corporeal, can make no alteration for the better or worse in the soul, which is of a different nature from all bodies, and is the immediate source of all moral purity or defilement; but every thing that goes in at the mouth, passes through the stomach and bowels, which, performing their proper offices, in separating nourishment for the body, the remainder is discharged, by the course of nature, without affecting the heart.

20 On the other hand, said he, the evils that are origi-

That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man.

21 For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders,

22 Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness :

23 All these evil things come from within, and defile the man.

24 And from thence he arose, and went into the borders of Tyre and Sidon, and entered into an house, and would have no man know it; but he could not be hid.

25 For a certain woman whose young daughter had an unclean spirit, heard of him, and came and fell at his feet :

26 (The woman was a Greek, a Syrophenician by nation :) and she besought him that he would cast forth the devil out of her daughter.

27 But Jesus said unto her, Let the children first be filled : for it is not meet to take the childrens bread, and to cast it unto the dogs.

originally in, and proceed from, a man's own soul, are the things that really make him vile and unclean : Here is the fountain-head of all moral impurity and pollution whatsoever.

21, 22 For, to instance in a few particulars, all manner of sinful imaginations, designs, and desires, in opposition to God or fellow-creatures ; all adulteries, fornication and unnatural pollutions, cruelties and murders, thefts and robberies, covetous over-reachings, oppression and frauds, effeminacy and unchastity, in thought, word or deed, envy and evil-speaking against God or man, haughtiness of spirit and behaviour ; and all sorts of intemperance, together with every foolish, irregular and exorbitant passion :

23 All these defiling abominations proceed from depraved and wicked hearts, as from their spring-head ; and these are the things that do indeed render a man most hatefully vile in himself, and in the eyes of God and all good people.

24 Our Saviour having ended these discourses, which he delivered in the country of *Gennesareth*, (chap. vi. 53.) departed from thence to that part of *Galilee* which borders upon *Tyre* and *Sidon* ; and there he went privately into an house for concealment, at least for a while, that he might avoid the throng of the *Gentiles*, and the envy of the *Jews*, on their account : But the fame of his doctrine and miracles so closely followed him, wherever he went, that it was next to impossible for him to arrive, even at so remote a place as this, without its being known, as the event shewed.

25, 26 For his coming thither soon reached the ears of a certain woman of *Phenicia*, bordering upon *Syria* ; (see the notes on *Mat.* xv. 22.) and though she was a *Greek*, and so a stranger, by birth, to the commonwealth of *Israel*, and to the covenants of promise, yet, having heard of Jesus, and of the great power and mercy, which he had shewn, in working many miraculous cures, she came in an humble manner, and threw herself down at his feet, earnestly intreating him to cast out an evil spirit from a young daughter of her's, who was possessed, and grievously tormented by it.

27 But Jesus, for the trial of her faith, seemed to reject and disdain her, saying, Pray stay, let the children of God's family, his own peculiar people, be first satisfied with the blessings I am come to bestow : For, as it would be thought very improper and unnatural, that a parent should take away his childrens food, before they have enough, and give it

to

28 And she answered and said unto him, Yes, Lord : yet the dogs under the table, eat of the childrens crumbs.

29 And he said unto her, For this saying, go thy way; the devil is gone out of thy daughter.

30 And when she was come to her house, she found the devil gone out, and her daughter laid upon the bed.

31 And again departing from the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, he came unto the sea of Galilee, thro' the midst of the coasts of Decapolis.

32 And they bring unto him one that was deaf, and had an impediment in his speech : and they beseech him to put his hand upon him.

33 And he took him aside from the multitude, and put his fingers into his ears, and he spit, and touched his tongue.

to the dogs ; so it is not fit that I should deal out my mercies to you, till the *Jews*, who are the household of God, are first served ; since you are without the pale of the covenant, and, for your *Gentile* abominations, deserve to be treated as a dog.

28 The woman replied, Lord, what thou sayest is indeed highly equitable, and I freely own myself to be utterly unworthy of the least of thy favours : Nevertheless, as the dogs themselves are suffered to catch the crumbs that fall from the childrens table, without any injury to them ; so I humbly plead and hope, that this one mercy may not be denied me, as the offal of the plentiful blessings which I hear thou hast vouchsafed to the *Jews*, and which thou mayest spare, if thou pleasest, to a poor wretched outcast, without lessening thy more liberal distributions among them.

29 The compassionate Saviour being highly pleased with her humble importunity, and unshaken faith, answered, O woman, I cannot tell how to deny your earnest, believing petition ; it is granted to your heart's content : Depart in peace ; Satan is dispossessed, and your daughter is made whole.

30 Hereupon the woman returned to her house, rejoicing in the belief of a performance of the things that had been told her from the Lord ; and when she got home, she found the evil spirit was cast out, and saw her daughter lying upon the bed, with composure, and in perfect health.

31 After this, Jesus leaving the neighbourhood of *Tyre* and *Sidon*, and other *Gentile* towns and cities, went through the region of *Decapolis*, till he came near to the sea of *Galilee*. (*Mat.* xv. 29.)

32 And whilst he was in these parts, a deaf man, who had likewise much ado to speak, (*μογιδαλον*) was presented to him ; and they that brought him earnestly intreated, that our Lord would please to lay his hand upon him, and heal him, as they knew he had done in other cases, and believed he could do in this.

33 But to shew that he would not be tied down to any one particular method of procedure, especially when others might seem to prescribe to him, he rather chose to vary it ; and, stepping aside with the man to a small distance from the company, he put his fingers into his ears, and afterwards touched his tongue with a little spittle, using these applications, not as means or natural causes of the cure, but as visible emblems of his invisible healing power, and to shew that he could as easily open this man's ears, and set his tongue at liberty, as touch them.

34 Then

34 And, looking up to heaven, he sighed, and saith unto him, Ephphatha, that is, Be opened.

35 And straightway his ears were opened, and the string of his tongue was loosed, and he spake plain.

36 And he charged them that they should tell no man: but the more he charged them, so much the more a great deal they published it,

37 And were beyond measure astonished, saying, He hath done all things well: he maketh both the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak.

34 Then lifting his eyes up to heaven, to teach us from whence our help comes, and to intimate that his commission for this work was from above, he groaned within himself, as sympathizing with this poor creature under his miseries, and said to him, in the *Chaldee* dialect, with an air of independency, and with the majesty and authority of a God, Be opened †; I command that your distemper be removed; receive your hearing and your speech.

35 And immediately, upon Christ's pronouncing these words, the man was fully restored to his hearing, and the impediment of his speech was entirely removed; so that he spake distinctly, and without any remaining difficulty.

36 Then Jesus, to avoid all appearances of vain-glory, and occasions of envy and rage in his enemies, his time being not yet come, ordered the man, and those that were eye-witnesses of the cure, not to divulge it: But they were so affected with his mercy and power, and so apprehensive as if over-modesty put him upon giving them this charge, that the more earnest he was in forbidding them to make the miracle public, the more pains they took in spreading it abroad.

37 And they were so exceedingly amazed, and overcome with joyful wonder, that they could not help saying, to his honour, That nothing came a-miss to him; but that he was able and ready to do every thing that could be desired for the relief of miserable creatures; as appeared in his restoring the deaf, and (*αλαλους*) such as could not tell how to speak before, to their perfect hearing and speech.

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

What a sink of wickedness is the heart of man; and how vain and trifling are its inventions for cleansing! Superstitious minds are more fond of external rites and ceremonies of human devising, than of heart purity, and the most important duties of God's commanding: But all the devotion and service which has not God's warrant in his word, and is not offered with sincere and upright hearts to his glory, is unprofitable and vain.—When divine grace effectually works in them that believe, what a happy change does it make upon them! What high and honourable thoughts does it give them of Christ! How sympathizing and compassionate does it make them to their afflicted relations and friends: how importunate with the Lord

N O T E.

† This was a word of sovereign authority, directed to the man, or to his distemper, and commanding the cure, and not an address to God for power to heal: Nor was there any need of such address; for Christ had a perpetual fund of power residing in himself, to work all miracles

whenever he pleased, even to the quickening of the dead, as he had asserted, *John* v. 25, 26. And this shews, that his *looking up to heaven* was not in a way of application to his Father for assistance to do the work.

for mercy on their behalf; and how humble and patient under seeming denials! But though he may sometimes try his peoples faith with many difficulties and discouragements, he secretly upholds and animates it, till, at length, he owns and honours it, by fulfilling the utmost of their wishes or hopes: And if we would be cleaned from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, and would be delivered from the power of Satan, and the various miseries of this present world, we should look to him for direction and relief, and seek and take his favour, in his own way, without prescribing to him. He can unstop deaf ears, and teach the tongue of the stammerer to speak forth his praise: And our great concern should be to listen to his instructions with an obedient ear; and to ascribe to him, on all proper occasions, as he shall direct, the glory due to his great name, who is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working.

C H A P. VIII.

Jesus miraculously feeds four thousand with seven loaves, 1,—9. Refuses to give a sign from heaven to the Pharisees, 10,—13. Cautions his disciples against the leaven of the Pharisees, and of Herod, 14,—21. Restores sight to a blind man. 22,—26. Asks his disciples what they and others thought of him, and foretels his sufferings, 27,—33. And exhorts to an acknowledgment of him and his gospel, under persecutions for his sake, 34,—38.

TEXT.

IN those days, the multitude being very great, and having nothing to eat, Jesus, called his disciples unto him, and saith unto them,

1 I have compassion on the multitude, because they have now been with me three days, and have nothing to eat:

3 And if I send them away fasting to their own houses, they will faint by the way: for divers of them came from far.

4 And his disciples answered him, From whence can a man satisfy these men with bread here

PARAPHRASE.

ABOUT this time, a great multitude being with Jesus and his apostles, in a desert place, to hear him preach, to behold his wonderful works, and to get their sick healed, and having continued with him till they were reduced to straits for want of food; he, whose eye is ever upon the needy and distressed, called his apostles to him, and, merely from his own free motion, said,

2 My heart is moved with tenderness and concern for this great crowd of people, because of the pains they have taken, and the inconveniencies they have suffered, by following me, for three days running, in uninhabited places, where they could meet with little or no refreshment, and are now quite destitute of necessary supplies:

3 And, should I withdraw from them, or order them to go home, before they have any victuals for their sustenance; poor creatures! many of them must certainly suffer great hardship, by means of their hunger, if they do not utterly perish on the road: For he knew that some of them had a great way to go.

4 The disciples, not reflecting upon the signal miracle whereby, not long since, he had fed five thousand men in their presence. (chap. vi. 41,—44.) asked him, How it could be possible for any one, in such a barren desolate place as they were in, to get

here in the wilder-
ness?

5 And he asked them, How many loaves have ye? And they said, Seven.

6 And he commanded the people to sit down on the ground: and he took the seven loaves, and gave thanks and brake, and gave to his disciples to set before them; and they did set them before the people.

7 And they had a few small fishes: and he blessed, and commanded to set them also before them.

8 So they did eat, and were filled: and they took up of the broken meat that was left, seven baskets.

9 And they that had eaten, were about four thousand: and he sent them away.

provision enough for the satisfying of so great a company?

5 But (*καί*) he, without any emotion of spirit at the dishonour which their stupidity and unbelief reflected upon him, asked them, How much bread they had with them? To which they replied, That they had only seven loaves, which were next to nothing for feeding so great a number of people.

6 However, without more ado, he commanded the whole multitude to sit down, in convenient order for an entertainment, on the ground; and then, having received the loaves, he, like the master of a family at meals, and according to his own constant custom, on such occasions, recommended the people and the food to the blessing of God, in thanksgiving and prayer: Then breaking the bread, and, at the same time, increasing it by his own divine power, he put it into the hands of his apostles, as his servants, to distribute it among the people; and they accordingly did so.

7 The apostles had likewise a few small fishes, that were included in the provisions for which our Lord gave thanks †; and he, miraculously enlarging their quantity also, ordered the apostles to hand them round about among the company.

8 By means of this distribution of the bread and fish, the vast number of people, then present, had enough; and so amazing was the increase, by the creating power of this divine Master of the feast, that, after they were all thoroughly satisfied, the apostles gathered together as many fragments as filled seven baskets for after-use.

9 And yet the number of the persons who were thus liberally fed, was about four thousand men, besides women and children, (*Mat. xv. 38.*) and when they had been graciously instructed, and sufficiently refreshed for their journey home, our Lord dismissed them.

10 The

N O T E.

† As Christ's blessing the loaves and fishes related, not to the miraculous multiplication of them, but to his customary acknowledgment of God as a bountiful benefactor; (see the note on *Matt. xiv. 19.*) so it seems that his blessing them did not consist of two prayers, distinctly made one after another, over each; but only of one prayer, relating to the whole entertainment; for the loaves and fishes were doubtless eat together: And in all other places, where this, and the miracle of feeding five thousand, are spoken of, his blessing both the loaves and fishes

is represented as but one action. But the reason why, in the institution of the Lord's supper, there were distinct prayers, one before the bread, and the other afterwards, before the cup was received, might be, not only for the greater solemnity; but likewise because the eating was over before the drinking began, and because the two elements were therein set apart for sacred use, to signify and bring to remembrance two distinct parts of Christ's sufferings, one of his body, as intimated in its being broken; and the other of his soul, in the shedding of his blood.

10 And straight-way he entered into a ship with his disciples, and came into the parts of Dalmanutha.

11 And the Pharisees came forth, and began to question with him, seeking of him a sign from heaven, tempting him.

12 And he sighed deeply in his spirit, and said, Why doth this generation seek after a sign? Verily, I say unto you, There shall no sign be given to this generation.

13 And he left them; and entering into the ship again, departed to the other side.

14 Now the disciples had forgotten to take bread, neither had they in the ship with them more than one loaf.

15 And he charged them, saying, Take heed, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, and of the leaven of Herod.

10 The multitude being gone, he embarked with his apostles; and, passing over the lake of *Genesareth*, went ashore on the coast of *Dalmanutha*, not far from *Magdala*. (Mat. xv. 39.)

11 And there the *Pharisees* soon gathered together about him, in company with the *Sadducees*, (Mat. xvi. 1.) and began to enter into a dispute with him, under pretence that all the wonderful works he had wrought were not sufficient to satisfy them of his divine power and mission. They therefore demanded, that, to put the matter past doubt, he would not amuse them with surprising changes only on earthly things, in which tricks of art might possibly deceive the common people; but that he would give them some immediate and visible sign from heaven itself, in which there could be no collusion. (See the note on *Mat. xvi. 1.*) This they did, not from any real desire of receiving conviction, but in hopes of getting some advantage against him.

12 Our Lord therefore, knowing their hypocrisy, and their wicked design in this proposal, fetched a deep sigh, and said, What false pretenders to honest inquiry, and what a malicious set of people, am I cast amongst! After all my unquestionable miracles, which, having been wrought among them on earth, are capable of being tried and proved by the strictest examination, why should they insist upon it, that they will not believe, unless I gratify their unreasonable curiosity, in giving them a visible sign immediately from heaven? I tell you plainly, that no sign of this sort shall be granted to so incorrigible a generation of men as ye are: Ye do not deserve it, nor would ye be convinced by it; and it is beneath my character to humour you in it.

13 Having given them this answer, he turned away from them, as one that would take no further pains to reclaim them; and, re-imbarking in the vessel, he returned to the other side of the lake.

14 Now, by this time, the disciples stock of bread was so far reduced, that they had but a single loaf aboard among them all, they having forgot to recruit while they were ashore.

15 And Christ knowing this, as also that they began to call to mind and to blame themselves for their neglect, took occasion, according to his custom of improving present occurrences, in temporal affairs, for spiritual uses, to warn them against the leaven of the *Pharisees*, and of the *Herodians*, who were mostly *Sadducees*; meaning their corrupt doctrines, which were as apt to spread their malignant

nant influence through mens minds and manners, and to infect others that converse with them, as leaven, put into a parcel of meal, is to diffuse itself through, and sour the whole mass.

16 And they reasoned among themselves, saying, *It is* because we have no bread.

16 The apostles, upon hearing him speak of leaven, just at the time when they were concerned about scarcity of bread, imagined that he thereby intended to reprove them for their carelessness, in not providing so much as they might want for their present supply.

17 And when Jesus knew it, he saith unto them, Why reason ye, because ye have no bread? perceive ye not yet, neither understand? have ye your heart yet hardened?

17 But Jesus, observing their gross mistake, expostulated with them in a way of friendly, and yet sharp rebuke, saying, How is it that ye so strangely misconstrue my admonition, by fancying that I am so solicitous about food, as to upbraid you for your negligence in not furnishing yourselves with bread? Do not ye, after having been so long with me, yet understand my way of spiritualizing natural things? and, after the great miracles I have wrought in your presence, and that particularly to supply a defect of bread, have ye not yet learned to depend upon my power and goodness? Are ye still so stupid, and so slow of heart to believe, notwithstanding all that ye have seen and heard from me?

18 Having eyes, see ye not? and having ears, hear ye not? and do ye not remember?

18 Yea, after I have enlightened your minds, are ye still so apt to be confused, and carnal in your thoughts? and, after I have opened your ears to instruction, are ye still so dull of apprehension, and so prone to misunderstand my words? What! do ye never reflect upon the great things which ye have seen me do?

19 When I brake the five loaves among five thousand, how many baskets full of fragments took ye up? They say unto him, Twelve.

19 Pray look back, and consider; When I lately fed five thousand men, besides women and children, with five loaves, and they eat as long as they could, how many baskets-full did ye gather together of the remaining pieces that were to spare? They replied, Twelve.

20 And when the seven among four thousand, how many baskets full of fragments took ye up? And they said, Seven.

20 And, said he, when the other day I satisfied to the full four thousand men, besides women and children, with seven loaves, how many baskets did ye fill with the remaining fragments then? They answered, Seven.

21 And he said unto them, How is it that ye do not understand?

21 Then he added, How amazing is it, that ye should be capable of so perfectly remembering the vast increase which my power gave once and again to so small a quantity of food; and yet should be so unbelieving, and so weak and stupid, as to imagine that I was solicitous about your having no bread, when I cautioned you against the leaven of the *Pharisees* and others; and that ye should not rather appre-

apprehend me to mean the dangerous infection of their false doctrines, which insinuate themselves like leaven !

22 And he cometh to Bethsaida; and they bring a blind man unto him, and besought him, to touch him

22 Soon after our Lord had said this, he landed with his apostles at *Bethsaida*; and there some people presented to him a blind man, intreating that he would have pity on him, and cure him, which they believed he could do by only laying his hands upon him.

23 And he took the blind man by the hand, and led him out of the town; and when he had spit on his eyes, and put his hands upon him, he asked him, if he saw ought?

23 And as he was always ready to do good, and yet with as little noise and appearances of ostentation as possible; so he freely granted their request, though chusing to work this miracle in a private manner, because of the obstinate infidelity which reigned among the inhabitants of that place: And therefore, taking the blind man by the hand, he led him, like a guide, out of the town; where, putting spittle into his eyes, and laying his hands upon him, he asked him, Whether he had any sight?

24 And he looked up, and said, I see men as trees, walking.

24 The blind man, beginning to perceive some glimmering of light, lifted up his eyes, and told him, that he saw a little, but it was so obscurely, that he could hardly distinguish men from trees by any thing but their walking.

25 After that, he put his hands again upon his eyes, and made him look up: and he was restored, and saw every man clearly.

25 Then the divine Oculist touched his eyes a second time; and bidding him look up again, he found his sight so perfectly recovered, that he could easily and exactly distinguish every man that presented before him.

26 And he sent him away to his house, saying, Neither go into the town, nor tell it to any in the town.

26 And, when our Lord had thus thoroughly restored his sight, he dismissed him, charging him to go directly to his own home, without returning into *Bethsaida*, or acquainting any of its inhabitants what a wonderful cure he had wrought upon him: For Christ knew that it would be to little purpose for this man to go and report his cure to them, who were so infamous for their impenitence, perverseness, and contempt, in rejecting his gospel, and his numerous mighty works, which they had been eye-witnesses of. (*Mat. xi. 21.*)

27 And Jesus went out, and his disciples, into the towns of *Cesarea Philippi*: and by the way he asked his disciples, saying unto them, Whom do men say that I am?

27 After this, Jesus removed with his apostles from that neighbourhood, and travelled through several towns in the country of *Cesarea Philippi*; and, while they were on their journey, he took an opportunity to introduce his design of gradually leading them into a view of his proper work and office, as the Messiah, by asking them, What the opinion and talk of the common people were concerning him?

28 And they answered,

28 To which the apostles replied, It is the prevailing

swered, John the Baptist : but some say, Elias ; and others, One of the prophets.

29 And he saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Peter answered, and saith unto him, Thou art the Christ.

30 And he charged them, that they should tell no man of him.

31 And he began to teach them, that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again.

32 And he spake that saying openly. And Peter took him, and began to rebuke him.

vailing notion of some, that thou art *John the Baptist*, risen from the dead : Others think thee to be *Elijah the Tishbite*, come down from heaven, as the forerunner of the Messiah : And others say that thou art *Jeremiah*, or some other of the ancient prophets, appearing again among them. (*Mat. xvi. 14.*)

29 Then said our Lord, But, among these various opinions, what are your own thoughts about me, after all the intimate acquaintance ye have had with me, and with my manner of life, doctrine, and miracles? *Peter* answered, in the name of the rest, they signifying their consent, We are satisfied that thou art the true Messiah formerly promised in the Old Testament, and now looked for by those that are waiting for redemption in Israel ; and we believe in thee as such.

30 Our Saviour thereupon expressed his high approbation of this noble confession of their faith, (*Mat. xvi. 17.*) and yet enjoined them not to be free in publishing this doctrine for the present, at least, not in plain and express terms, that he might not encourage any attempts of the common people to set him up for a temporal king, nor put his inveterate enemies upon resolutions of dispatching him before his time, nor might forestal the brighter evidence which was to be given of his divine character after his resurrection, lest they, who would not receive the apostles declaration now, should be prejudiced against the higher testimony they were to give of him then.

31 And to let them into the reason of this prohibition, and, at the same time, into the great design of his coming into the world, to perform the Messiah's office, he began to tell them very freely, which he afterwards often repeated, that, before he should appear in all the glory of his character, he must suffer many severe and opprobrious things from the hands of his enemies ; must be denied, abused, and treated as an impostor, by the *Jewish* sanhedrim, till at length they would put him to a painful and ignominious death, three days after which he should certainly rise again. (See the note on *Mat. xxvii. 63.*)

32 And now, while their faith was so strong, he thought proper to tell them of these important things (*παραγορα*) in the plainest terms, without using any figure, that he might check their expectations of worldly grandeur from him, and might prepare them before-hand for the trial of his sufferings, and prevent their after-stumbling at them.

But

But they did not know how to take in thoughts of this kind; and *Peter* particularly, upon hearing him speak of suffering and dying, was so full of amazement and concern, that he rashly took him aside, and in too free a manner chid him, saying, What do you mean by talking at this rate? far be it from thee Lord, that any of these dismal things should ever come to pass. (*Mat.* xvi. 22.)

33 But when he had turned about, and looked on his disciples, he rebuked *Peter*, saying, Get thee behind me, Satan; for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but the things that be of men.

33 But the meek and humble *Jesus* never discovered such resentment against a disciple as on this occasion; when, turning short upon *Peter*, and looking with a stern countenance, and with a glance of his eye toward the rest of the apostles, that they might the more observe it, he severely took him to task in their hearing, and said to him, with holy indignation, Away with all this false friendship: You herein act the part of the greatest enemy to the most important design of my commission: Satan himself could not suggest a more injurious thing to me; and you are really doing his work, and acting under his influence, to defeat the method by which his power is to be destroyed: (see the note on *Mat.* xvi. 23.) For you herein have no true discerning or taste of the spiritual nature of my kingdom, and of those things which God has ordained for his glory and the redemption of his people; but are only relishing and consulting what may be most likely to promote temporal grandeur and worldly advantages.

34 And when he had called the people unto him, with his disciples also, he said unto them, Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.

34 Then ordering the people to draw near, that they, together with his apostles, might hear what was necessary for them also to learn, he addressed himself to the whole company in the following manner: Whosoever among you desires to embrace my doctrine, and adhere to me, must be unbottomed from self, and be ready to give up his worldly honours, pleasures, and enjoyments, and to suffer all sorts of persecutions, even to death, for my sake †; and must cleave with full purpose of heart unto me, following my example, and observing all my commands.

35 For whosoever will save his life, shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's,

35 For he who, through unbelief and fear of sufferings, shall disown and forsake me and my cause, in hopes of preserving his life for the present, shall certainly lose it, by the worst of deaths, for ever: But, he, who, from a principle of faith in, and love to me,

N O T E.

† *Taking up the cross*, is an allusion to a known custom among the *Romans*, who obliged those that were to be crucified to take their cross, or at least part of it, upon their shoulders, and carry it to the place of execution. See the note on *Matt.* xxvii. 32.

pel's, the same shall save it.

36 For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?

37 Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

38 Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me, and of my words, in this adulterous and sinful generation: of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father, with the holy angels.

me, shall courageously hazard his life for my honour, and suffer death for his belief, esteem, and profession of my gospel, shall only exchange a temporal for an eternal life; and so, properly speaking, his life shall be rather perfected than lost, and he will be the greatest gainer in the end.

36, 37 For what will all the comforts and enjoyments of this uncertain, unsatisfying, and perishing world, avail any man, were he to have them in their utmost fulness, if, at last, his own precious and immortal soul should be lost for ever, in a deprivation of all happiness, and in being overwhelmed with eternal anguish and despair? What can compensate such a dreadful loss as this? What can retrieve it? Or what would not any man, in his senses, especially when he begins to feel the terrors of this loss, give or suffer to prevent it?

38 The condition, therefore, of all those must be very sad indeed, who prefer any thing in this world to me; since whoever, upon any temporal consideration, shall be ashamed to profess, and stand up for me and my cause, or shall be afraid to own me and my gospel, people, and ways, in a corrupt and degenerate age that opposes and reviles them; the true Messiah, who is indeed the Son of man, will disdain to own such for his disciples, when he shall appear in the brightest glory of his divine, as well as office-characters, surrounded with an innumerable company of angels, to judge the world in righteousness at the last day. (See *Luke ix. 26.* and the note upon it.)

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

How apt is unbelief to raise and stick at difficulties, as if they were too great for Christ to surmount; and how prone to misconstrue his dispensations, and to forget the years of the right hand of the Most High! and how unreasonably doth it reject the plainest and properest evidence which Christ has given, and want to be gratified in some extraordinary way of its own suggesting! But faith, and not fancy, is to be encouraged; and all this unbelief, whether in the total, or only in the partial degree, argues such hardness of heart, as calls for lamentation and severe reproof: And yet, alas! how great are its remainders in God's own people during their present state of infirmity! How doth an evil leaven work in them, and attempt to insinuate itself into them! And what need have they to be warned, and to be continually watchful against it, and that with respect to corrupt doctrines as well as practices, because of the bad influence that principles have upon the heart and life! This works and prevails to the ruin of obstinate sinners; and if they persist in infidelity and impenitence, Christ will never gratify their curiosity or humour, to reclaim them; he will turn away from them in righteous indignation, and leave them to the heavy judgments which they deserve. But oh how ready is he to bear with his people's infirmities, and to help, and heal, and save them, who are sensible of their wants, and apply, by faith, to him for mercy! He sometimes relieves them in an instant, and at others in a more gradual way; sometimes in a public, and at others in a more private manner, as may be most for his glory and their good; and all his gracious discoveries to them are at the most seasonable times, when they are fittest to receive them, and most likely not to abuse

buse them: But if Satan gets an advantage, and they, through his influence, and the carnal workings of their own hearts, make a wrong use of them, Christ will shew his displeasure, and sharply rebuke them, how much soever he loves them.—How low were his disciples notions about the nature of his kingdom, and how slow of understanding, believing, and consenting to, the plainest notices he gave them of his sufferings and death! But we must receive a humbled, as well as an exalted Saviour, if we would have him for our own; and must be ready to suffer with him, and not be ashamed to own him, by a professed subjection to him, however we may be reproached for it, as ever we hope to be glorified with him, and to be owned by him, when he shall come in the illustrious pomp and grandeur of the last day. What are all the sufferings and shame of this present state, compared with the glory that shall be revealed then? And what signities it, whether we be in the prosperous or afflicted circumstances of this dying life? The great concern is, what will become of our immortal souls, and what they shall be for ever.

C H A P. IX.

Christ's transfiguration, 1,—10. His discourse about the coming of Elias, 11,—13. He casts out an evil spirit, which his disciples could not do for want of faith, 14,—29. Foretels his death and resurrection, 30,—32. Exhorts his disciples to humility, 33,—37. Forbids to prevent their acting for him who were not against him, and cautions against offending any that believe in him, 38,—50.

TEXT.

AND he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, that there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power.

2 And after six days, Jesus taketh with him, Peter, and James, and John, and leadeth them up into an high mountain apart by themselves: and he was transfigured before them.

PARAPHRASE.

OUR Lord, at the close of the foregoing discourse, said †. I assuredly tell you, that the Messiah will soon give a specimen of his judicial power: For, some who are now living, and hearing me speak, shall not die, till they see a signal appearance of his power and kingdom, in the plentiful effusion of his spirit in the utter destruction of the Jews, for their aggravated unbelief, and in the amazing success of the gospel, and establishment of the New Testament church through the world; and some shall very soon behold a lively emblem of all his glory, which shall hereafter be more fully revealed. (See the note on *Mat. xvi. 28.*)

2 And after six days were completely run out from this time, (*Luke ix. 28*) Jesus singled out three of his apostles, *Peter, James, and John*; and taking them along with him to the top of a remarkable high hill, (see the note on *Mat. xvii. 1.*) the form of his person was there suddenly changed into such dazzling lustre, as gave him the appearance of God incarnate, before their eyes. (See *Mat. xvii. 2.* and the note there.)

NOTE.

† Here is evidently a wrong division of the chapters, which was the work of latter ages: For this verse belongs to the close of the preceding discourse, as appears from the other evangelists; and,

therefore, it ought to have concluded the former chapter, and not began this, according to the division that is made in *Matthew* between chap. *xvi.* and *xvii.*

3 And his raiment became shining, exceeding white as snow; so as no fuller on earth can white them.

4 And there appeared unto them Elias, with Moses: and they were talking with Jesus.

5 And Peter answered and said to Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias.

6 For he wist not what to say; for they were sore afraid.

7 And there was a cloud that overshadowed them; and a voice came out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son; hear him.

8 And suddenly when they had looked round about, they saw no man any more, save Jesus

3 His face not only shone with rays of brightness, like the meridian sun in a clear sky; but beams of divine glory seemed to dart through every pore of his body, and, by means of these, all his clothes glittered, and appeared as perfectly white as snow, far surpassing the utmost power of the fulling-art to imitate.

4 And, as a further representation of his coming hereafter to be glorified in his saints, two eminent servants of God from heaven appeared with him, in shining robes, viz. *Moses* and *Elias*: And to shew that the law and the prophets, as well as the evangelists and apostles, bore witness to Christ, and that Old as well as New Testament believers should be glorified with him, these ancient chiefs of the former dispensation were admitted to commune with him.

5 Then *Peter*, full of ecstasy and amazement at this glorious and transporting sight, broke out into the following exclamation and request, Lord, what a heavenly interview is this! What an honour and delight is it for us, thy poor disciples, to be favoured with such a presence! Here let us all fix our abode; and, in order thereunto, suffer us to erect three tents, one for thee, another for *Moses*, and the third for *Elias*, that what we now enjoy may be continued to us.

6 So powerfully did his warm affections bear down his judgment; for he, as well as his two other brethren, was, in a manner, overcome with awful wonder and joy, so that he almost lost possession of his own mind, and hardly knew what he said.

7 And, at the same time, a supernatural cloud, which was a further emblem of the divine glory, descended upon the company; (see the note on *Mat. xvii. 5.*) and out of this cloud a voice from God the Father, himself, reached the ears of the apostles, saying, This is my beloved Son, who partakes of my nature, and fulfils my pleasure, and is the grand medium of all communion between me and my people, and who reveals my will as the last and standing rule of faith and obedience in all things: Reverence, adore, and believe in him, and hearken diligently to the voice of his word, in whatsoever he shall say unto you.

8 And presently after this voice, the cloud was withdrawn, and *Moses* and *Elias* were gone; and the apostles, recovering themselves out of the rapturous consternation, which had almost overset their mortal nature, and looking about, saw nobody with them

selves only with themselves.

9 And as they came down from the mountain, he charged them that they should tell no man what things they had seen, till the Son of man were risen from the dead.

10 And they kept that saying with themselves, questioning one with another what the rising from the dead should mean.

11 And they asked him, saying, Why say the scribes that *Elias* must first come?

12 And he answered and told them, *Elias* verily cometh first, and restoreth all things; and how it is written of the Son of man, that he must suffer many things, and be set at nought.

13 But I say unto you, that *Elias* is indeed come, and they have done unto him whatsoever they listed, as

them but *Jesus* himself, who then appeared again, with his usual garb and countenance.

9 Then *Jesus* came down with his apostles from the mount; and before they got to any other company, strictly enjoined them to take no notice of what they had seen to any one, till after his resurrection, because that would be the properest and most seasonable time for fully manifesting and publishing his glory, and would procure more credit to their report of this transaction, than it would have found, had they made it during his state of humiliation.

10 Accordingly, in obedience to his command, they kept the secret among themselves till after he was risen; but, in the mean time, they canvassed things over in a way of inquiry and debate, one with another, about the sense in which they were to understand his rising from the dead; whether it were to be taken literally, or in some metaphorical reference to a revival of his temporal dominion and glory, which their heads were full of, but of which there were little visible hopes in the then present state of things.

11 And as *Elias* had only shewn himself privately and transiently to themselves, and they were obliged to make it an absolute secret till after what *Christ* had called his own resurrection, they asked him, Why their doctors insisted upon it, that *Elias* must appear among the people before the *Messiah*, to make way for his coming to set up his kingdom.

12 In answer to this, our Lord told them, It was indeed necessary, according to the scripture, that *Elias* should first appear, to begin and lead the way to the great reformation which the *Messiah* was to make in the world, by directing the people to him: And he further informed them how the ancient prophets had likewise foretold, that the incarnate Son of God must undergo many sufferings from the hands of wicked men, and be contemned and rejected as an impostor, and even put to death, before the manifestation of his kingdom and glory.

13 But, says he, I assure you, that the *Elias* intended in prophecy † has already appeared, and done his work: *John the Baptist* came in the spirit and power of that famous man, as the forerunner of the *Messiah*; and yet the scribes, being misled by false traditions, to expect a personal appearance of *Elijah the Tishbite*, would not own *John* under that

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N O T E.

† As it is written, relates to *Elias's* coming, and not to the scribes treatment of him.

it is written of him.

14 And when he came to his disciples, he saw a great multitude about them, and the scribes questioning with them.

15 And straightway all the people, when they beheld him, were greatly amazed, and running to him, saluted him.

16 And he asked the scribes, What question ye with them?

17 And one of the multitude answered and said, Master, I have brought unto thee my son, which hath a dumb spirit:

18 And wheresoever he taketh him, he teareth him; and he foameth, and gnasheth with his teeth, and pineth away: and I spake to thy disciples, that they should cast him out, and they could not.

19 He answered him, and saith, O faithless generation, how long shall

character; but shamefully despised him, and were willing that he should be destroyed.

14 The day after Christ's coming down with the three disciples from the mount of transfiguration, (*Luke ix. 37.*) he went to the place where the rest of the apostles were, and found a great company of people crowding about them, and the doctors of the law disputing with them, in hopes of being too hard for them, while their Lord was not present to assist and take their part.

15 And immediately, upon his appearing, an universal surprise and pleasure spread through the multitude, who had before missed him, and knew not where he was gone, nor whether they should ever be able to find him again; they, therefore, in all haste flocking to him, expressed their joy in respectful salutations, to bid him welcome.

16 Then he, who knew all that passed whilst he was absent, as well as when he was present, asked the *Jewish* doctors, What was the matter, or the reason of their dispute with the apostles, whom they had been contending with?

17 Upon which, they not caring to enter the lists with him, one of the company replied, Sir, it is occasioned by my bringing my only son to thee, to see whether I could get any relief for him, who is sorely afflicted by an evil spirit, which has taken away his speech and hearing. (*ver. 25.*)

18 And his case is so deplorable, that when, or wheresoever this malicious spirit seizes him, he throws him into violent convulsions; so that, poor creature, he froths at the mouth, grates his teeth, and, being often seized and tormented, is almost reduced to a skeleton: I, therefore, not finding thee, intreated some of thy disciples to dispossess this mischievous dæmon; but, alas! he is such a powerful, headstrong spirit, that they could not master him.

19 Now as, upon the apostles fruitless attempt, this man's unbelief put him upon taking part with the *scribes*, in the foregoing dispute, our Lord's answer was in a way of reproof to him, which † included

N O T E.

† It is strange to me, that no expositor, whom I have consulted on this place, takes any notice of its being expressly said, that our Lord directed this answer to the father of the child, which, with other reasons given in the note on *Matt. xvii. 17.* seems clearly to determine, that the *scribes*, and the people who sided with them, together with this man, and not the apostles, were meant

by the faithless generation, whom Christ, on this occasion, so severely reproveth: For it is natural to suppose, that, upon the apostles attempting in vain to relieve his son, his disappointment overcame his faith, and made him fall in with the *scribes* in their dispute against them, as unable to work so great a miracle as this, even in their Master's name; and his afterwards (*ver. 22, 23.*) speaking doubtfully

shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him unto me.

20 And they brought him unto him: and when he saw him, straightway the spirit tare him; and he fell on the ground, and wallowed, foaming.

21 And he asked his father, How long is it ago since this came unto him? And he said, Of a child:

22 And oft-times it hath cast him into the fire, and into the waters, to destroy him, but if thou canst do any thing, have compassion on us, and help us.

23 Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth.

24 And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief.

ded them, saying, O perverse and unbelieving set of men, how long shall it be before the wonderful things I am daily performing, will satisfy you of my unlimited power, to work the greatest miracles, by what hand, and whenever I please? and how long shall my patience be tried, and my soul grieved at the hardness of your hearts, before ye will believe? Bring the lad hither, that I may give you this further proof of my power and mercy, in healing him.

20 They accordingly brought him to Jesus; and, as soon as the youth came within sight, the evil spirit, enraged at the thought of being dispossessed, flung the poor young creature into a terrible fit, tore him with violent convulsions, as if he would presently rack him to death, and threw him furiously down upon the ground, where he lay tumbling and tossing about, and foaming at the mouth.

21 And, whilst he lay in this distress, before all the people, our Lord, to shew how incurable a case this was, by any human means, asked the father, in their hearing, How long his son had been in this miserable condition? He replied, Alas! this is no new thing, he has been subject to it even from his childhood to this very day.

22 And, in many of these terrible fits, the devil has violently hurled him sometimes into the fire, and, at others, into the water, to the apparent hazard of his life. But now, Sir, I humbly offer him to your compassion; and beg that, if this case be not beyond the reach of your power, the calamitous circumstances of it may move your pity toward him and me, and engage your help.

23 Jesus answered, The only difficulty lies in your own unbelief: You put an *if* upon my ability; I return it upon your faith; *if* you are but as ready to believe in my power and mercy, as I am to exert them, all will be well, and nothing shall be found too difficult for me to do: What say you then? Do you really believe that I am able to do this great thing for your son?

24 Upon this, the father of the poor afflicted youth, reflecting on the late workings of his unbelief, and finding a spirit of faith beginning to spring up within him, cried out aloud, with tears of intermingled grief and joy, Lord, I now do sincerely believe in thy all-sufficiency for my help, and am ashamed to think that there should be so much unbel-

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fully of Christ's power, and Christ putting it to him whether he believed that he was able to cure his son, strengthens this thought. See also the note on *Luke ix. 41.*

unbelief in my heart as thou has seen there : O forgive it, and take away all the remainders of it, that I, and my son may be thoroughly cured, I of my spiritual, and he of his corporal disease, at once.

25 When Jesus saw that the people came running together, he rebuked the foul spirit, saying unto him, Thou dumb and deaf spirit, I charge thee come out of him, and enter no more into him.

25 As soon as he had uttered these words in the hearing of the multitude, they crowded up still nearer, to see the event ; which, when Jesus observed, he, turning toward the distressed youth, spoke with awful majesty and power to the evil spirit, saying, Thou malicious and mischievous dæmon, who, besides other acts of violence, hast taken away the speech and the hearing of this person, though thou resistest my apostles, I will now make thee feel my authority, and force thee to obey it : I therefore peremptorily command thee to depart from him, and never to trouble him more.

26 And the spirit cried, and rent him sore, and came out of him : and he was as one dead ; inasmuch, that many said, He is dead.

26 No sooner had Jesus spoken in this manner, but the evil spirit made a hideous roaring, and, flinging him into terrible convulsions, departed from him, with the greatest signs of ill-nature and reluctance imaginable : And the young man, on a sudden, lay still, and, to all appearance, so entirely breathless on the ground, that many of the company verily thought him to be dead.

27 But Jesus took him by the hand, and lifted him up ; and he arose.

27 But Jesus, taking hold of his hand, commanded him to arise ; and he instantly got up, being perfectly well at once.

28 And when he was come into the house, his disciples asked him privately, Why could not we cast him out ?

28 When all this was over, and our Lord and his disciples were retired into an house alone, they privately inquired of him, What might be the reason of their not being able to cast the devil out of this youth, as well as to perform other miracles which they had wrought in his name.

29 And he said unto them, This kind can come forth by nothing but by prayer and fasting.

29 He told them, It was because that sort of extraordinary faith of miracles, which was necessary in them to the casting out of devils, could not ordinarily go forth, or exert itself, to produce its effect, without solemn prayer with fasting, which they had neglected. (See the note on *Mat.* xvii. 21.)

30 And they departed thence, and passed thro' Galilee ; and he would not that any man should know it.

30 After this, our Lord, designing to go into *Judea*, (chap. x. 1.) travelled privately, with his apostles only, through *Galilee*, without the knowledge of the people, that he might not be hindered, by their flocking to him, from reaching *Jerusalem* at the time he proposed, and that he might have the better opportunity of instructing these his constant attendants by the way.

31 For he taught his disciples, and said unto them, The

31 For he then insisted upon what he had told them before, (chap. viii. 31.) saying, It is already settled by the decree of my Father, and by the prophecies

The Son of man is delivered into the hands of men, and they shall kill him; and after that he is killed, he shall rise the third day.

32 But they understood not that saying, and were afraid to ask him.

33 And he came to Capernaum: and being in the house, he asked them, What was it that ye disputed among yourselves, by the way?

34 But they held their peace; for by the way they had disputed among themselves who *should be the greatest.*

35 And he sat down, and called the twelve, and said unto them, If any man desire to be first, the same shall be last of all, and servant of all.

36 And he took a child, and set him in the midst of them: and when he had taken him in his arms, he said unto them,

phesies of the Old Testament, that I, the Messiah, shall, by divine permission, be perfidiously betrayed, and put into the power of wicked men, and they will deal cruelly with me, till they take me off by a violent death; and, on the third day afterwards, I shall rise again from the dead.

32 But still, though he spoke of these things in the most plain and express terms, they could not comprehend his meaning, the literal sense being so contrary to all their opinions about his secular dominion; and they were ashamed and afraid to desire him to explain himself any further upon those points, lest he should be displeased with them for their ignorance and stupidity.

33 Hereupon they entered into hot and carnal contentions among themselves on the road. And when Jesus, arriving at *Capernaum*, went with them into the house of his usual residence there, he, whose knowledge was always privy to their most secret transactions, took an opportunity to ask them, What they had been disputing about in their journey?

34 But they, being conscious that the subject of their debate, together with the pride and warmth with which they had managed it, was unbecoming, and would be offensive to their Lord, made no reply, till they found that it was in vain to think of concealing it from him: (*Mat. xviii. 1.*) For the main point in eager dispute between them, while they were travelling together, was about which of them should have the precedence in his temporal kingdom, which they imagined, from his expressions, (ver. 9.) he would rise to with great glory, as soon as he should get through some shocking difficulties and troubles, that would amount to their notion of a civil death.

35 Then, to put a check upon their fierce and ambitious temper and worldly views, Jesus sitting down, and calling all the apostles about him, told them, that the way for any one to be advanced to the highest honours and privileges of his kingdom, was, to have low thoughts of himself, and condescend to the humblest services for doing good; but that, if any one should be contentious, and proudly aspire after preferment and pre-eminence over others, he should be reckoned the meanest of all, and should be really abased, and fall under the greatest contempt.

36 And, to impress these sentiments by a visible emblem, he, calling a little child, placed him before them; and then, affectionately embracing him in his arms, addressed himself to them, saying,

37 The

37 Whosoever shall receive one of such children in my name, receiveth me : and who-so shall receive me, receiveth not me, but him that sent me.

38 And John answered him, saying, Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name, and he followeth not us : and we forbade him, because he followeth not us.

39 But Jesus said, Forbid him not : for there is no man which shall do a miracle in my name, that can lightly speak evil of me.

40 For he that is not against us, is on our part.

41 For whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in my name, because ye belong to Christ, verily I say unto you, He shall not lose his reward.

37 The account I make of meek and humble souls, who, like this infant, have no ambitious views, is such, that I esteem them as partakers of my spirit and likeness, and as standing in the nearest relation to me ; and whosoever shall heartily love and shew favour to any one of them, because of his resemblance of me, and relation to me, shall be esteemed as having done it to myself ; and not to me only ; for this is the same thing as doing it to my heavenly Father, who sent me, and is one with me.

38 This discourse so affected the apostle *John*, that, reflecting on a late instance of his own and his brethrens behaviour, he wanted to know whether it were consistent with that meek and humble spirit which his Lord had been recommending ; and therefore said to him, Master, we one day saw a man making use of thy name to cast out devils, though he was neither one of the twelve, nor of the seventy, to whom thou gavest authority to preach and work miracles, nor had ever joined our company, and attended on thee as one of thy professed disciples † ; and therefore we charged him never to do so any more, lest thy honour should suffer by peoples taking upon them to act in thy name, without a commission from thee.

39 But our Lord replied, It was wrong in you to go about to prevent or discourage him : For it can hardly be thought that any one, who has so much faith in me as to make use of my name, and that against Satan, and is so far owned as to be enabled to perform such a miraculous work, can readily say any thing dishonourable of that very name by which he performed it.

40 For if any man be not an enemy, carrying on a contrary design to that which we are pursuing, it is to be presumed that he is a friend ; and he ought not to be discountenanced, but encouraged, even in the smallest and most distant expressions of his friendship and respect.

41 For whoever, from an heart well affected toward me, shall perform the least offices of kindness to any of you, my friends and servants, for my name's sake, because ye are my disciples, and are engaged in my service, even though it were but giving you so inconsiderable a refreshment as a cup of cold water ; I solemnly assure you, it shall be graciously accepted, and shall have its reward.

42 And,

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† It is not unlikely but that this was one of *John the Baptist's* disciples, who believed in Christ, though he did not associate with our Lord's disciples in their attendances on him.

42 And whosoever shall offend one of *these* little ones that believe in me, it is better for him, that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea.

43 And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched.

44 Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

45 And if thy foot offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter halt into life, than having two feet to be cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched:

46 Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

47 And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out: it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having

42 And, on the other hand, I declare, with respect to others as well as you, that whosoever shall discourage, grieve, or hinder any, though it were but the weakest and meanest believer in me, or servant of mine, it would have been much rather to be chosen, that he should have been cut off by a death as sudden and violent, as if, with a great stone fastened to his neck, he had been thrown into the sea, than that he should have been guilty of so injurious a crime, which draws after it a much heavier punishment.

43, 44 And if any corruption in either of your hearts, or any temptation, or allurements of this world, should arise to prevent your compliance with this or any other duty, though that obstacle should be as dear to you as a right hand, and parting with it should be as painful as cutting off that member of the body; yet it is much more desirable to undergo this self-mortification, in order to your inheriting everlasting life, than to retain all the friends and comforts of this world, till you go into a state of endless and insupportable torment, which, for its perpetual restlessness and exquisite torture, is, like a worm, ever gnawing the tenderest vitals, and never dying, or ceasing to corrode them; and like the constant burning of a man's flesh, with a fierce fire that never will be extinguished.

45, 46 And, to illustrate this matter, by your value for another member of the body, if any corruptions of the heart, or temptations of life, that would turn you aside from the way of duty, be thought as dear and advantageous to you as the legs you walk upon; it is much more for your interest, safety, and comfort, to submit to such severe acts of self-denial, as are like cutting off one of these, that you may not be hindered in your way to everlasting perfection and blessedness, than to favour and indulge those darling enticements here, till they bring you to all the terrors and anguish of an everlasting hell, where a guilty conscience will be continually teasing, gnawing, and tearing the wounded soul with stinging remorse; and God's fiery indignation will flame out upon it, with almighty force, and unappeasable fury, for ever.

47, 48 Yea, to add one illustration more, If any inordinate affections, and intemperate appetites within, or any friends, possessions, or pleasures of this world without, have such an ascendancy over you, that it is like plucking out one of your eyes to part with them; it is nevertheless a much wiser and better choice to give up these for the spiritual blessings

ving two eyes to be cast into hell-fire :

47 Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

48 Forevery one shall be salted with fire, and every sacrifice shall be salted with salt.

50 Salt is good: but if the salt have lost his saltness, wherewith will ye season it? Have salt in yourselves, and have peace one with another.

sings of grace and glory, that are to be enjoyed in the gospel-kingdom, which begins on earth, and is perfected in heaven, than to have your fill of those carnal and sensual things, and go to hell with them, where, instead of finding any relief from them, they will ever turn upon you, in your remembrance of them, with agonizing twitches, like the riggling and biting of a living worm upon the forest wound, and will pierce and torture you like the hottest flame, without cessation, abatement or end.

49 For, as every burnt-offering under the law was salted with salt †, in order to its being consumed with the fire of the altar, which never went out ; so every one, who has fitted himself for destruction, by indulging his irregular appetites, yielding to temptation, and apostatizing from me, and from my truths and ways, shall fall a sacrifice to vindictive justice, to be destroyed by the everlasting fire of God's unquenchable wrath, which will consume all his happiness, whilst it preserves him from a cessation of being : And, on the other hand, every one who goes into acts of self-denial, and freely offers himself, as a living sacrifice, to God, devoted to his service, shall be seasoned with grace, which, like salt, will make him savoury, and preserve him from destruction for ever.

50 Our Lord having on this occasion mentioned salt, improved the metaphor to further instruction, saying, As salt is good for preserving meats from putrefaction, and making them savoury : So it is good that ye, my disciples and servants, be seasoned with gospel-truth and grace, for the purifying of your hearts and lives, and the reforming of others, and for spreading the favour of my knowledge in your own souls, and wherever ye go ! But as salt, if it loses its saltness, is fit for nothing, but is cast away, as irrecoverable to any good use : So if ye, whose hearts ought to be purified by faith, and filled with a divine favour, and who, like salt, ought to be instrumental in purifying and favouring others ; if ye, I say, should prove to be destitute of evangelical truth and grace, what can ye be fit for but to be utterly destroyed ? See to it therefore, that my doctrine, in its truth and power, abide with you ; and

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† As the sacrifices were salted with salt, both as a preparation for their being consumed by fire on the altar, and as an emblem of their purification from corruption, and of their favour and acceptableness to God ; so it seems as if salting were here spoken of in this double view : ac-

cordingly, some are said to be salted with fire, to denote their destruction ; and others are spoken of under the notion of a sacrifice salted with salt, to denote their acceptance and preservation, as I have considered it in the paraphrase.

and that ye ye be united in heart and design, without either envying or despising one another, to propagate my gospel in the world.

R E C O L L E C T I O N S.

How glorious is our Lord Jesus Christ; and how delightful are the manifestations of his glory! Some believers see more of it, and are admitted to draw nearer to him, than others; and they cannot but say, at such seasons, It is good for us to be here. But none of them must expect to be always favoured with such delights, till they get to heaven; in the mean while, let us hear him whom the Father owns for his beloved Son.—When Christ withdraws, we are troubled and dejected, and utterly insufficient for a due performance of any service; but his returns bring light, and strength, and joy. And oh how much do we lose, and what advantage does the devil get against us, from the weakness of our faith! Was this more in exercise, we should receive greater riches of mercy, and should be able to do all things through Christ's strengthenings. Wherever Satan has got possession, he will keep it as long as he can; and the sooner he gets it in the days of youth, the more loth he is to quit it, and the harder it goes with us at his parting: However, Christ, as sovereign Lord of all, can command him out at pleasure; and if he orders him to depart, and return no more, he must obey. But after Jesus has wrought salvation for us, he observes all our secret thoughts and actions, our remaining unbelief and uncharitableness, pride and vanity, and our disputes by the way; he rebuffs the proud, but gives grace to the humble; and the favour we shew to such for his sake, whether they follow with us or not, is graciously looked upon as done to himself, and shall not lose its reward. How careful should we be to guard against a selfish party-spirit, to lay no obstructions or discouragements in the way of the meanest of Christ's disciples and servants, to avoid all occasions of sin, to be found in God's statutes, and to have our hearts seasoned with grace, and our lives well ordered, as becomes the gospel! And how much better is it to go with self-denials to heaven, than to go with self-indulgences to hell; into one of which states each of us, in a little while, must enter, and there abide, in all possible happiness, or misery, for ever.

C H A P. X.

Christ's discourse about divorces, 1,—12. He blesses young children and reproves those that would have prevented their being brought to him, 13,—16. Discourses with a rich young man about the way of obtaining eternal life, 17,—22. Cautions his disciples against the temptation of riches, 23,—27. Shews them the advantage of sufferings for the gospel's sake, 28,—31. Foretels his own death and resurrection, 32,—34. Reproves James and John for their ambition, 35,—45. And cures blind Bartimeus, 46,—52.

TEXT.

AND he arose from thence, and cometh into the coasts of Judea, by the farther side of Jordan: and the people resort unto him again; and as he was wont, he

PARAPHRASE.

OUR Lord, after the foregoing discourses, removed from Galilee, and travelled, his apostles attending him, into Judea, through that part of the country which lay near the borders of Jordan, on the other side of that river; where, upon his arrival, crowds of people flocked about him again: And, according to custom, he set about doing them good,

he taught them again.

2 And the Pharisees came to him and asked him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife? tempting him.

3 And he answered, and said unto them, What did Moses command you?

4 And they said, Moses suffered to write a bill of divorce, and to put her away.

5 And Jesus answered and said unto them, For the hardness of your heart, he wrote you this precept.

6 But from the beginning of the creation, God made them male and female.

7 For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife;

8 And they twain shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one flesh.

9 What therefore God hath joined together, let not

not only by his merciful miracles, but likewise by preaching the gospel of his kingdom.

2 And here the Pharisees, as usual, coming to ensnare him, asked, Whether it were lawful for a man to divorce his wife or not? thinking with themselves, that if he should declare against it, they might charge him with contradicting *Moses*, who, in some cases, allowed of it; and if he should justify it, they might expose him for inconsistency with what he himself had taught some time before, (*Mat. v. 32.*) and for encouraging the licentious practice of that age, in which men put away their wives for every humour, on the most frivolous pretences imaginable.

3 But (as) as he knew their invidious and captious design, he wisely turned the question upon them, saying, What doctrine did *Moses* deliver in the law, relating to this point?

4 The Pharisees replied, That *Moses*, in several cases, left men at liberty to discharge themselves of their wives, and to marry others, provided they did but give the former a certificate of the divorce.

5 Our Lord answered, Whatsoever permission *Moses* granted, it was not by way of injunction, but only of condescension and compassion, to prevent greater evils, which, otherwise, would have been produced by the obstinacy of your tempers, and by your cruel usage of wives that do not suit your own fancies.

6 But in the first institution of marriage, immediately upon the creation of man, things were put upon a quite different foot; God then creating but one male and one female, and joining them together, as husband and wife, by such bonds of nature and affection as could not take place between either of them and any other man or woman that might afterwards be in the world.

7, 8 Accordingly, in settling the law of marriage for their posterity, (*Gen. ii. 24.*) God declared that, for the sake of this relation, a man shall quit the most endearing engagements he before was under to his other kindred, even to the nearest of them, such as father and mother, that he may come under the strictest ties to his wife, as nearer and dearer to him than any of them; and further added, that both these shall be so inseparably united together, as to be counted but one body, which *Adam's* and *Eve's* really were, before the substance of her flesh was formed out of his.

9 As therefore God, by his primitive ordinance, has joined together only one man and one woman, to be husband and wife, in the ordinary course of things,

not man put a sunder.

10 And in the house his disciples asked him again of the same matter.

11 And he saith unto them, Who-soever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her.

12 And if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery.

13 And they brought young children to him, that he should touch them; and his disciples rebuked those that brought them.

14 But when Jesus saw it, he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid

things, for their lives; let no man pretend, on slight or trivial occasions, to make a separation between them; or imagine *Moses's* permission, or rather connivence, in certain circumstances, under the legal dispensation, is to be pleaded for any divorce, without important reasons for it, in the times of reformation that are now coming on.

10 After this discourse with the *Pharisees*, which silenced them, and defeated all their hopes of getting any advantage against Christ; when he and his apostles were got together alone in an house, they desired him to explain this point still further to them.

11 Whereupon he told them, that the true state of the case, as he had declared to the *Pharisees*, (*Mat. xix. 9.*) and had formerly said to themselves, (*Mat. v. 32.*) was in short this, That unless the man or woman had been guilty of criminal conversation with another person, which was, in its own nature, inconsistent with, and a dissolution of, the matrimonial bond; whatsoever husband should divorce his wife for any other cause, and marry another woman during her life, he would, in God's account, be an adulterer, to the injury of his divorced wife.

12 And whatsoever wife should quit her conjugal relation to her husband for any other cause, and, during his life, should marry another man, she would, in God's account, be guilty of the sin of adultery, to the injury of her forsaken husband.

13 About this time some persons, who believed in our Lord Jesus †, presented their young children to him, desiring that he would lay his hands upon them, and bless them; at which the apostles opposed those that brought them, lest it should prove an occasion of too much trouble to their Lord, and of diverting him from his other work, by encouraging multitudes to crowd infants upon him.

14 But when Christ observed this repulse, he was so far from countenancing the apostles in it, that he discovered a holy resentment, and sharply reprov'd them for it, saying, Let the tender babes have free access to me, and by no means do any thing to prevent them; for the members of the gospel-kingdom,

N O T E.

† That these persons believed in Christ, appears from the end for which they brought their children to him: Which was, not that he might cure them of any corporal disease; (for there is no hint of their having any: and if they had, the disciples would not have gone about to prevent them, any more than older people;) but it was, that he might bless

them with the blessings of his kingdom. (*ver. 16.*) And his *touching* them is an expression of the same import with his *laying his hands* upon them, as it is often used in the evangelists, and is particularly to be understood in this very case, *ver. 16.* and *Mat. xix. 13, 14, 15.* See the paraphrase and note there.

bid them not : for of such is the kingdom of God.

15 Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein.

16 And he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them.

17 And when he was gone forth into the way, there came one running, and kneeled to him, and asked him, Good Master, what shall I do, that I may inherit eternal life ?

18 And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good ? there is none good, but one, that is God.

19 Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Defraud not, Honour thy father and mother.

dom, which I am come to set up in the world, consist of such as these, as well as of grown persons, who, in temper and disposition, are like these.

15 As to grown persons, I assuredly tell you, who, by your behaviour on this occasion, plainly need the admonition, Whoever he be, that does not embrace the gospel of the kingdom, with humility and meekness, free from prevailing hypocrisy, wrath and malice, pride and ambition, in resemblance of the temper of a little child, shall never be partaker of its great and glorious blessings.

16 And then, to shew that children themselves were likewise admitted to share in these privileges, he, taking the infants into his arms, affectionately embraced them, and, laying his hands upon them, authoritatively pronounced them blessed.

17 When Jesus went from this place, and was on the road to *Jerusalem*, (ver. 32.) a certain young gentleman, of considerable figure and authority among the *Jews*, (Mat. xix. 22. and Luke xviii. 18.) came with all speed and earnestness to him, and, falling down on his knees, saluted him with great respect, under the most honourable title that used to be given to their rabbies, saying, (see the note on *Luke xviii.*) Good Master, I believe that you are some extraordinary prophet, and can direct me in the most important of all concerns ; and therefore I beg that you would tell me what is necessary for me to do, in order to my obtaining a right to everlasting life.

18 Our Lord replied, What means your calling me, by way of eminence, *good*, since you do not take me to be any thing more than a man ? This title is too high and flattering to be applied so emphatically to any rabbi, or mere creature ; for there is none absolutely and perfectly good, but God himself, who is the Author of every kind of goodness.

19 But, as to your important question, The only way for obtaining a right to eternal life, by your own doings, is perfectly to obey all the commands of God, which, you know, are written in his law, and, with respect to duties of the second table, are such as these, *viz.* Thou shalt neither be guilty of adultery, or any uncleanness in heart or life ; nor of murder, nor any tendencies toward it ; nor of theft or cheating ; nor of lying or false accusing ; nor of over-reaching, or any way depriving another of his right ; and thou shalt behave with all decency, obedience, and reverence, toward your parents, and toward all such as God has placed in

supe-

superior ranks, and given authority over you. (See the note on *Luke* xviii. 20.)

20 And he answered, and said unto him, Master, all these have I observed from my youth.

20 The young man, supposing himself to have been guilty of no defect in any of these articles, according to his lax acceptance of their meaning, replied, Sir, I am confident that my obedience, in all these points, has been very exact, from my infancy to this very day; and I am ready to do any thing else that you can mention, if it be further necessary to secure my title to eternal happiness.

21 Then Jesus beholding him, loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come, take up the cross, and follow me.

21 Then Jesus, looking earnestly upon him, was pleased with the virtuous dispositions that appeared in him; and yet, to shew him his ignorance, self-conceit, and vain confidence, told him, that much more, than he imagined, was contained in the requirements of the law. If, says he, you would indeed come up to its high demands, I will propose one thing for your trial, which you have not yet done: Go, and sell your whole estate, and distribute it to the poor; and, in case you yield a willing obedience only to this one demand, I assure you of much better treasure in heaven, than all your possessions on earth: when you have done this, come again to me, and follow my doctrine and example in your faith and obedience, freely submitting to whatsoever hardships or sufferings may befall you, in these evil days, for my sake; and I will effectually bring you to eternal life. (See the note on *Mat.* xix. 17.)

22 And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved: for he had great possessions.

22 But (20) when the young man heard what acts of self-denial Christ called him to, he was sorely disappointed, and turned away from this good Master, with a sorrowful heart; for he had a very plentiful estate, and could on no account whatsoever think of parting with it, even though he should lose heaven itself by keeping it.

23 And Jesus looked round about, and saith unto his disciples, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!

23 Hereupon Jesus, casting his eyes upon his disciples, like one who would observe how they were affected with this discourse, and with its event as to this young man, took occasion to caution them against ambitious desires after the riches of this world, and against their foolish expectations of temporal prosperity under him, saying, How great are the temptations and dangers of the rich! and how extremely difficult is it for them to be so far weaned from the allurements of this world, as to seek and prefer the glorious blessings of my kingdom before them, and to be ready, when called to it, to resign their earthly enjoyments for me and heaven!

24 And the disciples

24 The apostles, hearing him use such a pathetic,

ciples were astonished at his words. But Jesus answereth again, and faith unto them, Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches, to enter into the kingdom of God!

25 It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.

26 And they were astonished out of measure, saying among themselves, Who then can be saved?

27 And Jesus looking upon them, faith, With men it is impossible, but not with God: for with God all things are possible.

28 Then Peter began to say unto him, Lo, we have left all, and have followed thee.

tic, earnest exclamation. were exceedingly amazed; they rather imagining that riches were tokens of God's favour, and were among the benefits of the Messiah's kingdom. But, to set them right in their thoughts about these things, he further said, My dear children, who indeed shew yourselves to be but children in understanding, do not mistake me: My words are not to be understood of a bare possession, much less of a regular enjoyment and use of riches, but of an inordinate disposition of mens hearts toward them, whereby they place their chief happiness in them. How exceeding hard is it for persons of this character to obtain such a humble and self-denying, holy and heavenly temper of spirit, as is necessary for the subjects of my kingdom!

25 This is so very difficult, that, in a proverbial way, it may said, So bulky a creature as a camel may sooner thrust through so small a passage as the eye of a needle, than a rich man, who places his confidence in his riches, can, with all the evil affections of his heart toward this world, get through the strait gate, and narrow way that leads to everlasting life. (See the note on *Mat. xix. 24.*)

26 At this the apostles were still more abundantly astonished than before, supposing that their Lord hereby made it an absolute impossibility for such a man ever to be saved, and saying one to another, At this rate, who that is rich, or that even desires to be so, as mankind generally do, can ever attain salvation?

27 But Jesus looking upon them with pity for the anxiety of mind which he saw they were in, said, This is indeed utterly impossible to every man by any power of his own; but is not so to the mercy and power of God, with whom nothing is too hard to do: He can make an effectual change upon the heart by regenerating grace, and enable it freely to surrender up all the affluence of this world, and every thing that is dearest to it here, when they stand in competition with me, and the blessings of my kingdom, and when he demands a resignation of them for his glory.

28 Then Peter, recovering from his surprise, as if none could be saved, was ready to run into the contrary extreme, as if he and his brethren had done enough to secure their salvation, saying, Lord, behold how thoroughly we have complied with all this! Though we had no great possessions in the world; yet we have freely given up our all, such

as it was, to be thy disciples and servants, and to adhere to thee.

29 And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake and the gospel's,

29 Jesus replied, I assuredly tell you, that what ye have lost for me is not worth mentioning, in comparison with what ye shall gain by me: For no one, upon the whole, shall be a loser, who, from a principle of faith and love, is willing to quit his house and home, and nearest relations, such as brethren or sisters, a father or mother, a wife or children, or contentedly suffers his estate, be it more or less, to be taken from him, rather than not be faithful in his profession of my name and gospel.

30 But he shall receive an hundred-fold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions: and in the world to come, eternal life.

30 But, amidst all his losses and persecutions, he shall have habitations, friends, and possessions, with such satisfaction, and inward peace and joy, by the favour of God's providence, and the gracious influences and comforts of his Spirit, as will be an hundred times better for him, even in this world, than every thing that he parted with for them; and all shall be crowned with an eternal life of glory and blessedness in the world to come.

31 But many that are first, shall be last; and the last, first.

31 Nevertheless, to shew the freeness and sovereignty of divine grace in all this, many who, like the *Jews*, are first called, and stand nearest, in their own and others opinion, to the kingdom of heaven, shall be last in my account, and in their entrance into it; and, on the other hand, many who, like the *Gentiles*, will be last called, and are thought, by themselves and others, to be furthest off from this kingdom, shall be first in my esteem, and in their admissions to it. (See the note on *Mat.* xix. 30.)

32 And they were in the way going up to Jerusalem: and Jesus went before them; and they were amazed, and as they followed, they were afraid. And he took again the twelve, and began to tell them what things should happen unto him.

32 Whilst our Lord was thus instructing his apostles, they were in the road to *Jerusalem*, he leading the way, and going before them: And, when they observed with what resolution he hastened thither, they were perfectly astonished, considering what he himself had suggested, and they had seen of his enemies designs against him; and, while they followed him, it was with heavy hearts, under fearful apprehensions of the great danger which they were all likely to be exposed to there: And as he knew their thoughts, so the better to fore-arm them against being dismayed at what would befall him, he again, ordering the twelve apostles to come up to him, told them plainly of the terrible distresses that he must undergo.

33 Saying, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the

33 Observe, says he, my words, We are now on our journey to *Jerusalem*; and the time draws very nigh, in which the things I have often mentioned before will be accomplished. Soon after I,

the Son of man shall be delivered unto the chief priests, and unto the scribes: and they shall condemn him to death, and shall deliver him to the Gentiles;

34 And they shall mock him, and shall scourge him, and shall spit upon him, and shall kill him: and the third day he shall rise again.

35 And James and John the sons of Zebedee come unto him, saying, Master, we would that thou shouldst do for us whatsoever we shall desire.

36 And he said unto them, What would ye that I should do for you?

37 They said unto him, Grant unto us, that we may sit, one on thy right hand, and the other on thy left hand, in thy glory.

38 But Jesus said unto them, Ye know not what ye ask: can ye drink of the cup that I drink of? and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?

39 And they said,

the Messiah, get thither, I shall be betrayed into the hands of the great council, consisting mostly of the chief priests and Jewish doctors: And such is their enmity against me, that they will certainly censure me as an impostor, who deserves to die; and will accuse and deliver me over as a capital offender, to the Roman governor and his soldiers, for judgment and execution.

34 And these soldiers will abuse me with all manner of indignity, cruelty, and contempt; they will deride and insult me, scourge and buffet me, (see the note on *Mat.* xxvii. 26.) and shamefully spit upon me, and, at length, will put me to a barbarous and ignominious death; after which, I shall surely rise again on the third day.

35 Hereupon, though the disciples knew not what to make of these repeated and express declarations of his sufferings and death, and of the resurrection which should follow; yet, having some confused and general notions, that, after his going through some further troubles, he would raise up a kingdom of external pomp and grandeur with a high hand, which should be like a resurrection from the dead, James and John, the two sons of Zebedee, came to him with their mother, (*Mat.* xx. 20.) and, making use of her interest in him, begged that he would grant them a favour, which they had to ask him.

36 Then Jesus ordered them to open their minds to him, saying, What would you have me to do for you? Let me hear it, that I may tell you whether your request shall be granted or not.

37 They answered, It is that thou wouldst please to give us the honour and dignity of being placed next to thyself, one of us at thy right hand, and the other at thy left, when thou shalt set up that glorious kingdom in the world, which we apprehend will soon appear.

38 But Jesus replied, Alas for your pride and ignorance, and carnal notions about the nature of my office and kingdom! Ye aim at temporal preferments, little thinking that they do not lie within the compass of my design; and ye ask for honours in my presence, not knowing that the way for obtaining them, lies through great hardships and sufferings, or what it would cost you to come at them: Let me ask you, Do ye think that ye are able to pledge me in the bitter cup of sorrows which I must drink, or to bear the baptism of sufferings which I must pass under?

39 And they, without any manner of hesitancy,

said unto him, We can. And Jesus said unto them, Ye shall indeed drink of the cup that I drink of; and with the baptism that I am baptized withal, shall ye be baptized:

40 But to sit on my right hand, and on my left hand, is not mine to give; but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared.

41 And when the ten heard it, they began to be much displeased with James and John.

42 But Jesus called them to him, and saith unto them, Ye know that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles, exercise lordship over them; and their great ones exercise authority upon them.

43 But so shall it not be among you: but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister:

44 And whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all.

or due sense of their own weakness, and need of divine grace, answered, Yes, we can bear or suffer the worst of injuries and indignities with thee. Well, said our Lord †, ye shall indeed have enough of these, after my example: Waters of a full cup shall be wrung out to you; and, as ye will therein suffer, ye shall hereafter be glorified with me.

40 But as to an advancement to the very highest seats of glory, and nearest to my person, at my right and left hand: this is an honour which depends upon ancient settlements between the Father and me; and therefore is not mine to dispose of to any, (*αλλ' οὐς προμαρτα*) but to those for whom it is prepared in his eternal counsels and decrees. (See the note on *Mat. xx. 23.*)

41 Now when the other ten apostles understood what petition James and John had presented, they began to stomach it, (*νεζηατο αγχνακτιν*) that these two brethren should go about to supplant the rest by an attempt to get the pre-eminence, which every one of them was ambitious of obtaining, and hoped to get for himself.

42 But, to repress this envious and aspiring temper in them all, Jesus, calling them to him, said, Ye are acted by the very same spirit, and are taking just such measures as ambitious persons go into, in seeking after the powers and preferments of this world: Ye know indeed that, in the several nations of the *Gentiles*, there is a mighty strife for dominion and authority, and they are counted the greatest men who get the government into their hands, and tyrannize over others by absolute will and pleasure.

43 But ye have a very wrong notion of the nature of my kingdom, if ye imagine that its honours are to be pursued and managed after this rate. No, no: Whoever he be among you that desires to be truly great and honourable under me, the only way of his rising, is to be meek and humble, and to act the part of a servant, rather than of a lord or master, in his way of doing all the good he can to others.

44 And whoever among you would excel all the rest, and shine with the highest lustre, must be more eminent than his brethren, for condescension, humility, and works of labour and love; and must

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N O T E

† The apostle James suffered martyrdom under Herod, Acts xii. 2.; and the apostle John met with various persecutions, and was banished to the isle of *Patmos*, for the sake of Christ, *Rev. i. 9.* But, as is generally believed, he only, of

all the apostles, escaped a violent death; and therefore I have limited this baptism to sufferings short of proper martyrdom. *Vid. Euseb. Eccles. Hist. l. iii. cap. 1. And 31. Et, si non male fidei, Doroth. de vit. & mort. Apostol.*

be willing to stoop to the meanest services, for the benefit of all that he has to do with.

45 For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

4; For even I the Messiah myself, who am indeed your Lord and Master, did not come into the world to set up for state and grandeur, or to behave in an assuming manner toward others; but my great design and business here is, to act the part of my Father's servant, to go about doing good to the souls and bodies of men whilst I live, and at last to give up my life itself, (*λυτρον αρεσ πολλων*) as a price of redemption for great multitudes, that I, dying in their room and stead, may satisfy God's law and justice on their behalf, and set them free from the dreadful slavery to which their sins had brought and exposed them: This is the way in which I am to rise to my throne of glory; and, if ye would follow me thither, ye must learn of me, who am meek and lowly in heart, and walk so as I shall have left you an example.

46 And they came to Jericho: and as he went out of Jericho with his disciples, and a great number of people, blind Bartimeus, the son of Timeus, sat by the highway-side, begging

46 Soon after this, our blessed Lord arrived with his disciples at *Jericho*, still pursuing his journey toward *Jerusalem*; and upon his departure from that town, together with his apostles, and a great multitude of people who followed him from thence, he came to a place where a noted blind beggar, viz. *Bartimeus* (which, in the *Syriac* language, signifies the son of *Timeus*) was sitting on one side of the road, to ask the alms of travellers who came that way. (See the note on *Luke* xviii. 3. 5.)

47 And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out, and say, Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy on me.

47 This man, hearing the noise of a great company near him, inquired what might be the occasion of that extraordinary concourse; and upon the people's telling him that the famous Prophet called *Jesus of Nazareth* was just then passing by, he immediately cried out aloud, with great earnestness, saying, Lord Jesus, thou promised Messiah of the house of *David*, I have heard of thy fame, and believe in the greatness of thy power and mercy; oh that thou wouldst commiserate my deplorable case!

48 And many charged him that he should hold his peace: but he cried the more a great deal, Thou son of David, have mercy on me.

48 And yet such was the unnatural hard-heartedness of several in the company, that they were angry, and huffed him for making such a clamour, and did all they could to silence him: But the more they offered to retrain him, the more he raised his voice and importunity, saying, Oh thou Saviour of *Israel*, who art sprung from our father *David's* loins, I beseech thee cast an eye of pity upon me!

49 And Jesus stood still, and commanded him to be called. And they call the blind man,

49 Then Jesus, making a full stop, ordered some of the company to lead this blind man to him: And they immediately went and spoke to him, saying, Come along with us, get up, and be of good

cou-

man, saying unto him. Be of good comfort, rise; he calleth thee.

50 And he, casting away his garment, rose, and came to Jesus.

51 And Jesus answered and said unto him, What wilt thou that I should do unto thee? The blind man said unto him, Lord, that I might receive my sight.

52 And Jesus said unto him, Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole. And immediately he received his sight, and followed Jesus in the way.

courage; you need not fear finding favour, Jesus himself calls for you to come to him.

50 Hereupon the blind man sprung up in an ecstasy; and, for the greater speed and decency, throwing off an old upper covering in which he sat to screen himself from the inconveniences of the weather, hastened away to Jesus.

51 And the blessed Saviour, to encourage and try him, said, What is it you thus earnestly call upon me for? Is it for an alms, or for a cure? The blind man answered, Lord, my humble request is, for what none of this great company can do besides thee, that thou wouldst please to shew the greatness of thy power and compassion in restoring my sight, and thereby enabling me to see thee in the light of this world, and get my bread in an industrious way, without being always obliged to go a-begging.

52 Then Jesus, taking pity upon him, said, Be of good comfort, and depart in peace; thy faith is answered, and thy request is granted; be it unto thee according to thy dependence upon me for this cure: And, at that very instant, his eye-sight was perfectly recovered; and he, full of joy and praise, joined the company, and went along with them after Jesus in his way toward *Jerusalem*.

RECOLLECTIONS.

What a bright example of unwearied labour and patience, of wisdom, caution, and humbleness of mind; of condescension, tenderness, and compassion to the miserable, has our blessed Lord set before us! and what an excellent dispensation of purity, light, and grace, do we live under in gospel-days! The law of marriage is restored to its primitive institution, and settled, by the word of God, on such a foundation, as is admirably suited to prevent confusion in families, and to engage conjugal faithfulness and affection: The covenant privileges of the children of believers are established with advantage; Christ owns and favours them, and makes them emblems of such disciples as may expect the blessings of his kingdom, which are all spiritual, holy, and heavenly, incomparably better than the riches and honours of this world. Suffering and self-denial, with faith and patience, is the way to glory; but whatsoever we may lose, or undergo, for Christ, and in love to him, we shall never lose by him; he that willingly bears the cross here, shall wear the crown for ever. May we believe in a suffering, as well as risen Saviour! and did we but realize, by faith, his death and resurrection for us, we should think nothing too much to endure for him: But self-confidence, ambition, and a worldly spirit, are the bane of religion and happiness; the more they are tried, the more they are found to be so; and nothing but the mighty power of God can effectually preserve or recover us from them. But oh how apt are the remainders of these iniquities to work even in the hearts of Christ's own disciples, and to offend him; though humility is itself our honour, and the first step to farther advancement in his kingdom of grace and glory! This will keep us from despising any of our brethren, or desiring to prefer ourselves to them, or to exercise dominion over their faith; and this will dispose us to imitate our blessed Lord, in bearing with the infirmities, the ignorance, and the forwardness, of all that we have to do with, and in shewing compassion to the poor, and blind, and miserable. And as wants and distresses, of one

kind

kind or other, will attend every one of us while we are here, we, like blind *Bar-timæus*, should make them all known to the Lord, and cry mightily to him for his reasonable help, believing that he is able and willing to succour, supply, and save us: And when he takes pity upon us, it becomes us to follow him.

C H A P. XI.

Christ rides in triumph to Jerusalem, 1,—11. Curses the barren fig-tree, 12,—14. Turns the traders out of the temple, 15,—18. Exhorts to faith, and a forgiving temper, as necessary to acceptable prayer, 19,—26. And silences the Jews by a question about John's baptism, 27,—33.

TEXT.

AND when they came nigh to Jerusalem, unto Bethphage, and Bethany, at the mount of Olives; he sendeth forth two of his disciples,

2 And saith unto them, Go your way into the village over against you; and as soon as ye be entered into it, ye shall find a colt tied, whereon never man sat: loose him, and bring him.

3 And if any man say unto you, Why do ye this? say ye, that the Lord hath need of him; and straightway he will send him hither.

4 And they went their way, and found the colt tied by the door without, in a place where two ways met: and they loose him.

5 And certain of them that stood there, said unto them, What do ye loosing the colt?

PARAPHRASE.

NOW when Jesus, attended with his apostles, approached Jerusalem, and came to a place at the foot of mount *Olivet*, not far from the villages of *Bethphage* and *Bethany*; he, knowing that the appointed time for his last sufferings was just at hand, and desiring to make a public entry into the city, ordered two of his disciples to go from this place, into one of those villages, which lay opposite to them; and told them, that, upon their entrance into it, they would certainly meet with a young ass, which never had been backed, standing tied in the street; and bade them untie it, and bring it away to him. (See the note on *Mat. xxi. 7.*)

3 And, said, he if any man should observe you, and ask what ye mean by leading away the ass's colt, tell him, that the Lord of all, the great Proprietor of heaven and earth, has a present occasion, in his state of humiliation, to make use of it; and, immediately upon your saying this, his heart shall be over-ruled to grant free leave for your bringing it to me.

4 Accordingly, the two disciples readily went into the village, in obedience to their Lord's command, without objecting or disputing against it, or doubting whether the event would answer his prediction; and, finding a young ass, just as he had told them, tied by a door, at the corner of a street, they immediately went to loose him, that they might lead him away.

5 And its owners (*Luke xix. 33.*) standing by, and taking notice that two strangers were untying, and about to lead away the colt, asked them, What authority they had to meddle with another person's property?

6 And they said unto them even as Jesus had commanded : and they let them go.

7 And they brought the colt to Jesus, and cast their garments on him ; and he sat upon him.

8 And many spread their garments in the way : and others cut down branches off the trees, and strewed them in the way.

9 And they that went before, and they that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna ; Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

10 Blessed be the kingdom of our father David, that cometh in the name of the Lord ; Hosanna in the highest.

11 And Jesus entered into Jerusalem, and into the temple : and when he had looked round about upon all things, and now the even-tide was come, he went out unto Bethany with the twelve.

12 And on the morrow, when they were come from Bethany, he was hungry.

13 And seeing a fig-tree afar off, having leaves, he came, if haply he might find any thing thereon : and when he came to it, he found nothing

6 The apostles replied, as Jesus had ordered them, That the great Lord of heaven and earth wanted to make use of it for a special purpose ; and, upon hearing this, they said no more, but let the apostles lead it away without any further opposition.

7 Then they brought the young ass to the place where Jesus waited for it ; and, to shew their respect to him, spread their clothes upon its back, and mounted him upon it, that he might ride to *Jerusalem* in a manner answerable to ancient prophecies of the Messiah. (*Isa* lxii. 11. and *Zech.* ix. 9. See the note on *Mat.* xxi 4, 5.)

8 And as he rode amidst a great crowd of attendants, many of them, to signify their joy, and the honour they desired to pay him, spread their clothes in the road, instead of tapestry, for him to ride over, (see the note on *Mat.* xxi. 8.) thereby representing the triumphal entry of a king ; whilst others, to express the gladness of their hearts, as at the feast of tabernacles, cut off boughs from the trees, and strewed them in the road to adorn it.

9 And all this numerous retinue, both before and after him, made the air ring with loud acclamations, saying, May all prosperity attend the long expected Messiah, who comes from God to bring salvation to *Israel!*

10 May the throne of *David*, our father, be exalted, and flourish, and abide for ever, under the reign of this his Son, who is come with authority from our God ! Save now, we beseech thee, O Lord ! We offer thee our loftiest praises ! Let the angels join our song ! and let God himself pour down all blessings from on high upon Messiah, our King, upon his kingdom, and upon us ! (See the notes on *Mat.* xxi. 9.)

11 In this manner Jesus made his public entry into *Jerusalem* ; and, to shew that he did not aim at a temporal, but spiritual rule and government, he went, not to the court, but to the temple, to preach and set things to rights there : And, having taken an exact notice of the state of its affairs, he, in the evening, retired with the twelve apostles to *Bethany*, near two miles from the city.

12 And, in the morning of the next day, as he was going back with them to *Jerusalem*, he found himself to be hungry.

13 And, casting his eye upon a fig-tree, at some distance, which, by its leaves, was promising for fruit, he went up to it, like a stranger, to see whether there were any thing upon it, for him to eat : But, when he came to examine it, he found only leaves ;

thing but leaves; for the time of figs was not yet.

14 And Jesus answered and said unto it, No man eat fruit of thee hereafter for ever. And his disciples heard it.

15 And they come to Jerusalem: and Jesus went into the temple, and began to cast out them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the money-changers, and the seats of them that sold doves;

16 And would not suffer that any man should carry any vessel through the temple.

17 And he taught, saying unto them,

leaves; for it was not a time of figs with that tree †. it having failed of bearing that year.

† Jesus therefore took occasion from thence to give his disciples an emblem of the destruction of the Jewish nation, and of all hypocritical professors, for their unfruitfulness, under the means of grace, notwithstanding their high pretences to religion, saying to this flourishing, but barren fig-tree. Let no more fruit ever grow upon thee, from this time forward; as thou art a faulty and deceitful tree, unprofitable and blasted thou shalt be for ever. And, as he spoke to it, after this manner, in the hearing of his apostles, they observed the curse which he pronounced upon it.

‡ Then they proceeded in their way to Jerusalem: And, upon their arrival thither, Jesus repaired directly to the temple; and, going into the court of the Gentiles, where profelytes used to meet for worship, he found several sorts of trades carrying on there. Then, being filled with holy indignation at the avarice of the priests, who had brought the market thither for their own profit, and at the horrible profanation of that sacred place, which, by God's own appointment, was solemnly dedicated to his service; he, in an awful and authoritative way*, cleared the court of all the buyers and sellers, and threw down the tables of money-changers, and the seats of them that sat to sell doves, sheep and oxen, with other things, to those that came thither to offer sacrifices.

16 And that he might thoroughly reform all abuses of this kind, which had been introduced there, he proceeded to give charge, that no man should pervert the temple to secular uses, by carrying any goods or burdens, in a way of trade, through its courts.

17 And, to vindicate his conduct, he discoursed to the people on *Isa. lvi. 6, 7.* where God, speaking

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† For another interpretation of these words, we may observe, that the word *yet* is not in the Greek, which only says, *υ γαρ ην καιρος ουκ ην, for it was not the time, or season of figs*: But as this may be meant of the time of gathering in of ripe figs, it may be understood that this season was not yet: And so, inclosing the immediately foregoing words in a parenthesis, it may refer to the former part of the sentence, and be considered as the reason of Christ's going to see whether there were any figs on this tree; for the time of ingathering the fruit, and clearing the trees of it, was not yet come.

* As this is related, *Matth. xxi. 12, 13.* among the transactions of the preceding day, and before he cursed the fig-tree; it is probable that some of the people, at the instigation of the priests, ventured to return to their traffic here the next morning, which occasioned Christ's acting the same part over again. But as the evangelists did not always observe the exact order of time in their narratives, when it was of no importance to the history; so, possibly, either *Matthew* or *Mark* did not tie himself down to it here.

them, Is it not written, My house shall be called of all nations, the house of prayer? but ye have made it a den of thieves.

18 And the scribes and chief priests heard it, and sought how they might destroy him: for they feared him, because all the people was astonished at his doctrine.

19 And when even was come, he went out of the city.

20 And in the morning, as they passed by, they saw the fig-tree dried up from the roots.

21 And Peter calling to remembrance, saith unto him, Master, behold, the fig-tree which thou cursedst is withered away.

22 And Jesus answering, saith unto them, Have faith in God.

23 For verily I say

ing of the sons of the stranger that join themselves to the Lord, says, Them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer; for my house shall be called an house of prayer to all nations. Now, says our Lord, Does it not appear from what is here written, that the court of the Gentile profelytes, as well as the rest of the temple, is included in this house of God? But, instead of appropriating it to holy and religious uses, ye have turned it, not only into a place of common traffic, but even into a nest of thieves, who rob God of his honour, and carry on trades of oppression and fraud.

18 The doctors and chief priests, having heard how he spake with authority, and condemned them, who hated to be reformed, and were afraid of his reputation's rising upon the ruins of their own, consulted by what means they might most artfully and effectually cut him off, without exposing themselves to popular odium and resentment: For they durst not venture to seize him by violence, lest it should raise a tumult, because they knew what an interest he had in the common people's affections, who were full of admiration at the majesty, authority, and excellence of his preaching.

19 But Jesus, knowing the malicious designs of his enemies against him, would trust himself among them only in the day-time; and therefore, as night came on, he again retired out of the city with his disciples to *Bethany*.

20 And, as they were returning back from thence to *Jerusalem* the following morning, the disciples observed that the fig-tree, which he, in their hearing, had cursed the day before, was entirely withered down to the root.

21 Upon which, they immediately recollecting how green and flourishing it was when Christ so lately passed sentence against it, were much surprised; and *Peter*, as the mouth of the rest, spoke to him about it, saying, Master, we are amazed to see how soon thy words have taken effect: Look how the fig-tree, which thou cursedst but yesterday, is already quite withered and dead.

22 Jesus replied, Let this be an argument for your exercising (*πεινὸν οὖν*) the faith which God requires, works, and approves of, rather than for your wonder: See what he can do; and depend upon his almighty power for the performance of every thing that he encourages you to expect from him.

23 For I assuredly tell you, that how great soever any work may be, which ye shall attempt in my

say unto you, That Whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea, and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass, he shall have whatsoever he saith.

24 Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.

25 And when ye stand, praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses.

26 But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses.

27 And they came again to Jerusalem: and as he was walking in the temple, there come to him the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders,

28 And say unto him, By what authority dost thou these things? and who gave thee this authority to do these things?

29 And Jesus answered and said unto them, I will also ask of you one question, and answer me, and I will

name, agreeable to the will of God, even though it were as difficult and unlikely to be effected, as by a mere word of command to root up this mount of *Olives*, and throw it into the sea, it shall be as certainly accomplished as my word has been upon this fig-tree; provided ye have but an entire, humble, and unshaken trust in the divine power and promises, and have no unbelieving doubts about the performance of it.

24 Whatsoever therefore ye would ask of God at any time in prayer, which is fit for him to do, and ye have any warrant from his word to expect, I say unto you, Believe only, without doubting, that in his infinite wisdom, power, faithfulness, and goodness, he will fulfil your petitions, and it certainly shall be so.

25 And as your own acceptance with God is necessary to your requests being heard and answered, I further add, Whenever ye appear before him in prayer, see that ye be ready to forgive those who have offended you, as ever ye would hope for remission of sins from your heavenly Father, who will shew this mercy to such as are of a forgiving spirit toward their fellow-creatures. (*Matt. vi. 14.*)

26 But if ye cannot find in your hearts to pass by the offences of others against you, ye may depend upon it, that, under the predominancy of such an unsuitable and provoking temper of mind, so unlike to God, and so contrary to the nature and design of his compassion, he will not forgive your iniquities, or hear your prayers for any thing that ye ask of him.

27 Then our Lord and his apostles, going forward, entered again into Jerusalem: And, whilst he was walking in the temple, several of the chief priests, doctors of the law, and elders of the people, came about him, being vexed and filled with envy at his late public entry into the city, and at what he had done and said for rectifying the abuses of the sanctuary;

28 And hoping one way or other to get an advantage against him, they took upon them to call him to an account, and to ask him by what authority he pretended to talk and act at such a superior rate as he had done, especially for two or three days last past.

29 Jesus, knowing the evil design of their hearts in this demand, replied, I have likewise a question of great importance to put to you, the resolving of which will naturally make way for an answer to your own; and if ye will but be so free as to give me your

will tell you by what authority I do these things.

30 The baptism of John, was it from heaven, or of men? answer me.

32 And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say, Why then did ye not believe him?

32 But if we shall say, Of men, they feared the people: for all men counted John, that he was a prophet indeed.

33 And they answered and said unto Jesus, We cannot tell. And Jesus answering, saith unto them, Neither do I tell you by what authority I do these things.

your thoughts upon my query, then I will directly and plainly answer yours, that ye may know by what commission I do these things.

30 The question I would propose is this: When *John the Baptist* appeared to preach the doctrine of repentance for the remission of sins, because the kingdom of heaven was at hand, and to make profelytes by baptism; did he do all this by commission from God, or by the authority of men? Pray let me hear your sense of this matter.

31 Hereupon they found themselves cramped, and were utterly at a loss what answer to make; for such sort of reasonings as these arose in their minds, and ran through their private debates between themselves, (*προς αυτους*) If we should own that *John* did these things by divine commission, Jesus will reply upon us, Why then did ye not believe the testimony which he therein gave to me? and we shall be self-condemned, and exposed to contempt and reproach before all the multitude.

32 But if, on the contrary, we should say, that all *John's* preaching and baptizing were human inventions, without any authority from God; we have reason to fear that the common people will be so enraged, as even to stone us, or tear us to pieces: For they are all firm in the belief that *John* was really a prophet sent of God, and have a high veneration for his memory.

33 And so, being apprehensive of dangerous consequences to themselves, which ever way they should answer; they, contrary to their own consciences, said to Christ; We cannot pretend to determine whether *John* had a commission from God or not: Upon which our Lord replied, I then do not think myself obliged to tell you by what commission I do and say the things that ye object against, since ye refuse to give your thoughts upon so plain a question, which, fairly answered, would have gone a good way to resolve your own to me.

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

What signal testimonies did Jesus give of his divine sovereignty and dominion, omniscience and omnipotence, as lord and governor of the spirits of men, and of all civil and religious concerns, even in his state of humiliation! How suitable was his meek and lowly triumph, to proclaim the humble and the glorious Saviour; and to shew that he has indeed a kingdom, but that it is not of this world! How high are the honours due to him, and with what pleasure should we pay them! Every one's property should be readily resigned at his demand, and all his orders obeyed without disputing or delay. And divine institutions, with the purity of sacred ordinances, must be maintained inviolably, whatever pretences there may be to break in upon them; it being the great design of Christ and of his gospel, to reform the worship of God, and the minds and manners of men. And oh with what majesty, authority, and power, does he act, when he takes this work in hand!

What great things will he do for them, and by them, who ask in faith, and are moulded, by his grace, into an imitation of God's compassion and forgiveness in their own tempers and behaviour! and how many a prayer is lost for want of faith, and a charitable frame of spirit toward others! But alas for fruitless professors, under the means of salvation! They are in the nearest danger of falling under a curse, and of being utterly, blasted to their endless perdition. The more our blessed Lord displays his glory, his holiness, and power, in his word and works; the more hypocrites and ungodly sinners set themselves against him: And oh what sad shifts are they often put to! How free do they make with conscience, and with truth itself, in their opposition to him and his kingdom in the world: But as no arts, evasions, or evil designs, can be concealed from him; so none of them shall prevail against him, who will prove too hard for all his enemies, whenever he contends with them.

C H A P. XII.

Christ foretels the rejection of the Jews, and the calling of the Gentiles, in the parable of the vineyard let out to unfaithful husbandmen, 1,—12. Answers the Pharisees and Herodians about paying tribute to Cæsar, 13,—17. and the Sadducees about the resurrection, 18,—27. and the scribes about the chief command of the law, 28,—34. Confounds all the scribes with a question about his being David's Son and Lord, 35,—37. Warns his disciples against pride and hypocrisy, 38,—40. And commends the poor widow for her two mites, 41,—44.

TEXT.

AND he began to speak unto them by parables. A certain man planted a vineyard, and set an hedge about it, and digged a place for the wine-fat, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country.

PARAPHRASE.

AFTER the foregoing debate in the temple, our Lord proceeded to discourse to the Jewish doctors, priests, and elders, by several comparisons, to intimate that they, and all of that nation who continued to act under their influence, and side with them, should be rejected of God, and deprived of his gospel, and of all its blessings, for their impotence and unbelief; and that the Gentiles should be favoured with them, and taken into covenant in their stead. "A certain great man, (said he,) set apart a piece of ground for a vineyard; and, having planted it, did every thing needful for its security and improvement: And then committing it to the management of servants, whom he ordered to cultivate it, and make the best of its fruits, he took a long journey into a distant country."—So God, many ages ago, formed the Jewish nation into a church; gave them his law, his ordinances, and his promises, for his glory and their advantage; and set the priests and rulers of the people to instruct and govern them, that they might bring forth fruits of righteousness, from time to time, in proportion to the great privileges he had bestowed upon them: And then he withdrew the visible

visible tokens of his presence, till he should visit them again in the last days.

2 And at the season he sent to the husbandmen a servant, that he might receive from the husbandmen of the fruit of the vineyard.

3 And they caught him, and beat him, and sent him away empty.

4 And again he sent unto them another servant; and at him they cast stones, and wounded him in the head, and sent him away shamefully handled.

5 And again, he sent another; and him they killed: and many others, beating some, and killing some.

6 Having yet therefore one son, his well-beloved, he sent him also last unto them, saying, They will reverence my son.

2, 3 "And at the time when vines use to begin to bear, and grapes to be ripe †, the master of the vineyard sent a servant to receive the profits from thole to whom he had let it out: But, instead of answering his just demands, they fell upon his servant, beat him, and sent him back without one farthing of rent or profits."—So when God had continued his laws and ordinances in *Israel*, till it might be expected that they should bring forth fruits of holiness and obedience, they, on the contrary, were a stiff-necked and rebellious people; and their priests and great men themselves neglected their care of them, and even abused and rejected the extraordinary prophets which God raised up and sent to reclaim them.

4, 5 "Afterwards the owner of the vineyard sent another servant; and him the vine-dressers stoned, and miserably wounded, and sent back with ignominy and contempt: Then he sent another, whom they put to death: And, time after time, he dispatched more on the same errand; some of which they shamefully abused, and others outrageously killed."—So God, from age to age, raised up a succession of prophets, whom he sent to the *Jews*, and to their teachers, to warn and reclaim them: But they hardened their hearts against his fear, and were provoked at his messengers, whom they persecuted; cruelly oppressing, reviling, and scourging some, and, in various ways, murdering others of them:

6 When all these methods failed, the lord of the vineyard sent his only and beloved son and heir, as the last expedient for getting the fruit that was his due; supposing that the dignity of his Son's character, and the interest he had in the vineyard, might have such an awe upon the husbandmen, as to restrain them from affronting him.—So, after all other means had proved ineffectual, God was graciously pleased to make one further trial of the *Jewish* church, and of their teachers and rulers, by sending to them his only-begotten dear Son, who was heir of all things, and had a peculiar claim to that people, as visibly in covenant with him, to make the last overtures of mercy and peace to them, and to bring them back again to God; and whatsoever they had done before to his servants, it was reason-

N O T E.

† *Kaipe* the season, may relate either to the time when young vines first begin to grow fruitful, or to the time of vintage, when the ripe grapes were gathered and pressed; and therefore the paraphrase takes in both.

reasonable to think that they would not dare to offer any indignity to his own Son.

7 But those husbandmen said amongst themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and the inheritance shall be ours.

8 And they took him, and killed him, and cast him out of the vineyard.

9 What shall therefore the lord of the vineyard do? he will come and destroy the husbandmen, and will give the vineyard unto others.

10 And have ye not read this scripture? The stone which the builders rejected is become the head of the corner.

11 This was the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes.

7, 8 "But as soon as their master's Son appeared they contrived to destroy him, saying, Here comes the heir, who, if he lives, will turn us all out; let us but make away with him, and we shall keep possession, from this time forward, without controul: And therefore, they seized and slew him, and threw him out of the vineyard."—So, upon the Son of God's appearing, with manifest credentials, among the *Jews*, such is the obstinacy, perverseness, and ambition of the chief priests, *scribes*, and elders, that they reject and despise him, and are prejudiced against him, as one that is come to take away their authority: And therefore they consult how they may get rid of him, to secure to themselves their secular interests, honour, and influence; and will not rest till they have filled up the measure of their iniquity, in procuring his death.

9 What then, says Christ, is to be expected from the lord of the vineyard? He will certainly come and revenge all these abuses and affronts, and miserably destroy those perfidious, ungrateful, and provoking wretches, to whom he let it out; and will put it into other hands, who shall make better improvements, and return its fruits in due season, as ye yourselves cannot but own it is fit and right that he should. (See the paraphrase on *Mat.* xxi. 41.)

10, 11 Then Jesus, to bring the matter home to the chief priests and rulers, said, Have ye never taken notice of that prophecy of the Messiah, which refers to this very case? saying, (*Psal.* cxviii. 22, 23.) *The stone, which the builders refused, is become the head stone of the corner, This is the Lord's doing, it is marvellous in our eyes.* i. e. "He whom the chief priests; *scribes*, and rulers of the *Jews* rejected, despised, and put to death, is made the foundation, strength, and glory of the church; and unites the *Gentiles* to it, as the chief corner-stone supports and beautifies an house, and knits and holds its two sides together. This is so apparently the work of God, in bringing good out of evil, by the powerful influence of his Spirit, and of his overruling providence, in a way both of mercy and of judgment, for his own glory, the destruction of his obstinate enemies, and the salvation of true believers, that it is matter of great and awful admiration, and will be adored with wonder by all that duly observe it.

12 And they fought

12 Then the chief priests, and *Jewish* teachers, being

sought to lay hold on him, but feared the people; for they knew that he had spoken the parable against them: and they left him, and went their way.

13 And they send unto him certain of the Pharisees, and of the Herodians, to catch him in his words.

14 And when they were come, they say unto him, Master, we know that thou art true, and carest for no man; for thou regardest not the person of men, but teachest the way of God in truth: Is it lawful to give tribute to Cæsar, or not?

15 Shall we give, or shall we not give? But he knowing their hypocrisy, said unto them, Why tempt ye me? bring me a penny, that I may see it.

16 And they brought it: and he saith unto them, Whose is this image and superscription? And they said unto him, Cæsar's.

17 And Jesus answering said unto

being assured that this cutting parable was directly pointed at them, were exceedingly enraged, and resolved to be revenged upon him, as soon as ever they could: But, as they knew the common people, in general, had a great esteem and veneration for him, they were afraid to run the risk of provoking them by immediately and openly laying violent hands upon him; and so they turned away, and went to consult some safer method of getting him into their power.

13 And as the *Pharisees* contended that the *Jews* ought not to be subject to any foreign power; and the *Herodians*, on the other hand, stood up for the civil authority of the *Romans*; they prevailed upon some of both these opposite sects to go together, and propose such ensnaring questions to Jesus, as might give them an opportunity of making use of his answers, either to incense the populace, or the government against him.

14 Accordingly, when these perfidious men came to him, they said, with an air of friendship and deference to his judgment and authority, Master, we are well assured that you, having a divine commission, are faithful and impartial in speaking your mind, whatever any man living may think of it; and that you freely declare the truth, just as God has authorized you to deliver it, without the least regard to parties, or being influenced by hopes or fears from them: We therefore beg that you would please to decide a point in dispute between our two sects; which is, Whether the *Jews*, who are God's peculiar covenant-people, ought to pay tribute to the *Roman* emperor, he being a heathen, or not?

15 What is fit and right for us to do in this case? Is it best to comply with his demand of tribute, or to refuse it? But, as all their secret intrigues were fully known to him, and he saw through their malicious designs, he replied, Ye hypocritical fawners, why do ye pretend, under a shew of friendship, to propose such an ensnaring question to me? Let me see one of the *Roman* pence, which is demanded of you for tribute.

16 And, they bringing a piece of this coin to him, he asked, Whose head and inscription is this which I see upon it? They replied, It is the *Roman* emperor's.

17 Then, said he, behave as good subjects of civil government, by paying to that monarch whatsoever is due to him, for your privileges and protection under him, the currency of whose coin a-

mong

to them, Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to God the things that are God's. And they marvelled at him.

18 Then come unto him the Sadducees, which say there is no resurrection; and they asked him, saying,

19 Master, Moses wrote unto us, If a man's brother die, and leave his wife behind him, and leave no children, that his brother should take his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother.

20 Now there were seven brethren: and the first took a wife, and dying left no seed.

21 And the second took her, and died, neither left he any seed: and the third likewise.

22 And the seven had her, and left no seed: last of all the woman died also.

23 In the resurrection therefore, when they shall rise, whose wife shall she be of them? for the seven had her to wife.

24 And Jesus answering, said unto them, Do ye not therefore err, because ye know not the scriptures, neither the power of God?

mong you, is an evidence of your subjection to him; and, at the same time, behave with all fidelity to God, in religious concerns, by paying universal obedience to his commands, who is the only sovereign Lord of conscience: And they, finding that his answer was so wisely and justly framed, as utterly to defeat all their hopes of stirring up either the people, or the Roman government against him, went away, confounded, and full of amazement, at his matchless prudence and foresight.

18 When these were thus baffled in their attempt, some of the sect of the Sadducees, who denied the resurrection, and even the immortality of the soul, came to try whether they could not puzzle him, and thereby expose him to contempt; and therefore they put a question to him, saying,

19 Master, we beg your opinion upon the following difficulty: Moses ordered in the law, (*Deut. xxv. 5.*) that if a man die, and leave his widow without any children by him, the eldest surviving brother shall marry her, to keep up his family and his name in *Israel*.

20 Now there has been a very uncommon instance of this sort amongst us, relating to seven brethren: The eldest of these married; and, when he died, left his wife without any child.

21, 22 Hereupon the next brother, according to *Moses's* injunction, took her for his wife; and he dying childless, the third married the same woman; and so on, till she came to be married, in succession, to every one of the seven brothers, without having a child by either of them: And, at last, the woman herself died without issue.

23 The question therefore upon the case, is this: Supposing the doctrine of the resurrection, and of a future state after this present life, were true; which of these brethren shall be her husband, in that other world, since she was equally married to every one, and had no child by either of them, in this life?

24 In answer hereunto, Jesus said, This is a very poor objection to that doctrine: It proceeds upon a gross mistake, and betrays the most stupid ignorance of the spiritual nature of that future world of happiness which the scripture maintains, and of the law which ye refer to, as if it affected that state; yea, and of the divine power itself, as if the great God, who created all things out of nothing, could not raise the dead bodies of men and women to life, and make them happy, without continuing the particular relations which they contracted here.

25 For when they shall rise from the dead, they neither marry, nor are given in marriage; but are as the angels which are in heaven.

26 And as touching the dead, that they rise; have ye not read in the book of Moses, how in the bush God spake unto him, saying I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob?

27 He is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living: ye therefore do greatly err.

28 And one of the scribes came, and having heard them reasoning together, and perceiving that he had answered them well, asked him, which is the first commandment of all?

29 And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear,

25 For as to the kind of life to which the dead shall be raised in another world, it is very different from that which they lead in this: How necessary soever marriage is to keep up a succession of men and women, and to relieve one another's burdens in a world which lies under a law of mortality and miseries; yet, at the resurrection of the just, there will be no occasion for husbands and wives, to propagate children, or to be comforts to one another under various exercises; for there will be no deaths or sorrows to make desolation, or cause grief; but the inhabitants of that blessed world will be as immortal, perfectly satisfied and glorious, as the holy angels themselves.

26 And as to the resurrection of the dead, in connection with a state of happiness hereafter; even the law of Moses itself, which ye Sadducees own to be of divine authority, sufficiently assures you of it: (See the note on *Mat.* xxii. 31.) Have ye never read in those sacred writings, how God, appearing to Moses in the fiery bush, styled himself the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, several ages after they were dead and gone? (*Exod.* iii. 6.)

27 Now since the character of his being the God of any persons, manifestly intimates a relation to them, not under the notion of their being dead, but living; and since he cannot properly be said to be *at present* their God at all, if they are utterly dead; nor to be the God of human persons, such as Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, consisting of souls and bodies, if their bodies were to abide in everlasting death; there must needs be a future state of blessedness, and a resurrection of the body to share with the soul in it: And therefore your opposition to this doctrine is an exceeding great error. (See the note on *Mat.* xxii. 32.)

28 One of the Jewish doctors, who was of the sect of the Pharisees, (*Mat.* xxii. 35.) directly opposite to that of the Sadducees, having heard the dispute between Christ and them, and judging that he had thoroughly confuted them out of the writings of Moses, had a mind in his turn to try whether he could not put a more difficult question than theirs; and therefore said to our Lord, Master, since you have spoke so honourably of the law, I would ask you, Which of all its commandments is the principal, and most necessary to be observed?

29, 30 Jesus answered, The chief commandment in the law, relating to God, is that which requires Israel to believe and own their God to be the one only living and true God; and to love, worship,

Hear, O Israel ;
The Lord our God
is one Lord ;

30 And thou
shalt love the Lord
thy God with all
thy heart, and
with all thy soul,
and with all thy
mind, and with all
thy strength : this
is the first com-
mandment.

31 And the se-
cond is like, name-
ly this, Thou shalt
love thy neighbour
as thyself : there is
none other com-
mandment greater
than these.

32 And the
scribe said unto
him, Well, master,
thou hast said the
truth : for there is
one God, and there
is none other but
he.

33 And to love
him with all the
heart, and with
all the understand-
ing, and with all
the soul, and with
all the strength,
and to love his
neighbour as him-
self, is more than
all whole burnt-of-
ferings and sacri-
fices.

34 And when
Jesus saw that he
answered discreet-
ly, he said unto
him, Thou art not
far from the king-
dom of God. And
no man after that
durst ask him any
question.

35 And Jesus
answered and said,
while he taught
in

and serve him, with the united powers of the soul, with the understanding, will, and affections ; and that supremely, above all things else : This is so important and essential a command, and of such perpetual and indispensable obligation, that, in a manner, it includes all the rest ; and without observing this, no true obedience can be yielded to any of them.

31 And the other, of a like comprehensive nature, relating to fellow-creatures, is that which obliges men to love them in as sincere and benevolent a manner as themselves, and to treat them with as much humanity, justice, and mercy, as one would desire or expect, in like circumstances, for himself. These two are the principal, and indeed the summary, of all the other commandments ; and there is none among the moral, much less among the ceremonial precepts, that exceeds these.

32, 33 The Jewish doctor being convinced by this answer, that he was no match for Christ, and having now a better opinion of him, than when he put this question, tempting him, (Mat. xxii. 35.) replied, Master, It is with admirable wisdom and propriety that you have determined this point ; and what you say is undoubtedly right : For there certainly is but one only living and true God ; and to love, worship, and serve him, with all the united powers of the soul, in their utmost vigour, and to maintain the same equitable and charitable temper and behaviour towards all we have to do with, as we, in like circumstances, would wish for from them, towards ourselves, is a more necessary and important duty, than offering ever so many sacrifices, or complying with all the positive institutions of the law of Moses.

34 And when Jesus observed with what good humour and judgment the scribe received his answer and replied to it, he expressed his approbation, saying, These sentiments and dispositions are near approaches to a real change of heart ; they are a good step toward your embracing my gospel, and bid fair for your being made partaker of the blessings of my kingdom.—Our Lord having thus surprisingly overcome the various sects that offered to entangle him with their questions, all his enemies were so confounded, that none of them, from that time forward, durst enter into any further disputes with him.

35 Then Jesus turned the tables ; and, whilst he continued preaching in the temple, where some of the Pharisees were present, proposed this question
for

in the temple,
How say the
scribes that Christ
is the Son of Da-
vid?

36 For David
himself said by the
Holy Ghost, The
LORD said to my
Lord, Sit thou on
my right hand, till
I make thine ene-
mies, thy footstool.

37 David there-
fore himself calleth
him Lord; and
whence is he *then*
his son? And the
common people
heard him gladly.

38 And he said
unto them in his
doctrine, Beware
of the scribes,
which love to go in
long clothing, and
love salutations in
the market-places,
39 And the
chief seats in the
synagogues, and
the uppermost
rooms at feasts;

40 Which de-
vour widows hou-
ses, and for a pre-
tence make long
prayers: these shall
receive greater
damnation.

for any of them to answer, Why do your doctors,
the interpreters of the law, teach, that the Messiah
is to be a descendant from *David*? (See the note
on *Luke* xx. 41.) How can they reconcile this
with another account, which the scripture gives of
him?

36 For *David* himself, speaking of the Messiah,
as ye all own he did, under the inspiration of the
Holy Spirit, said, (*Psal.* cx. 1.) *The Lord said unto
my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, till I make
thine enemies thy footstool.* Ye see *David*, though
a king, here speaks of the Messiah in high terms
of majesty and power, and as superior in honour
and dominion to himself.

37 Since therefore *David* calls the Messiah his
Lord, How do ye understand that he is descended
from him? Is one and the same person both superior
and inferior, Lord and son, to his own royal father?
How can ye reconcile these things? The *Pharisees*,
not understanding that Christ was a complex per-
son, who, in his original nature, was God, and so
superior to *David*, and, in his assumed nature, was
man, and so inferior to his father according to the
flesh, could make no answer: And the common
people observing how far Jesus surpassed all their
teachers, were extremely pleased, and listened to
his discourse with great attention.

38, 39 Then our Lord, turning to his disciples
and the rest of the people, said, Take heed that ye
be not imposed upon, influenced and injured by,
nor drawn into an imitation of the *scribes* and *Pha-
risees*, who are exceeding ambitious, and fond of
walking abroad in long robes, to distinguish and
gain reverence to themselves; they are likewise
shamefully desirous of being openly saluted with
high tokens of respect, as great rabbies, in the
streets or markets, or any places of common resort;
and whenever they go, either to public worship,
or to any feasts, they have a mighty aim at getting
into the very highest seats, and taking the upper
hand of all the company, that they may be looked
upon as the most worthy among them.

40 And their hypocrisy and covetousness are as
great as their ambition: For they make high profes-
sions of extraordinary sanctity and devotion, drawing
out their prayers to an uncommon length, that they
may be the less suspected of oppression, or fraud, in
their various methods of enriching themselves at
the expence, and even to the ruin, of widows and
their fatherless children: But God will inflict the
heaviest punishment upon them, in proportion to the

greatness of their crimes, and of the worldly advantages they unrighteously gained under a cloak of religion.

41 And Jesus sat over against the treasury, and beheld how the people cast money into the treasury: and many that were rich, cast in much.

42 And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two mites, which make a farthing.

43 And he called unto him his disciples, and saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, that this poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury.

44 For all they did cast in of their abundance: but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living.

41 After this, as Jesus was sitting in a court of the temple near the treasury, and was observing what gifts and offerings the people put into the common chest for religious uses, he saw that many wealthy persons gave a great deal of money in a way of free-will offerings.

42 And he took particular notice of a certain poor widow, who, amidst the plentiful contributions of others, put in two small pieces of money, amounting to the value of only one farthing. (See the note on *Mat. x. 29.*)

43 Hereupon our Saviour, calling his apostles to him, said, Observe that poor widow; she, honest-hearted pious creature, has come and put her two mites into the treasury: How small soever this present be in itself, and how lightly soever others may account of it, I assuredly tell you, that it is more in proportion to her indigent circumstances, and discovers greater zeal and sincerity of affection, and is of higher account with God, than all the large sums of money which the wealthy people have offered.

44 For what they have given bears but little proportion to their affluent circumstances, and was what they could very well spare, and not feel it: But this poor widow has cheerfully put in (*ολω των βιω*) her whole stock of provision, and must pinch for want of it afterwards; and as she has, nevertheless, done this with so free and willing a mind, it is accepted according to what she had, and not according to what she had not.

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

How surprising is the long-suffering and patience of God toward obstinate and rebellious sinners, amidst all their wickedness against him and his messengers, his gospel, and his Christ, and that under a pretension of being themselves his people and servants! How many affronts does he put up, before he executes his wrath upon them! And how affecting are the riches of his grace, in sending his own Son to seek and save such as these! If they receive him with faith and love, salvation is theirs; but if they reject him, they must unavoidably perish. How much soever his enemies are at variance with one another, they can readily agree in a common opposition to him: But how vain and fruitless is all their united craft and malice to overthrow his gospel, and his kingdom in the world! While some reject and despise him, he will find out others to embrace him, and to bring forth fruit to God, in some measure answerable to the light and advantages they receive from him. And oh how happy is it to be under his gracious guidance and influence! With what evidence and justness of thought has he settled the true bounds of civil and religious liberty, confirmed the doctrine of a resurrection to eternal life, and cleared up the spiritual nature and perfection of heavenly blessedness! What a judicious and comprehensive view has he given us of the moral law, as an eternal rule of righteousness; and of its two grand principles, love to God and one another, that the duties of the first and second table may be ever looked upon as inseparable, and

and may be performed with pleasure! How plainly has he intimated, that the wonderful constitution of his person, God-man, is the only way of accounting for the different representations which the scripture makes of him as *the root and offspring of David*, as his Lord and son! And how critically does he observe, and determine about, all our acts of piety and charity, according to their principles and circumstances, and not according to outward appearances! And yet how many advocates are there for the most monstrous errors, in opposition to the plainest and most important truths; and in how many things do we all offend!—Christ's doctrines may be heard with pleasure, without any saving benefit; but when they are entertained with judgment and affection, they set us at the very door of entrance into the kingdom of heaven. Oh how ought we to be concerned, lest any of us should be only almost Christians, near to the kingdom of God, and never enter into it, nor bear a part in the resurrection of the just! And how dreadful will be the case of all false pretenders to religion! The greater their hypocrisy and iniquities are, the more terrible will their condemnation be.

C H A P. XIII.

Christ foretels the destruction of the temple, together with Jerusalem, as a figure of the final judgment, warning all men to be watchful, lest they be surpris'd unawares to their utter ruin, by judgments relating to this world, and that which is to come, 1,—37.

TEXT.

AND as he went out of the temple, one of his disciples saith unto him, Master, see what manner of stones, and what buildings are here.

2 And Jesus answering said unto him, Seest thou these great buildings? there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.

3 And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, over against the temple, Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, asked him privately,

4 Tell us, when shall these things be?

PARAPHRASE.

WHEN our blessed Lord had staid as long as he designed in the temple, and was going out of it, the apostles, and more particularly one of them, desired him to turn back and view it, saying, Master, be pleased to survey the stateliness and grandeur of this glorious fabric; observe its huge and beautiful stones, and the fineness of its architecture and decorations. What an admirable and magnificent building is this! Surely it cannot easily be demolished; and if it could, it is pity that ever it should.

2 Jesus replied, Though you look upon this house with admiration, desire, and pleasure, and now see it in all its strength and glory; alas! I tell you, it will not be long before it shall be so thoroughly razed to the very ground, as to leave none of its remains; no, not so much as to shew that there ever was such a noble edifice in this place. (See the note on *Mat. xxiv. 2.*)

3 Then going on to the mount of Olives, and setting himself down on that side of the hill which directly faced the temple, and gave him a full prospect of it, together with *Jerusalem* itself, some of his apostles, *Peter* and *James*, *John* and *Andrew*, by name, came and privately said to him,

4 Be pleased to acquaint us with the time when the dreadful desolation shall be made upon this stately building, and the other great revolutions shall

be? and what shall be the sign when all these things shall be fulfilled?

5 And Jesus answering them, began to say, Take heed lest any man deceive you.

6 For many shall come in my name, saying, I am *Christ*; and shall deceive many.

7 And when ye shall hear of wars, and rumours of wars, be ye not troubled: for such things must needs be; but the end shall not be yet.

8 For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be earthquakes in divers places, and there shall be famines, and troubles: these are the beginnings of sorrows.

9 But take heed to yourselves: for they

shall be brought to pass, relating to the establishment of thy kingdom and the end of the world, which we apprehend thou hast lately spoken of once and again: And, by what tokens may we know the time that shall immediately go before the accomplishment of † all these strange things?

5 Jesus knowing how much they were governed by curiosity in these questions, and what confused and carnal notions they had about the nature of his kingdom, began his answer with saying, See to it, that ye be not imposed upon by any seducers, in what relates to the great alterations that shall be made in the earth.

6 For, before these changes and desolations shall be made, several impostors will appear, each of them taking to himself the character of the Messiah, and pretending to be sent of God, to set up his throne with power among the *Jews*, and to deliver them out of the hands of the *Romans*, and give them dominion over all nations round about them; and, by their artful management, they will prevail upon many to believe and follow them to their utter ruin.

7 When therefore ye shall hear from one quarter and another, and shall have frequent reports of civil and foreign wars and commotions; do not be dejected or dismayed at them, like unbelievers: For these calamities must of necessity come to pass, as signs and forerunners of the destruction of the temple, city, and nation of the *Jews*, and as means of ushering it in, though that will not be the utmost of all their troubles, much less will it issue in the end of the world.

8 For of the several kingdoms and provinces into which the land of *Israel* is divided, one will rise up in arms against another, and *Jews* against *Gentiles*; and, together with intestine and foreign wars, there will be, in one place and another, earthquakes, famines, and other terrible frights and dangers; all which are but the leading steps and specimens of the still much greater distresses that shall attend the destruction of *Jerusalem*: And such like events will appear again in after-ages, as signs and presages of the dissolution of this world, when it shall be drawing near at the last day.

9 But as, besides these public calamities, ye, my disciples, will meet with many personal trials for

N O T E.

† *All these things*, (*causa causa*) seem to refer to some things more than barely the destruction of the temple; and though our evangelist has not expressed them, *Matthew* has, chap. xxiv. 3. (see the note there,) and therefore I put them into the paraphrase.

they shall deliver you up to councils; and in the synagogues ye shall be beaten, and ye shall be brought before rulers and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them.

10 And the gospel must first be published among all nations.

11 But when they shall lead you, and deliver you up, take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate: but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye: for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost.

12 Now the brother shall betray the brother to death, and the father the son: and children shall rise up against their parents, and shall cause them to be put to death.

13 And ye shall be hated of all men for my names sake: but

my name's sake; see that ye be not so scared or discouraged by them, as to do any thing unworthy of your profession and hopes: For many will be such enemies to you, merely on account of your relation to me, that they will hurry you to ecclesiastical and civil courts of judicature; and ye shall not only be tried before *Jewish* councils, and publicly chastised in their synagogues; but shall likewise be brought before the tribunals of heathen princes and judges, for your Christianity, that ye may have opportunities of preaching my gospel, and of shewing the power of it upon your own spirits, in their presence, for the vindication of its divine authority, and confutation of them that oppose it.

10 And God, in his providence, will certainly over-rule this, as a means of spreading the glad tidings of salvation, not only through *Judea*, but through all provinces of the *Roman* empire also, before the destruction of the temple; and this gospel, by like means, shall be spread through all nations of the earth, before the judgment of the great day.

11 Whenever therefore your adversaries, in the heat of their fury against you, for my sake, shall hale you, like criminals, before magistrates of what character soever; do not give way to the least discouragement, as if ye should be confounded, and not know what to say for yourselves; nor let any solicitude about the event, put you upon so much as studying beforehand how to plead the glorious cause ye are engaged in, with human art and eloquence; but, depending upon higher wisdom and power than your own, make your defence just in that way and manner which shall be suggested to you from above, at the very time when ye shall be called to speak: For, as the cause is God's, so the arguments by which ye are to maintain it, shall not be the product of your own abilities, but of the immediate inspiration of his Spirit as speaking in, and by you.

12 But (ðs) the malignant prejudices, and severe persecutions that shall rise against you, for the gospel's sake, will work in such an unnatural and cruel manner, that even the nearest and dearest relations will break through all the ties of friendship and blood; in so much that brothers, fathers, and children, will treacherously accuse and deliver up one another, even to death, for their religion.

13 And indeed this wicked spirit will so infect the generality of mankind, that they will unite in a common enmity and opposition to you, because ye profess

but he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.

profess my name, and preach my gospel: But, notwithstanding all this, be not discouraged, considering what assistances I have promised you, and that whoever shall hold on, through all these tribulations, and hold out to the end, he shall be under the peculiar care of Providence, and shall certainly, at last, obtain the salvation which is in me, with eternal glory.

14 But when ye shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing where it ought not, (let him that readeth understand,) then let them that be in Judea, flee to the mountains:

14 But to return. As to the immediately preceding tokens of the destruction of the *Jewish* state and temple, when once ye come to see the land invaded, that ought to have been sacred to God, and not profaned by the idolatrous armies and ensigns of the *Romans*; and see the holy city besieged by them, who are the desolating abomination spoken of in *Daniel*; (chap. xi. 31.) then let him who reads this prophecy, and lives to see this event, understand that the final destruction of *Jerusalem* is just at hand; and then every one that is in *Judea*, and would provide for his own safety, must immediately get away from the seat of war, and hide himself in the mountainous countries.

15 And let him that is on the housetop not go down into the house, neither enter therein, to take any thing out of his house.

15 And, since the ravage made by the *Roman* armies will be exceeding swift, your flight must be so too, as ever ye would escape them: If therefore any one happens to be on the top of his house when he first hears tidings of their invasion, let him not stay so long as to go into it, to pack up his goods, and carry them away with him, (See the note on *Mat.* xxiv. 17.)

16 And let him that is in the field, not turn back again for to take up his garment.

16 And if any one should hear of it, whilst he may be walking abroad, or busy in the fields, let him not once think of returning home, to secure any of his affairs there, or so much as to take another suit of clothes with him; but let every one fly for his life, as *Lot* did out of *Sodom*.

17 But wo to them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days.

17 But alas! the case of those women will be very distressed and perilous, who, at that time, may be big with child, or encumbered with sucking infants at their breasts, or may be in any circumstances of incapacity for speedy flight, since it will be exceeding difficult for them to escape the fury of the *Roman* army, and the miseries of intestine broils.

18 And pray ye that your flight be not in the winter.

18 And, for the same reason, beg that a kind Providence may so far order these days of adversity in your favour, as not to come upon you in the winter season, or in bad weather, which would render your necessary speed much more difficult and uncomfortable, than if the roads were good, and the weather fair.

19 For in those days shall be affliction, such as was not from the beginning of the creation which God created, unto this time, neither shall be.

20 And except that the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh should be saved: but for the elects sake, whom he hath chosen, he hath shortened the days.

21 And then, if any man shall say to you, Lo, here is Christ, or lo, he is there: believe him not.

22 For false Christs, and false prophets shall rise, and shall shew signs and wonders, to seduce, if it were possible, even the elect.

23 But take ye heed: behold, I have foretold you all things.

19 For what with the cruelty of the Roman soldiers, the tumults and confusions of the Jews among themselves, the perpetual alarms and horrors of every one's own mind, and the sore famine and other troubles that will concur in those days, they will be the most calamitous and formidable that ever were known upon earth, or ever shall come upon any particular nation afterwards, as long as the world endures.

20 Yea, so extremely great, and so multiplied will these distresses be, that if they were not to be limited and restrained, in due season, by the merciful providence of God, no human creature, in the land of Judea, could possibly outlive them: But, for the sake of his elect, whom he has chosen for himself, he will graciously put a stop, sooner than he otherwise would, to the destruction of those days; that such of them as will be then living in their sins, and those of them who are to descend from the loins of some of that age, may be brought to faith and repentance; and that they, together with the already converted, may be preserved for the propagation of his kingdom in the world.

21 And if, at this or any other time of great commotion and danger, it should be suggested, that the true Messiah appears in one place, or another, to destroy your enemies, and bring salvation to yourselves; I charge you to give no manner of heed to them.

22 For God will certainly suffer seducers to arise, for the trial of his people's faith, and for the righteous punishment of obstinate unbelieving sinners: Some of these will falsely pretend to be great prophets sent of God, and others to be the very Christ; and they will manage their surprising deceits and lying wonders with such a plausible air of miracles, as will impose upon many, to their inevitable perdition; and would have the same dreadful effect upon God's own elect themselves, whom he has chosen to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth, were it possible for them to be carried off from the only Saviour, to an impostor.

23 But as secret things belong to the Lord, and revealed things to you, and none are to think themselves safe, by any decree of God, without the use of proper means; watch and pray, that ye may not be deluded by such deceivers: Remember I have forewarned you of them, that ye might be fore-armed against them.

24 But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light;

25 And the stars of heaven shall fall, and the powers that are in heaven shall be shaken;

26 And then shall they see the Son of man coming in the clouds, with great power and glory.

27 And then shall he send his angels, and shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven.

28 Now, learn a parable of the fig-tree, When her branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is near:

29 So ye, in like manner, when ye shall see these things come to pass, know that it is nigh, even at the doors.

30 Verily I say unto

24, 25 But whatever the event may be, as to particular persons, these signs and troubles, which will appear within a few years, will certainly issue in a speedy and entire subversion of the civil and religious state of the *Jews*; so that, according to the figurative language of prophecy, (Joel iii. 15, 16.) *The sun and moon shall be darkened, and the stars withdraw their light, and the heavens shall shake*: And this may be considered as a lively emblem of what shall literally come to pass toward the end of the world, when the like signs and troubles shall return, and be followed with such an universal conflagration of the whole frame of nature, as will destroy the present influences of the heavenly bodies on this earth. (2 Pet. iii. 10, 11, 12.)

26 And then those very *Jews* who now obstinately reject the Messiah, shall, in the destruction of *Jerusalem*, find to their cost, that he is exalted in awful majesty, and comes with all conquering power to avenge himself upon them, like the great God, who makes the clouds his chariot: (*Psal.* civ. 3.) And, at the consummation of all things, he will visibly appear in the clouds of heaven, with all authority and grandeur, to judge the whole world; and every eye shall see him to their confusion, or joy.

27 Then also, upon his appearing to destroy the *Jewish* church and state, he will actually send the ministers of the gospel to execute his commission in all nations; and, by means of their ministry, will effectually call his sheep, whom he must bring in to his fold, from among the *Gentiles*, as well as *Jews*, wherever they may be scattered in the remotest parts of the earth: And, upon his coming to judgment at the last day, he will dispatch the holy angels, who are his servants, to make a general collection, far and wide, from the east and west, and north and south, of all who were ordained to eternal life, that they may escape the everlasting destruction which will befall his obstinate enemies.

28, 29 Now, to illustrate what I have been saying in a familiar manner, observe the following similitude, taken from the fig-tree, with its application: Ye know that when this tree begins to bud and open its leaves, the summer is coming on: In like manner, whenever ye shall see the presaging tokens but now mentioned, ye may depend upon it, that the great events I have been pointing to, will certainly have a very speedy accomplishment.

30 As to what respects the destruction of *Jerusalem*, and the signs that are to precede and give

unto you, That this generation shall not pass, till all these things be done.

31 Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away.

32 But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father.

33 Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is.

34 For the Son of man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch.

give notice of it, I solemnly assure you, that they shall all be fulfilled in the present age, before the whole set of people shall die, who are now living upon earth.

31 And, as to the last general conflagration, I assure you, that an entire end shall be put to the present frame of the heavens, and of the earth, which shall be melted into confusion: But all that I have been saying, shall be irreversible, and every word of it shall certainly be performed to a tittle.

32 But as to the exact time † in which the Messiah will come to judge the world and dissolve its present frame, it will not be in this present age; nor indeed is the day and hour, which are appointed for it, known to any man living, nor to any angel in heaven; no, nor to the Messiah himself, in his human nature, or by virtue of his unction, as any part of the mysteries of the divine will which he is to reveal; but this is still a secret, which God ‡ has reserved in his own mind.

33 Since therefore this time, and even the day of your own death, which will bring every one of you to judgment, is so uncertain, that none knows when it will overtake him; see that ye be ready for it, whenever it may come, whither sooner or later: Be constantly watchful over your own hearts and ways, and be earnest in daily prayer, *that ye may find mercy of the Lord in that day.* (2 Tim. 1. 18.)

34 For the Messiah's appearing in these awful dispensations, and especially at the final judgment, to call his servants to an account, may be fitly illustrated by this similitude. As, when a great man is taking a long journey into a far country, he commits the care of all his affairs to his servants, ordering every one his particular business, and, among the rest, charging the watchmen to give special heed that none break open the house or steal his goods, and that he be ready to receive his lord whenever he shall return: So the Messiah, being about

Y y 2

to

N O T E S.

† Ημερα εκεινη, *that day*, seems to be here opposed to *ταυτα παντα*, *all these things*, viz. the desolations on the temple and city, then before their eyes, which were to be fulfilled in that generation; (ver. 30.) and they are opposed one to the other, just in the same manner, *Mat. xxiv. 34, 36.* (*Ubi vid. Grot.*) The antithesis is beautiful: And it appears more natural to understand this of the day of judgment, than of the destruction of *Jerusalem*; because Christ had so

exactly described the time of that destruction, in the foregoing verses, as to be accomplished in the then present age; but the day of judgment was a far more distant thing, and the time for it was utterly unknown to any but God. See the notes on *Mat. xxiv. 35.* and *Luke xxi. 33.*

‡ The terms *Father* and *Son* may be considered, in this verse, as used economically for God, and for the Mediator, or the Man Jesus.

to leave this world, and go to the Father, appoints the duties and services that are to be performed by all the subjects of his kingdom, according to their different stations ||. whether they be ministers or private Christians, charging them to be diligent and faithful, watching unto duty with all perseverance, and waiting for his appearing again.

35 Watch ye therefore, (for ye know not when the master of the house cometh; at even, or at midnight, or at the cock-crowing, or in the morning.)

35 Be ye therefore, like faithful servants, very circumspect and diligent in the discharge of the trusts committed to you, that ye may be always ready to give up your accounts with joy, whenever your Lord shall come to demand them, at death and judgment: For none of you know how soon, or how suddenly, it may be; whether in any of the earlier, or of the middle, or of the latter parts of life, any more than the servants of their absent lord can tell whether he will return early or late, in the evening, or in the morning, or at midnight.

36 Left, coming suddenly, he find you sleeping.

36 Take heed that ye be not remiss and careless; lest, while ye are giving way to sloth and indolence, your lord should come on a sudden, and surprize you unawares, to your terror and confusion.

37 And what I say unto you, I say unto all, Watch.

37 And, what I herein say unto you, my disciples, I speak to all others, as a matter of common concern to them, as well as yourselves; not only to those who are living in the present age, but to all that shall hear my gospel, and profess to be my disciples, in future generations, till I come the second time, without sin, to salvation: My charge to all, and every one is, Be upon your watch, that ye may be always in expectation of, and in a state and frame ready for death and judgment, whenever the awful summons may be sent to you.

R E C O L L E C T I O N S.

How little are the external privileges of religion to be depended upon! They are so far from being a security against the vengeance of God, that, if they are abused, they aggravate our guilt and condemnation: And oh how often do despisers of gospel-grace bring the forest tribulations upon themselves in this world, which are but the beginning of sorrows, and will be followed with still greater at death and judgment! And none knows how soon any, or all, of these dreadful calamities may overtake him, to his utter destruction. But how faithfully has Christ fore-warned his disciples of their several dangers! How kindly doth he shew them the way of escaping them! and how effectually secure his own elect from falling by them! Whatever troubles they may endure for his name's sake in the way, he will give them wisdom and counsel how to behave themselves, and will save them with an everlasting salvation at last. But watching and prayer are the appointed means of his accomplishing his gracious designs toward them, and of their being prepared for every event; and all that either preach or hear the gospel, are concerned in these duties, as ever they would be found faithful, and give up their accounts with joy, and not with grief.

N O T E.

|| This seems principally to respect ministers and the day of judgment; but may likewise be applied to private persons, as in ver. 37. and to the time of death.

C H A P X I V .

The conspiracy of the chief priests and scribes against Christ, 1, 2. A woman anoints his head before his death, 3.—9. Judas's contract to betray him, 10, 11. He eats the passover, and institutes the Lord's supper, 12,—25. Foretels Peter's denying him, 26,—31. Christ's agony in the garden, 32,—42. He is betrayed and apprehended, 43,—52. Is tried, condemned, and abused, 53,—65. Peter denies him, and repents, 66,—72.

TEXT.

AFTER two days was the feast of the passover, and of unleavened bread: and the chief priests and the scribes sought how they might take him by craft, and put him to death.

2 But they said, Not not on the feast-day, lest there be an uproar of the people.

3 And being in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper, as he sat at meat; there came a woman having an alabastrer-box of ointment of spikenard, very precious; and she brake the box, and poured it on his head:

4 And there were some that had in-

PARAPHRASE.

TWO days after the foregoing discourse, came on the annual feast of the passover, which was always celebrated with unleavened bread: And in the mean while, the chief priests and Jewish doctors, with other members of the great council, having resolved upon putting Christ to death, consulted together to apprehend him by stratagem rather than force, that their design might not be defeated by an opposition from the people, who had an high esteem of him. (See the note on *Mat.* xxvi. 3.)

2 But some among them objected against attempting it, even in the most private and artful manner that could be proposed, at so public a time as the passover, lest as soon as the great multitude, who were gathering together on that occasion, should see him in their hands, they should make a riot, and rise for his rescue: However, God in his providence suffered the opinion of others to prevail for apprehending him without delay, the time appointed of the Father being then come for Christ our Passover to be sacrificed for us.

3 Now, while Jesus was at *Bethany* whither he came six days before the passover, (see the note on *Mat.* xxvi. 6.) as he sat at supper in the house of *Simon* †, who was called the leper, a certain woman (*Mary* the sister of *Lazarus*) came behind him, and opening a pot of rich and sweet-smelling ointment made of spikenard, she poured it, some upon his head, and some upon his feet, (*John* xii. 3.) in token of her great affection to him, and of her faith in him as God's Anointed.

4, 5 Hereupon some of the disciples so far followed *Judas's* example, (*John* xii. 4, 5.) as to be very

NOTE.

† It is uncertain whether he were styled *the leper* on account of his having descended from a leprous family, or been himself formerly leprous, and healed by Jesus. See the note on *Mat.* xxvi. 6.

indignation within themselves, and said, Why was this waste of the ointment made?

5 For it might have been sold for more than three hundred pence, and have been given to the poor. And they murmured against her.

6 And Jesus said, Let her alone; why trouble ye her? she hath wrought a good work on me.

7 For ye have the poor with you always, and whenever you will ye may do them good: but me ye have not always.

8 She hath done what she could: she is come aforehand to anoint my body to the burying.

9 Verily I say unto you, Where-soever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, this also that she hath done shall be spoken of, for a memorial of her.

10 And Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve, went unto the chief priests, to betray him unto them.

very uneasy in their own minds, saying, in private talk one with another, What a needless waste is this of so much costly ointment, which our Lord would never desire to be so profusely spent upon himself, and might have been disposed of in a much more useful manner? For, had it been sold, it would have fetched a great sum of money †, which might have been given for the relief of the poor. And they chid her.

6 But (de) Jesus, knowing all the secret murmurings of their hearts, and private whisperings among themselves, under a pretence of charity, expressed his displeasure against them, and his approbation of her, saying, Why do ye want to check and disturb this good woman, in the respect she is shewing to me? It is a commendable instance of honour, duty, faith, and love, which I take very kindly at her hands.

7 For as to the poor, who, ye pretend, might have been better relieved by this expence, they are, and ever will be, in the world, as standing objects of your charity, and ye may have opportunities of supplying their wants, as often as ye please: But I shall soon be taken from you, and none of you ought to think much of the charge which this friendly woman has been at, in paying so signal a testimony of her respect to me.

8, She has herein done me the most seasonable honour, she was capable of shewing, in my present circumstances, who shall shortly be slain and buried; and therefore, in reality, she has only anticipated an anointing of my body for the burial, a little before my death, Providence so ordering it, because she will have no opportunity for it afterwards.

9 I assuredly tell you, This is so remarkable an instance of her faith and love, that, wherever the doctrine of my sufferings and resurrection shall be preached, this pious act of her's shall be divulged, for her honour, and for the encouragement of them that believe in me.

10 Judas Iscariot, who was one of the twelve apostles, and the chief malecontent, was so far from being pacified by this answer, that he was filled with the greater vexation at it; and, under the power of covetousness, anger, and revenge, which Satan stirred up in his heart. (Luke xxii. 3.) he soon afterwards went to the sanhedrim, while they were consulting about methods of apprehending Jesus, and

N O T E.

† Three hundred pence amounted to above nine pounds sterling, reckoning the Roman penny at seven-pence half-penny of our money.

and made proposals of delivering him privately into their hands.

11 And when they heard it, they were glad, and promised to give him money. And he sought how he might conveniently betray him.

11 This was a very welcome surprise to their malicious minds; they were overjoyed to hear of such a motion from one of Christ's own apostles and intimates; and immediately agreed to give him thirty shekels of silver, the price of a slave, as a reward for that service. (*Mat. xxvi. 15.* see the note there.) And, from that time forward, he watched for the most convenient opportunity of performing his wicked bargain, by treacherously putting his Lord into the power of his cruel and implacable enemies, as the *scribes* and *Pharisees* were known to be.

12 And the first day of unleavened bread, when they killed the passover, his disciples said unto him, Where wilt thou that we go and prepare, that thou mayest eat the passover?

12 Now, on the first day on which the *Jews* began to eat unleavened bread, and were obliged, by the law, to kill the paschal lamb, it being the day before that on which they eat the passover, Christ's disciples, knowing how exact he was in observing all ordinances of divine appointment, desired him to tell them at what house he would have them make the necessary provisions for their eating it, none of them having any house of their own at *Jerusalem*. (See the note on *Mat. xxvi. 17.*)

13 And he sendeth forth two of his disciples, and saith unto them, Go ye into the city, and there shall meet you a man bearing a pitcher of water: follow him.

13 Upon which he ordered two of his apostles, viz. *Peter* and *John*, (*Luke xxii. 8.*) to go to *Jerusalem*; and, that he might give a specimen of his infallible knowledge and influence upon the minds of men, he directed them, saying, At your entrance into the city, ye shall meet with a man in the street carrying a pitcher of water; observe where he goes, and follow him. (See the note on *Mat. xxvi. 18.*)

14 And where-soever he shall go in, say ye to the good-man of the house, The Master saith, Where is the guest-chamber, where I shall eat the passover with my disciples?

14 And whatsoever house he shall enter into, go ye after him; and, applying to the good householder, tell him, that your Lord and Master sent you to ask, What room have you to spare, that is ready furnished for guests, where I and my disciples may celebrate the passover together?

15 And he will shew you a large upper room furnished and prepared: there make ready for us.

15 And immediately, upon your putting this question to him in my name, his heart will be inclined to give you a friendly reception, and to lead you into a large chamber, well fitted up for my purpose; there get every thing ready for me and you, and the rest of my apostles, to eat the paschal lamb.

16 And his disciples went forth, and came into the city, and found as he had said unto them: and they made ready the passover.

16 Accordingly those two disciples went, in obedience to his order, into the city, without disputing, or doubting the success; and, finding that every thing exactly answered what he had foretold them, they did all that was requisite, in a way of preparation, for eating the passover.

17 And

17 And in the evening he cometh with the twelve.

18 And as they sat, and did eat, Jesus said, Verily I say unto you, One of you, which eateth with me, shall betray me.

19 And they began to be sorrowful, and to say unto him one by one, Is it I? And another said, Is it I?

20 And he answered and said unto them, It is one of the twelve that dippeth with me in the dish.

21 The Son of man indeed goeth, as it is written of him: but wo to that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed: good were it for that man if he had never been born.

17 And, after sun-set, the time appointed in the law for eating the paschal lamb being then come, our Lord went into an upper room, with his twelve apostles, to celebrate the passover there. (See the note on *Mat.* xxvi. 20.)

18 And whilst, according to the Jewish custom, they were sitting at table, and feeding together, Jesus, who perfectly knew the secret treachery of Judas's heart, addressed himself, in an alarming manner, to the apostles, without distinction, saying, I assuredly tell you, that, though now we sit like friends together, one of this very company, who is eating the passover with me, will most perfidiously betray me into the hands of my barbarous enemies. (See the note on *Luke* xxii. 21.)

19 At the hearing of this, they all, except Judas, who alone could be conscious of any evil design against Christ, were surprised, and grieved at heart; and each of them, one after another, instead of suspecting his brother, cried out, with great concern, and godly jealousy over himself, Lord, Is it I, whom thou pointest at, as the wicked traitor, that will dare to commit so black, so ungrateful, and shocking a crime? I dread the thought of ever doing any thing like it: O let me never be guilty of such villainy, nor lie under the least suspicion of it.

20 But (as) our Lord replied, I shall, at present, only tell you, that one of my twelve apostles, whose hand is now dipping † in the same dish with mine, is the man who will certainly act this treacherous part against me.

21 I, who am the true Messiah, must indeed go as a lamb to the slaughter, according to ancient prophecy concerning me: But, though the instruments of my death will be therein over-ruled, by infinite wisdom, to subserve the most important designs of God's glory, in the redemption of *Israel*; yet that is no excuse for their wilful, and premeditated wickedness, who mean nothing but evil against me; and therefore dreadful will be the condition of that base and unworthy creature, who, under a profession of friendship, shall deliver me into their hands: It would have been better for him never to have been born, than live to contract such horrid

N O T E.

† It is probable that, at this very instant, our Lord and Judas, with some other of the disciples, were dipping the bitter herbs, that were to be eaten with the paschal lamb, in a vessel of vinegar,

or other sauce, then in use, which stood over the table for that purpose, that so they might make a nearer guess whom he meant. See the note on *Luke* xxii.

rid guilt, and bring upon himself the heavy vengeance that will be righteously executed upon him, for it.

22 And, as they did eat, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake it, and gave to them, and said, Take, eat: this is my body.

22 And at the close of the paschal supper, which, in its typical view, was fulfilled at the death of Christ, he, to institute another commemorative ordinance in its stead, took bread, and, when he had set it apart for the designed purpose, by solemn thanksgiving and prayer, he broke it into several pieces, and distributed it among the disciples, saying, Take, and eat it †! this is what I appoint to be henceforward done, in perpetual remembrance of my body's being broken for your redemption from sin and wrath, as the passover has hitherto been of *Israel's* deliverance from *Egyptian* miseries and bondage.

23 And he took the cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them: and they all drank of it.

23 In like manner, taking a cup of wine into his hand, he solemnly appropriated it to the same religious use, by another address to God; upon which he gave it to be handed round, ordering them all to drink: And every one of them drank of the wine, as they had before eat of the bread. (See the notes on *Luke* xxii. 20.)

24 And he said unto them, This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many.

24 And, together with his delivering the cup, he said to them, This is what I appoint to be a perpetual sign and memorial of my blood, as shed for establishing the new covenant, that all its gracious promises may be everlastingly ratified and sure, and for purchasing all its blessings, that as many as shall believe in me may receive remission of sins. (*Mat.* xxvi. 28 see the note there.)

25 Verily I say unto you, I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine, until that day that I drink it new in the kingdom of God.

25 I assuredly tell you, that after this time I will no more drink of the passover-cup, nor have that commemorative and typical ordinance continue in my church any longer than till it be superseded and fulfilled (*Luke* xxii. 16.) by the great salvation which I shall bring into the gospel-kingdom upon my resurrection from the dead, and which is to be afterwards commemorated by a new use of wine in the supper I have now instituted: Nor will I so familiarly commune with you again, as I now do in this New-Testament ordinance, till we shall have the most intimate fellowship together in the more

ex-

N O T E.

† As Christ ordered them to take, and eat, and drink, immediately after a full meal upon the paschal lamb, he evidently designed this institution, not for bodily refreshment, but only for spiritual purposes; which were sufficiently answered by eating and drinking ever so small a quantity, with an exercise of such apply-

ing graces as were directed to by those actions, in their reference to the memorials of a crucified Saviour. See the notes on *Luke* xxii. 19. And this naturally leads one to think, that a large quantity of water is no more necessary to baptism, than a full meal of bread and wine is to the Lord's supper.

excellent entertainments of the heavenly state, which, for their superior and always fresh delight, may, in the language of a festival, be called new wine. (See the note on *Mat.* xxvi. 29.)

26 And, when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives.

26 And, at the conclusion of the Lord's supper, Jesus and his disciples sung a proper psalm or song of praise, together, as had been customary at the close of the passover; and then he set out for the mount of *Olives*, chusing to retire thither, that he might prevent a riot in *Jerusalem* on account of his being apprehended by his enemies, the time of which he knew was then at hand.

27 And Jesus saith unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the Shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered.

27 While Jesus and his disciples were travelling toward that mountain, before they got to *Gethsemane*, (ver. 32.) he said unto them, Every one of you will this very night be in a dreadful consternation, and so exceedingly discouraged as to run away from me, and to be in great doubt about my being the Messiah, by reason of the seizure that will be made upon me: For the time is now come, when I must fall a sacrifice to divine justice; with regard to which, God has said, (*Zech.* xiii. 7.) *Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd, against the man who is my Fellow: Smite the Shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered.*

28 But after that I am risen, I will go before you into Galilee.

28 But, that you may not utterly despair, I now tell you beforehand, I shall rise from the dead for your justification; (*Rom.* iv. 25.) and, soon after that, ye shall see me, to your great joy, in *Galilee*, where I have often conversed with you, and whether I will go to gather you all together again.

29 But Peter said unto him, Although all shall be offended, yet will not I.

29 Hereupon *Peter*, being too self-confident, replied with earnestness and resentment, as if he were ashamed to be suspected of coolness or cowardice, Lord, though every one of thy disciples should be stumbled at what may befall thee, and, like *Judas*, who has already left us*, should forsake thee; yet I am resolved, at all events, never to think amiss of thee, or to run away from thee.

30 And Jesus saith unto him, Verily I say unto thee, That this day, even in this night

30 Then Jesus said to him, Alas, *Peter!* notwithstanding all this vain boast, I assuredly tell you, that this very day ||, which we are just now entered upon, even so early as before the second cock-crowing

N O T E S.

* It seems that, by this time, *Judas* began with the evening, according to the had slipped away from the disciples, to answer his vile contract with the sanhedrim; and *Peter* mistaking him, vaunted, that though all his fellow-disciples should follow *Judas's* example, he would stand by his Lord.

Mosaic computation, which called the evening and the morning the first day, &c. *Gen.* i. 5, &c.; and so that which, after sun-set, was called this night, might also be called this day. See likewise the notes on *Mat.* xxvi. 34. and *Luke*

|| The Jews, in reckoning their days, xxii. 34.

night before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice.

31 But he spake the more vehemently, If I should die with thee, I will not deny thee in any wise. Likewise also said they all.

32 And they came to a place which was named Gethsemane: and he saith to his disciples, Sit ye here, while I shall pray.

33 And he taketh with him Peter, and James, and John, and began to be sore amazed, and to be very heavy;

34 And saith unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death: tarry ye here, and watch.

35 And he went forward a little, and fell on the ground, and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him.

36 And he said, Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee; take away this cup from me: nevertheless not what I will, but what thou wilt.

ing in the morning, you will shamefully thrice deny that you ever so much as knew me.

31 But *Peter*, instead of being more humble and modest at this rebuke, grew more warm and peremptory, protesting, with an uncommon assurance, No, so far shall I be from doing any thing like this, that come life, come death, come what will, I am resolved no terrors shall ever prevail upon me to disown thee: And the rest of the disciples hearing *Peter* talk so bravely, as they thought, and being ashamed to be silent, declared that their resolution was the same with his.

32 By this time they arrived at *Gethsemane*, which lay at the foot of the mount of *Olives*; where, leaving eight of the disciples that were then with him, he ordered them to tarry there till his return, whilst he should retire a little further for prayer in an adjacent garden.

33 Then taking only *Peter*, *James*, and *John*, with him, who had been eye-witnesses of his glorious transfiguration, that they might likewise be so of his terrible agonies; he, as they were going along began to fall into an amazing, though senseless horror, and to be heavily oppressed in his spirit, by reason of the terrors of God which set themselves in array against him.

34 And, that the three disciples might take the more notice of it, he said to them, My soul is (*περιλυπος*) surrounded and pressed on every side with unutterable sorrows; the distress of my spirit is like the agonies of death, and will certainly issue in it: Stay ye here, and watch with me, and for yourselves, in this hour of great temptation, whilst I go a little further.

35 Then he removed to a small distance from them; and falling humbly prostrate on the ground, in the agony of his spirit, prayed with great earnestness, That if it might be consistent with his Father's will, and with the great designs of his glory, and the salvation of his people, the terrible sufferings and death which lay before him might be warded, saying,

36 O my heavenly Father, thou art able to do whatsoever thou knowest is fit to be done: If therefore it seems meet to thine infinite wisdom to take any other way of glorifying thyself in the salvation of the church, without my undergoing the dreadful sufferings and death which I now begin to feel in all their terrors, my human nature cannot but wish to escape them: Nevertheless, I freely and absolutely submit all its natural reluctances to thy

37 And he cometh, and findeth them sleeping, and saith unto Peter, Simon, sleepest thou? couldst not thou watch one hour?

38 Watch ye, and pray, lest ye enter into temptation: the spirit truly is ready, but the flesh is weak.

39 And again he went away, and prayed, and spake the same words.

40 And when he returned, he found them asleep again; (for their eyes were heavy;) neither wist they what to answer him.

41 And he cometh the third time, and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take your rest: it is enough, the hour is come, behold, the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.

42 Rise up, let us go; lo, he that

holy determination, which, considering it as thy will, it is my greatest pleasure to comply with.

37 Then returning to the three disciples, and finding them all dropped asleep, it being late in the night, and their spirits being overwhelmed and stupefied with sorrow, (*Luke xxii. 45.*) he gently reproveth them, and particularly *Peter*, saying, *What, Simon, are you asleep, who but just now talked at so high a rate of laying down your life for me, rather than not stand by me? Is this your kindness to your friend? Is all your zeal and resolution so soon come to this? Could you not keep awake for one hour only, in obedience to my command, and to see what would become of me while you knew what an agony I was in? (ver. 34.)*

38 This is a time for every one of you to be watching and praying, that ye may not be overcome by the trying providences and dangers which now lie before you: I know indeed that your hearts are sincerely desirous to shew your love and duty to me; but, alas! your natural and sinful infirmities disable you from doing what ye would, unless special strength be given from above, which ye therefore should be earnestly praying for, and watching to improve.

39 Our Lord having thus cautioned and counselled his disciples, retired a second time, repeating his humble address in words of the same purport, with like fervour, and entire resignation to his Father's will, as before.

40 And upon coming soon after to the disciples again, he found them all as fast asleep as at first; for they were exceeding drowsy: And he renewing his rebuke, they, like persons between sleep and awake, could hardly tell what he said to them, much less what excuse to make for themselves.

41 He once more left them a little while, to pour out his heart in prayer after the same manner; and when he returned the third time, and found them still asleep, he said, My previous conflict is now over; and ye may sleep on, if ye will, for me, who have no further occasion for your watchings: I have given you sufficient warnings of your danger, and there is now no time for any more: For the great sufferings I foretold are just at hand; and ye shall immediately see the Messiah treacherously delivered into the power of wicked men, of *Gentiles* as well as *Jews*, who are coming to take away my life.

42 Get up, let us go and meet the approaching enemy, from whom I must no longer think to make

betrayeth me is at hand.

43 And immediately, while he yet spake, cometh Judas, one of the twelve, and with him a great multitude, with swords and staves, from the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders.

44 And he that betrayed him, had given them a token, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is he; take him, and lead him away safely.

45 And as soon as he was come, he goeth straightway to him, and saith, Master, Master; and kissed him.

46 And they laid their hands on him, and took him.

47 And one of them that stood by drew a sword, and smote a servant of the high priest, and cut-off his ear.

48 And Jesus answered and said unto them, Are ye come out as against a thief, with swords and with staves, to take me?

49 I was daily with you in the temple teaching, and ye took me not:

my escape; behold, the perfidious wretch, who marches before them to shew them their way, and to give them an opportunity of apprehending me, is this moment coming up to me.

43 And the words were scarcely out of his mouth, before Judas, one of the twelve apostles, appeared as the leader of a great number of officers and soldiers, who were armed with swords and other weapons, and came by order of the sanhedrim to apprehend him, and to bring him before them.

44 Now it being night, and the company being strangers to Jesus, Judas had told them beforehand how they might certainly distinguish him from any other that should be with him, saying, Observe the person whom I shall advance to, and salute with a kiss; he is the man whom ye are to apprehend; seize him without fear of being mistaken, and take care that he by no means make his escape.

45 Accordingly, as soon as Judas had brought them to the place where Christ was with some of his disciples, he made up directly to him, and addressing him with an air of usual friendship and respect, under the style of Master, he saluted him with a kiss. (See the note on *Mat.* xxvi. 49.)

46 Hereupon the officers executed their commission from the council, in seizing upon him and binding him; (*John* xvi. 12.) and his time being then fully come, he made no attempts to rescue himself out of their hands.

47 However, one of the disciples that were with him, Peter by name, a rash hot-headed man, having a sword, (*Luke* xxii. 38.) immediately drew it, in the midst of surprise, rage, and zeal; and, striking at the head of one of the high-priest's servants, wounded him so far as to cut off his right ear. (*John* xviii. 10.)

48 Then, after Jesus had mercifully and miraculously cured the wound, and reproved Peter for his intemperate heat in offering such an act of violence, and attempting to maintain his cause by the power of the sword, (*Mat.* xxvi. 52. and *Luke* xxii. 51.) he gently and calmly expostulated with those that came to apprehend him, saying, What is the reason of your coming out in the night, armed against me, as if I were some resolute villain, or public robber, who must be overpowered by main force?

49 Ye well enough know that I never shunned to appear openly, as there were occasions, among you: I frequently resorted to the temple, and continued preaching there every day for some time past; and yet

not: but the scriptures must be fulfilled.

yet none of you took me up, as ye easily might whenever ye would, if ye had any thing to lay to my charge: Why then should ye now come out in this private, and yet hostile manner, to apprehend me? But the time appointed of God, and foretold by the ancient prophets, for my sufferings and death, is now come; and therefore, that his council may stand, he has permitted you to take this extraordinary course against me.

50 And they all forsook him, and fled.

50 Then all the disciples, who but a little before had protested that they would sooner die with him than forsake him, left him in the power of his enemies; and every one ran away to shift as well as he could for himself.

51 And there followed him a certain young man, having a linen cloth cast about his naked body: and the young men laid hold on him:

52 And he left the linen cloth, and fled from them naked.

53 And they led Jesus away to the high priest: and with him were assembled all the chief priests, and the elders, and the scribes.

51, 52 And, as our Lord passed along with the company, a certain young man* ran to see what was the matter, though he had only a linen cloth upon him to cover his body: And some of the soldiers, suspecting him to be one of Christ's disciples, caught hold of the cloth to secure him; but (as) he, leaving the garment in their hands, slipped, away from them, and made his escape naked.

53 Now Jesus being in custody of the soldiers, they carried him bound, and under guard, first to *Annas*, (John xviii. 12, 13.) and afterwards to the house of *Caiaphas*, who was high priest for that year; and there, though it was so late in the night, the council, consisting of the chief priests and elders, and doctors of the law, were all assembled together, waiting for his being brought before them, that they might proceed immediately upon his trial.

54 And Peter followed him afar off, even unto the palace of the high priest: and he sat with the servants, and warmed himself at the fire.

54 And *Peter*, recovering a little from his surprise, ventured to follow him at a considerable distance, that he might not be observed; and getting into the high priest's house, he thrust in, like a stranger, among the servants, to warm himself at the fire, hoping to stay there undiscovered, till he should see what became of his Lord.

55 And the chief priests, and all the council, sought for witness against Jesus, to put him to death; and found none:

55 Then the chief priests, and the rest of the council, having Jesus before them as their prisoner, and, being resolved to take away his life, used all possible methods to get such depositions against him as might give a colour of justice to their proceedings, in putting him to death; but they could find none to answer their purpose.

56 For

N O T E.

* It does not appear that he was one of Christ's disciples; but it seems, by his covering, as if he were either going, or got to bed, and that, out of curiosity, he ran in his shirt to see what was the meaning of a band of soldiers passing by at that time of night.

56 For many bare false witness against him; but their witness agreed not together.

57 And there arose certain, and bare false witness against him, saying,

58 We heard him say, I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and within three days I will build another made without hands.

59 But neither do did their witness agree together.

60 And the high priest stood up in the midst, and asked Jesus, saying, Answerest thou nothing? what is it which these witness against thee?

61 But he held his peace, and answered nothing. Again the high priest asked him, and said unto him, Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?

62 And Jesus said, I am: and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power

56 For though they prevailed with several to bring in false accusations; yet they either were inconsistent with each other, or what they said did not amount to the charge of a capital crime*, that might afford a fair pretence for these unrighteous judges themselves, to pass sentence of death upon him.

57, 58 At length others were procured, who, from a notorious misconstruction of some words which he had dropped, relating to his own death and resurrection; (*John* ii. 21.) immediately affirmed that they had heard him say, he would, and was able to destroy their famous and sacred temple, at *Jerusalem*, which was built by the hands of men, and, within three days, would build another, without the help of any hands. (See the note on *Mat.* xxvi. 61.)

59 But false and forced as this interpretation of his words was, these witnesses either did not agree as to the precise meaning of them, or all that they deposed on this head did not come up to the charge of a crime †, for which they could lawfully conclude that he deserved to die.

60 Then, Jesus continuing silent under all these false and frivolous accusations, the high priest rose up in a heat, and, with scorn and fury, said to him, What! have you nothing to say on your own behalf? Or, do you cast contempt upon the court by refusing to plead? What answer is it possible for you to make to the things that these men witness against you? Can you either deny or justify them?

61 But Jesus knowing the malicious design of the high priest and council, and that they wanted only to provoke him to say something which might give them a handle against him, still continued to make no reply: Then the high priest urged him again, with greater vehemence, and with an air of religious solemnity, (*Mat.* xxvi. 63.) saying, Tell us plainly, as in the presence of God, Art thou the Messiah of *Israel*, even the Son of the Blessed and only Potentate?

62 When a question of this importance was put with such solemnity to our Lord, he thought himself called to witness a good confession; and therefore roundly affirmed, I am the true Messiah, and the Son of the Blessed; (see the note on *Luke* xxii. 70.)

NOTES.

* *ἴσας οὐκ ἴσων*, They were not equal to the charge of a capital crime.

† *οὐδὲ οὐτως ἴσων ἴσων*, Neither so was it equal to the charge of a capital crime.

power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.

63 Then the high priest rent his clothes, and said, What need we any further witnesses?

64 Ye have heard the blasphemy: what think ye? And they all condemned him to be guilty of death.

65 And some began to spit on him, and to cover his face, and to buffet him, and to say unto him, Prophecy: and the servants did strike him with the palms of their hands.

66 And as Peter was beneath in the palace, there cometh one of the maids of the high priest:

67 And when she saw Peter warming himself, she looked upon him, and said, And thou also wast with Jesus of Nazareth.

68 But he denied, saying, I know not, neither understand I what thou sayest. And he went out into the porch; and the cock crew.

70.) and how much soever ye, my present judges, disbelieve it, through the hardness of your hearts, a time is coming, when ye shall have convincing demonstrations of it, to your own confusion, by the terrible vengeance which I will, ere long, execute upon this city and nation, for their unbelief, by the powerful and amazing spread of my gospel, through all the nations whom ye despise, and at last by my appearing on a throne of glory, to judge you and all the world.

63 At the high priest's hearing this, he, according to the custom of the Jews, rent his clothes, as a token of the utmost indignation; and, turning to the council, said, What occasion have we to give ourselves any further trouble to call or hear any other evidence.

64 Every one of you yourselves have now been ear-witnesses of the horrid downright blasphemy that has proceeded from his own lips: What say ye? Is not here sufficient cause to condemn him to death? And they impiously agreed, as with one consent, that his so plainly taking to himself these characters, was a blasphemous claim, for which he deserved to die. (See the note on *Mat. xxvi. 66.*)

65 And no sooner had they thus passed sentence against him, but many began to treat him with all manner of rudeness, insolence, and contempt: (See the note on *Mat. xxvi. 67.*) Some spit in his face; and others, blindfolding, and then striking him, said with a taunt and a jeer, Now, thou high pretender to prophecy, tell us, Who was it that struck you at this time, and who at that? And the very servants themselves were so bold and abusive, as to slap him in the face.

66, 67 In the mean while, as Peter was sitting among the servants, at the lower end of the high priest's hall, to observe the issue of this affair, and, as he was there warming himself at the fire, one of the high priest's servant-maids came up to the company, and, looking hard at him, thought that he was one of Christ's disciples; whereupon she taxed him with it, saying, I am well satisfied that you was one of the followers of this Jesus of Nazareth.

68 But Peter, struck with fear, replied on a sudden, It is false, I know nothing of the matter, and cannot imagine why you should suspect me; and thereupon, withdrawing into the porch, he heard a cock crow for the first time, it being then about midnight.

69 And

69 And a maid saw him again, and began to say to them that stood by, This is *one* of them.

70 And he denied it again. And a little after, they that stood by said again to Peter, Surely thou art *one* of them : for thou art a Galilean, and thy speech agreeth *thereto*.

71 But he began to curse and to swear, *saying*, I know not this man of whom ye speak.

72 And the second time the cock crew. And Peter called to mind the word that Jesus said unto him, Before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice. And when he thought thereon, he wept.

69 Some time after, another maid-servant took notice of him again; and, turning to some of the bystanders, said, I am confident this fellow was one of the disciples of Jesus.

70 But *Peter* as rashly and absolutely denied it as before. And soon after that, others in the company pressed him further a third time, and, warmly insisting upon it, said, Without doubt you are one of the followers of this Jesus, it is in vain to think of denying it : For, as he is of *Galilee* ; so it appears plainly, by the dialect you speak, that you are a *Galilean*.

71 *Peter* being now confounded to the last degree, for fear of being, after all, discovered, hardly knew what he said ; but, resolving to brave it out in the most likely manner he could, he fell into a violent passion, and denied it a third time, with such imprecations and oaths, as no disciple of Christ's could easily be supposed to use, saying, with daring assurance, I am so far from being a follower of the man you talk of, that I never so much as saw his face till now.

72 And immediately after this third and most shocking denial of his Lord, a cock crew, it being then about three o'clock in the morning, which, by way of eminence, was called the time of cock-crowing : (See the note on *Mat.* xxvi. 34.) And *Peter* immediately, upon hearing it, recollected the solemn warning which Christ had given him but a few hours ago, when he said, Before the second cock-crowing, you will thrice deny me : And in his reflections on this, and on his own vain confidence then, and on his wicked and shameful conduct since, his heart was ready to burst with grief ; and he poured out floods of penitential tears, in the bitterness of his spirit, for what he had done,

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

What different treatment did the suffering Saviour meet with from the same, and from different persons ! His dear disciples professed to stand by him to the last extremity ; and yet, soon after, they all forsook him, and the most forward of them shamefully denied him. One of his friends would spare no cost to testify an affectionate respect to him ; but others, misjudging the action, were displeas'd with it ; and, at the same time, both secret and open enemies were conspiring against his life, and uniting treachery, falsehood, and force, to destroy it. But the righteous shall be had in everlasting remembrance, while the memory of the wicked shall rot. Christ loves and honours them that love and honour him : He puts an end to the passover, by being sacrificed for them ; and instituted his last supper, as a feast upon the sacrifice, and as a perpetual memorial of his dying love to them. He communes with them as his friends, pities and bears with their infirmities, warns them faithfully of their danger, reproves them tenderly for their weaknesses, concerns himself for their safety, and recovers them from their falls. But ah ! how often do their fears overcome their faith, and presumptuous confidences betray them into sin !

sin! and how does one iniquity lead on to another! O the dreadful power of passion and tumultuous fear! But all make work for bitter repentance; and which of their hearts would not relent and melt, in reflection upon their sin against him, whose love to them was so great, that, for their sakes, he suffered to the utmost extremity in soul and body, with entire resignation to his Father's will, despised all the malicious charges of his enemies, and patiently endured their insolent affronts! And yet, to leave us an example, he boldly witnessed a good confession, when his own and his Father's glory lay at stake. But wo to his false friends, who, Judas-like, betray him! and to his inveterate enemies, who, like the council and their servants, deride and degrade him, and turn every thing against him! He abhors their treachery and wickedness; and will one day give them dreadful conviction of his own divine authority, and of their obstinate infidelity: Then they, and not he, will stand under the charge of blasphemy; and it had been better for them, and especially for perfidious apostates, never to have been born.

C H A P XV.

Christ is brought before Pilate, 1,—14. Is delivered to be crucified, and is thereupon mocked and abused by the soldiers, 15,—21. Is crucified and derided by the Jews, 22,—32. Several prodigies attend his death, 33,—38. The centurion and others are witnesses of it, 39,—41. And Joseph of Arimathea gives him an honourable burial, 42,—47.

TEXT.

AND straightway in the morning, the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes, and the whole council, and bound Jesus, and carried him away, and delivered him to Pilate.

PARAPHRASE.

NOW the Jewish sanhedrim having sat up the greatest part of the night to examine Jesus, and agreed among themselves that he deserved to die; they, after a short recess, (see the note on *Mat.* xxvii. 1.) came together in full assembly, early in the morning; when the chief priests, being most zealous and active in Satan's cause, consulted with the other members of that great council, about the best method for cutting him off: And their authority in matters of life and death, having been very much sunk of late, by their subjection to the Romans, (see the note on *John* xviii. 31.) they sent him bound like a criminal, to *Pontius Pilate* the governor of *Judea*, and resolved to accuse him as a seditious person who set himself up for king against *Cæsar*. (*Luke* xxiii. 2.)

2 And Pilate asked him, Art thou the king of the Jews? And he answering, said unto him, Thou sayest it.

2 And when they brought him before *Pilate* under this charge, he put the plain question to him, saying, Do you profess to be king of the Jews? Art thou guilty, or not guilty? To which Jesus replied, Though my kingdom is not of this world, (*John* xviii. 36.) as you may easily judge by the meanness of my appearance; yet there is a sense in which I own the charge: I really am a king, as the nature of your question supposes that I affirm myself to be.

3 And the chief priests

3 In the mean while, the chief priests, and others

priests accused him of many things; but he answered nothing.

4 And Pilate asked him again, saying, Answerest thou nothing? behold how many things they witness against thee.

5 But Jesus yet answered nothing; so that Pilate marvelled.

6 Now at that feast he released unto them one prisoner, whomsoever they desired.

7 And there was one named Barabbas, which lay bound with them that had made insurrection with him, who had committed murder in the insurrection.

8 And the multitude crying aloud, began to desire him to do as he had ever done unto them.

9 But Pilate answered them, saying, Will ye that I release unto you the king of the Jews?

10 (For he knew that the chief priests had delivered him for envy.)

11 But the chief priests moved the people, that he should rather release Barabbas unto them.

12 And Pilate answered, and said again

thers under their influence, were exceeding vehement and clamorous in the many invidious accusations they brought against him: But he, knowing it was to no purpose to reply to the malicious and improbable suggestions of a set of people who had before-hand resolved to have his blood, abode by his first answer, and declined giving any other.

4 Then *Pilate* spoke to him again, saying, What! have you nothing to plead in your own defence, against your accusers? Observe how many heinous crimes they lay to your charge.

5 But still Jesus continued silent, that he might not needlessly exasperate the *Jews*, since there was no appealing them. This appeared to *Pilate* an unaccountable piece of conduct, on such an occasion; so that he was perfectly amazed at it, not knowing what our Lord meant by it.

6 Now, it was a customary thing for the *Roman* governor, at every paschal-feast, to discharge one prisoner, whom the *Jews* should appoint, in honour of that great memorial of their own deliverance from *Egyptian* bondage.

7 And, at this very time, there was a most notorious criminal in custody, one *Barabbas*, who was committed to jail for spiriting up the mob, and heading them, in a seditious riot, in which they had been guilty of murder, robbery, and other outrages.

8, 9 While therefore the common people were importuning the governor to gratify them with the discharge of a prisoner, as he had always done at that great feast, ever since he came to the regency of *Judæa*; *Pilate*, supposing that they could hardly think of having so detestable a wretch as *Barabbas* spared, made a motion for the release of Jesus, in preference to him, saying, Will ye agree that, in honour of the passover, I shall discharge this man, whom ye say calls himself the king of the *Jews*.

10 This the governor himself was very desirous of, if it might possibly be obtained; for, by the whole course of the evidence against Jesus, and of his behaviour under it, *Pilate* was fully satisfied in his own mind, that it was an envious, unreasonable, and malicious prosecution.

11 But no sooner was this proposal made, than the chief priests urged and prevailed upon the people to insist, as with one voice, upon the discharge of *Barabbas* himself, in opposition to Jesus.

12 At this *Pilate*, being extremely troubled and surpris'd, replied, Why is all this rage and clamour against a poor inconsiderable man, who is to

again unto them, What will ye then that I shall do unto him whom ye call the king of the Jews?

13 And they cried out again, Crucify him.

14 Then Pilate said unto them, Why? what evil hath he done? And they cried out the more exceedingly, Crucify him.

15 And so Pilate, willing to content the people, released Barabbas unto them, and delivered Jesus, when he had scourged him, to be crucified.

16 And the soldiers led him away into the hall, called Pretorium; and they call together the whole band.

17 And they clothed him with purple, and platted a crown of thorns, and put it about his head,

18 And began to salute him, Hail,

be pitied and despised, rather than feared, on account of his pretences to be your king, for which ye have brought him before me? What would ye have me to do with him, if I must not release him?

13 They answered with still greater outrage, at the instigation of the chief priests and rulers, We demand that he be crucified; nothing short of his being put to that ignominious death will satisfy us.

14 The governor being still desirous, if possible, to soften their temper and bring him off, expostulated with them in a rational way, saying, Why will nothing short of this man's blood content you? What crime have ye proved upon him, that by the Roman law deserves death, especially such a cruel and shameful death? But (ds) instead of being pacified, they were more furious than ever, and cried out with bitter rage and impatience, We will hear of no favour being shewn him; let him, without more ado, be crucified.

15 Then Pilate finding it was to no purpose to attempt any thing further to quiet them, and being inclined rather to humour them, and prevent the seditious tumult which he was afraid of, than to follow his own convictions of Christ's innocency, released the infamous Barabbas to them; and having before ordered Jesus to be scourged to move their compassion, but in vain, he at length delivered him up to be crucified. (See the notes on Mat. xxvii. 26.)

16 And, among other barbarities, some of the soldiers seized him; and, carrying him into another large room*, called *Prætorium*, they summoned the rest of their company to insult, abuse, and ridicule him, in mockery of his claiming kingly power, as if it were only to be laughed at. (See the notes on Mat. xxvii. 16, 17.)

17 And this they did in the following scornful manner: They put upon him a † garment of such a colour as resembled that of royal robes; and having made a crown of thorns, they clapped it upon his head, putting also a reed, or hollow cane, into his hand for a sham sceptre. (Mat. xxvii. 29.)

18 And, when they had thus disguised him with the ridiculous mimicry of a prince, they, to make further

N O T E S.

* The *Prætorium* was an inner hall, so called from the *Prætor's* (a Roman magistrate) using to give judgment there.

† As royal robes were usually purple and scarlet, the colour of this garment,

which was probably one of the soldiers, is here, and *John* xix. 2. expressed by the first, and in *Mat.* xxvii. 28. by the last, and we are told, that the *Tyrian* purple was not very different from scarlet.

Hail, king of the Jews:

19 And they smote him on the head with a reed, and did spit upon him, and, bowing their knees, worshipped him.

20 And when they had mocked him, they took off the purple from him, and put his own clothes on him, and led him out to crucify him.

21 And they compel one Simon, a Cyrenian, who passed by, coming out of the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to bear his cross.

22 And they bring him unto the place Golgotha, which is, being interpreted, The place of a skull.

23 And they gave him to drink wine mingled with myrrh: but he received it not.

24 And when they had crucified him, they parted his garments, casting

further sport, accosted him with a jeer, saying, All happiness attend the king of the Jews.

19 Then taking the cane out of his hand, they barbarously smote him with it upon the head; and scornfully spit at him, of whom it was prophesied, that *he hid not his face from spitting*; (Isa. 1. 6.) and, in a ludicrous way, they dropped down on their knees before him, as if they were paying homage to him.

20 And, when they had treated him with all this contempt, they plucked off the mock robe, and put upon him his own clothes again; and, after all this, they guarded him to the place of execution, to which he went, carrying his cross on his shoulder, in order to his being crucified. (See the note on *Mat. xxvii. 31.*)

21 And, as they were passing along, a certain man came in their way from the country, whose name was *Simon of Cyrene*, and who was the father of *Alexander* and *Rufus*, two men, well known in those parts; and, as there was danger of Jesus's fainting under the burden of the cross, they forced this man to take it up and carry it. (See the note on *Mat. xxvii. 32.*)

22 In this manner they conducted him to the place of execution, a little way without the gates of *Jerusalem*, where they used to put criminals to death, and therefore called it *Golgotha*, the meaning of which word is, *The place of a skull*. (See the note on *Mat. xxvii. 33.*)

23 And as soon as they arrived thither, they, like enemies that would use him with all possible indignity and inhumanity, offered him a draught of four wine, mixed with a bitter ingredient †, instead of the stupifying potion which used to be given to persons just before they were crucified, that they might be the less sensible of their pain; but Jesus tasting it, refused to drink it.

24 And when they were about to crucify him, (*σταυρωσαντες αυτον*) they stripped him of his cloaths; some of which the soldiers, who were his immediate executioners, and claimed them as their fee, divided into four parts, that each of them might have

N O T E.

† Dr. *Clarke* thinks that *οινος σαμυγνισμιος* is here used to signify the potion given Jesus in contempt, instead of the real *οινος σαμυγνισμιος*. Dr. *Lightfoot*, on *Mat. xxvii. 34.* was also of the same opinion; adding, that these words seem to relate to the custom of the nation, and

those of *Matthew* to the thing as it was really acted. Other methods of reconciling the two evangelists, as *χαλαρ*, the word used in *Mat. xxvii. 34.* signifies *wormwood*, or any kind of bitter poisonous mixture, as well as *gall*, may be seen in *Hammond* and *Whitby* on that place.

ing lots upon them, what every man should take.

25 And it was the third hour; and they crucified him.

26 And the superscription of his accusation was written over, THE KING OF THE JEWS.

27 And with him they crucified two thieves; the one on his right hand, and the other on his left.

28 And the scripture was fulfilled, which saith, And he was numbered with the transgressors.

29 And they that passed by, rail- ed on him, wag- ging their heads, and saying, Ah, thou that destroy- est the temple, and buildest it in three days,

30 Save thyself, and come down from the cross.

31 Likewise also the

have one: (*John* xix. 23.) And they cast lots, to determine who should have a particular garment, being loth to divide it, because it was all of one piece, without any seam: God also herein over-ruling their minds to fulfil that remarkable prophecy of the Messiah, saying, (*Psal.* xxii. 18.) *They parted my garments among them, and cast lots upon my ves- ture.*

25 Now the time of day at which they nailed his hands and feet to the cross, was within the com- pass of what the *Jews* called the third hour*.

26 And, according to the *Roman* custom, they, by *Pilate's* order, fixed a writing over Christ's head, in large capital letters, which, contrary to their de- sign of reproach, declared him to be, what he real- ly was, in a high and glorious sense, *The king of the Jews.*

27 They likewise, to put the greater odium up- on him, crucified him in company with two rob- bers; placing all three in a row, one on each side, and Jesus in the middle, as if he had been a more notorious criminal than either of the other suf- ferers.

28 And so they were over-ruled, by the provi- dence of God, to fulfil another ancient prophecy of the Messiah's *being numbered with transgressors*; (*Isa.* liii. 12.) which intimated, that though he was perfectly innocent in himself, yet he stood, in the eye of the law, as an offender, whilst he bore his people's sins.

29 Moreover, the very passengers on the road, contrary to all rules of humanity and decency, in- sulted and reviled him in a blasphemous manner, (*βλασφημούν*) and shaking their heads, with an air of scornful triumph, cried out, Aha, so we would have it: What are all your-high pretences come to at last! You who once talked big, as if you could even demolish our magnificent temple, and rebuild it within the space of three days, what say you now?

30 Come, let us see what you can do in the time of your own extremity; deliver yourself from tor- tures and death, quit the cross, and come hither, if you can.

31 After the same manner the chief priests, the doctors

N O T E.

* The third hour is to be understood, according to the *Jewish* computation, for our nine o'clock, and onwards to twelve; but the sixth hour, at which, it is said, (*John* xix. 14.) *Pilate* passed sen- tence against Christ, is to be taken, ac-

ording to the *Roman* way of reckoning, for our six o'clock in the morning, that gospel being written after the destruction of *Jerusalem*. And so there is an exact agreement between these two accounts of Christ's condemnation and crucifixion.

the chief priests, mocking, said among themselves, with the scribes, He saved others; himself he cannot save.

32 Let Christ the king of Israel descend now from the cross, that we may see and believe. And they that were crucified with him reviled him.

33 And when the sixth hour was come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour.

34 And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani? which is, being interpreted, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?

35 And some of them that stood by, when they heard it, said Behold, he calleth Elias.

36 And one ran and filled a sponge full of vinegar, and put it on a reed, and gave him to drink, saying, Let alone; let us see whether Elias will come to take him down.

doctors of the law, and the elders themselves, (*Mat. xxvii. 41.*) those ecclesiastical senators, notwithstanding their age and gravity, impiously derided him, saying one to another, We have him safe enough now: He set up for a saviour of others; but alas, poor wretch! it is plain that he is a vile impostor, utterly unable to save himself from his own approaching death.

32 Let him make good his pretences of being *Israel's* Messiah, if he can; let him now give us a proof of his boasted power, by quitting the cross, and coming down to us, that we may see, cause to believe in him: (See the notes on *Mat. xxvii. 41.* and *Luke xxiii. 35.*) Yea, so general and violent was the run upon him, that even one of the crucified thieves themselves threw out the most spiteful and reproachful words against him. (See the note on *Mat. xxvii. 44.*)

33 Now, after Jesus had hung on the cross about three hours, there began to be at noon, or the sixth hour of the day, according to the *Jews* way of reckoning, such a miraculous darkness as deprived the earth of the light of the sun, and continued till three in the afternoon, which, in their computation, is the ninth hour. (See the note on *Mat. xxvii. 45.*)

34 And about three o'clock, Jesus, in the midst of terrible agony and distress, cried out, with a strong and mournful voice, *Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?* the meaning of which, in the mixed language then commonly spoken and well understood, is, *My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?* He thereby claiming God as his God; and yet lamenting his Father's withdrawing all tokens of his love, and dealing with him as if he were an enemy, whilst he was bearing our sins in his own body on the tree. (*1 Pet. ii. 23.*)

35 As soon as he had uttered these words, some of the standers-by who heard them, but either did not distinguish them from other words of a like sound, or wilfully perverted them, said, See how he is put to it; he cries out for *Elias* to appear and deliver him.

36 And immediately one of them dipping a sponge in vinegar, fastened it on the top of a reed, long enough to reach up to his mouth, and offered that, instead of a comfortable cordial, for him to suck it: (See the note on *John xix. 29.*) Whilst others said, Be quiet; let him take his own course: Ye hear he calls for *Elias*, and he may call long enough before that prophet comes to help him; let us

37 And Jesus cried with a loud voice, and gave up the ghost.

38 And the vail of the temple was rent in twain, from the top to the bottom.

39 And when the centurion, which stood over against him, saw that he so cried out, and gave up the ghost, he said, Truly this man was the Son of God.

40 There were also women looking on afar off; among whom was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the less, and of Joseph, and Salome;

41 Who also when he was in Galilee followed him, and ministered unto him; and many other women which came up with him unto Jerusalem.

42 And now when the even was come, (because it was the preparation, that is, the day before the Sabbath,)

43 Jo-

us see what interest he has in heaven, and whether *Elias* will appear to save him from death, or not.

37 Then Jesus commended his spirit into his Father's hand, not with a languid tone, like dying persons, in whom nature is spent, but with a loud voice; and, whilst he was yet speaking, he breathed out his holy soul, as one who freely laid down his life of himself. (See the note on *Mat.* xxvii. 50.)

38 And at this very instant the vail, which hung between the court of the priests and the holy of holies, was miraculously torn asunder from top to bottom; intimating, that God would no longer dwell in that holy place; that the ceremonial law was then abolished; that all its mysteries were laid open, and its types fulfilled; and that both *Jews* and *Gentiles* might have free access into the holiest of all, even heaven itself, by the blood of Jesus: And several other surprising wonders attended this, as supernatural and awful attestations to the dying Saviour. (*Mat.* xxvii. 51, 52.)

39 So that the *Roman* captain of the band that were ordered to see to the execution, was struck with astonishment, when he observed, among other things, the uncommon manner of Christ's expressing himself with his expiring breath; and could not help saying, Undoubtedly this was no other than the Son of God, notwithstanding all the cruelty and reproach he has undergone for asserting it: And the soldiers, falling under the like conviction, said the same concerning him. (*Mat.* xxvii. 54.)

40 There were likewise several women standing at a distance within sight of the cross, to observe all that passed; some of which were *Mary Magdalene*, with another *Mary*, who was the mother of *James the less*, (see the note on *Mat.* xxvii. 56.) and of *Joseph*, and a third woman named *Salome*.

41 These, though of the timorous sex, were his fast friends to the last; who had also accompanied him before, and supplied him with necessaries, at their own expence, in his journeyings through *Galilee*: And, together with these, there were many other women, who, having attended him when he went up to *Jerusalem*, followed him to the place of execution, and were spectators of the tragical scene.

42, 43 Now, after all these things, the evening came on: And then because the next day was the Sabbath, in which no work could be lawfully done, *Joseph of Arimathea*, a man of great reputation, riches, and honour, who believed in Christ, and expected that his kingdom would soon appear in its glory,

43 Joseph of Arimathea, an honourable counsellor, which also waited for the kingdom of God, came, and went in boldly unto Pilate, and craved the body of Jesus.

44 And Pilate marvelled if he were already dead: and calling unto him the centurion, he asked him whether he had been any while dead,

45 And when he knew it of the centurion, he gave the body to Joseph.

46 And he bought fine linen, and took him down, and wrapped him in the linen, and laid him in a sepulchre which was hewn out of a rock, and rolled a stone unto the door of the sepulchre.

47 And Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of Jesus, beheld where he was laid.

glory, hastened away to *Pilate*; and begged the liberty of taking down the body of Jesus, that he might give it an honourable burial, instead of its being interred in an ignominious manner with the bodies of the other malefactors. (See the note on *Luke* xxiii. 50, 51.)

44 *Pilate*, hearing this request, was amazed to think that our Lord should expire so soon, and could not tell how to believe it: But, sending for the captain of the soldiers that were set to guard the cross, he inquired of him, Whether Jesus were really dead, and how long he had been so.

45 And the centurion having assured him, to his full satisfaction, that they had certain proof of his being dead, (*John* xix. 33, 34.) the governor granted *Joseph's* petition, and gave order that Christ's body should be delivered to him.

46 Then *Joseph* went and bought some fine linen, fit for his purpose, and, returning to *Golgotha*, took down the body from the cross; and winding the linen about it, according to the custom of the *Jews*, he buried it in a new sepulchre, which was a cave cut in a rock, and prepared for himself to lie in; and having deposited Christ's body there, he placed a great stone at the mouth of the sepulchre to inclose it, and prevent any farther inhuman usage of the precious remains.

47 And *Mary Magdalene*, with the other *Mary* the mother of *Jesus*, like true mourners, followed the corpse to its interment, and took particular notice of the sepulchre in which it was laid, and of the state of things there.

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

How shocking is it to think, that there should ever be such perverseness, obstinacy, and inhumanity, in the heart of man, as were found among the high-priests, populace, and soldiers, against so innocent, meek, and divine a person, as our blessed Lord! Strange, that loud *Hosannas* should be so soon changed into *Crucify him, Crucify him*; and that *Pilate* could dare to act so directly contrary to the convictions of his own conscience in condemning him! and oh how multiplied and distressing were the sufferings of the dear Saviour! After he had been harassed about, and abused all night, how was he hurried away to the judgment-hall, and made a public spectacle early in the morning! With what rancour did the barbarous crew run out against him! How was the vilest of malefactors preferred before him! What an infamous and unrighteous sentence was it that passed upon him! With what contempt and cruelty was he treated, before he came to his cross, and all the while he was hanging upon it! And who knows the distress that he underwent in his body, and the still greater anguish of soul that he felt under the forsakings of his Father and his God! Oh the astonishing patience and love of the dying Redeemer, that he would silently and willingly undergo all this, in the room and stead of sinners, and be contented to be numbered with transgressors! With what holy bravery did he own his true character, whatsoever it might cost him! How calm was he under all injurious accusations and affronts! and how was he led as a sheep to the slaughter! What clear accomplishments were there in him of an-

cient prophecies concerning the Messiah in his suffering character! And what honourable testimonies were given to him, amidst all his disgrace, by the prodigies that appeared at his death; by *Pilate*, who bore witness to him as an innocent person, and as the king of the *Jews*; by the centurion, who was forced to own him to be the Son of God; by *Joseph of Arimathea*, who gave him a reputable burial; and by the good women, whose love carried them above their fears of danger, that they might be eye-witnesses of all that passed, and testify their affectionate respect to him in a designed embalment! And how can we sufficiently love and honour him, who thus amazingly loved us, and gave himself for us!

C H A P. XVI.

An angel tells three women of the resurrection of Christ, 1,—8. Jesus himself appears to Mary Magdalene, 9,—11.; to two of his disciples, 12, 13.; and then to the apostles all together, 14. He sends them forth to preach the gospel, 15,—18.; and ascends into heaven, 19, 20.

TEXT.

AND when the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, had bought sweet spices, that they might come and anoint him.

2 And very early in the morning the first day of the week, they came unto the sepulchre, at the rising of the sun.

3 And they said among themselves, Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre?

4 (And when they looked, they saw that the stone was rolled away :) for it was very great.

5 And, entering in

PARAPHRASE.

NOW, after the Sabbath was past, in the dawn of the morning, (*Mat. xxviii. 1.*) which was the ontrance on the first day of the week, *Mary Magdalene*, and the other *Mary*, who was the mother of *James the less*, and of *Josef*, and *Salome* the mother of *Zebedee's* children, hastened away to the sepulchre; which they reached by sun-rising: And, having bought proper ingredients, they came with a design of testifying their respect, by embalming the body of *Jesus*; their faith failing with regard to his resurrection, which he had once and again foretold, whilst he was yet with them.

3, 4 And, as they were going, they were perplexed in their minds about getting the great stone removed, which they observed (*chap. xv. 46. 47.*) *Joseph of Arimathea* had laid at the opening of the sepulchre, to stop it up; for the stone was so large, that they feared they should not be able of themselves to stir it*: But, upon coming to the place, they found, to their great amazement, that the stone was by some means or other already removed; so that the passage was quite clear.

5 And †, going into the sepulchre, they saw one angel

N O T E S.

* It seems they knew nothing of the watch that was set to guard the sepulchre, or of sealing the stone, which were done on the sabbath-day, *Mat. xxvii. 62,—66.*; and therefore they had no apprehensions of difficulty from thence.

† It may be uncertain whether they entered into the sepulchre in which *Christ's* body was laid; or only into what some call the outward sepulchre, mean-

ing a space before it, inclosed with a fence or wall. But if, according to the note on *John xx. 2.* this account, and that in *Luke xxiv. 3.* were not the same with those recorded in *Matt. xxviii. 5. 6.* and *John xx. 11, 12.*; all the toil of criticism may be spared, which has been employed for reconciling the history in the two first evangelists with that of the two last.

into the sepulchre, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, clothed in a long white garment; and they were affrighted.

6 And he saith unto them, Be not affrighted: ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified: he is risen; he is not here: behold the place where they laid him.

7 But go your way, tell his disciples and Peter, that he goeth before you into Galilee: there shall ye see him, as he said unto you.

8 And they went out quickly, and fled from the sepulchre; for they trembled and were amazed: neither said they any thing to any man; for they were afraid.

9 Now when Jesus was risen early, the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast seven devils.

10 And she went and told them that had been with him, as they mourned and wept.

angel, and afterwards another with him, (*Luke xxiv. 4.*) in the likeness of a young man, clothed with a long garment, which was exceeding bright and shining: And they were struck with great confusion and fear at this unexpected and surprising sight, not knowing what might be the meaning of it.

6 Then the angel spoke kindly to them, saying, Do not be discouraged, or apprehend that any evil has befallen your Lord, or shall come to you: I know that, in the sincerity and fervour of your affection, ye are come to seek after the Saviour, who was commonly known by the name of Jesus of Nazareth, and was the other day crucified: I tell you, for your comfort, he is risen, and is no longer to be found among the dead; observe the place where his body was laid, and do not give way to any further fears.

7 But go to his apostles; and particularly to Peter, who most of all needs a word of comfort, under his bitter anguish of spirit, on account of his late denial of his Lord: Let him, with the rest of them, know what ye yourselves have now seen and heard; and tell them, for their further satisfaction, that, before they can get into Galilee, Jesus will be there, ready to shew himself alive to them, according to what he promised a little before his death. (*Chap. xiv. 28.*)

8 Hereupon the good women hurried away immediately from the sepulchre, full of discomposure and surprize, and ran with all speed to deliver the angel's message to the disciples; and so great was their consternation, and their fear of the Jews, that they took no notice of these things to any whom they met with in the way.

9 Now the resurrection of Christ was a point of such vast importance, that he would not leave the evidence of it merely to the testimony of angels; but on that very day, the first day of the week, in the morning of which he rose very early from the dead, Jesus himself met with Mary Magdalene, whom he had before delivered from the possession of seven devils; and, to shew his amazing condescension and grace, he first of all made himself known, in a plain and familiar manner, to her. (See the note on *John xviii. 2.*)

10 And having now seen him with her own eyes, and being fully satisfied by his discourse with her, that it was really he, (*John xx. 14,—17.*) she went to the apostles, who used constantly to attend him, and were, at this instant, bewailing, with tears and

and sorrow of heart, the loss of their Lord, and their own late unworthy behaviour toward him; and she gave them a full account of her interview with him.

11 And they, when they had heard that he was alive, and had been seen of her, believed not.

11 But (*xxi*) notwithstanding all that she told them of her own having seen Jesus alive, and talked with him herself, they were too full of fears and prejudices to believe that he was really risen from the dead.

12 After that he appeared in another form unto two of them, as they walked, and went into the country.

12 Afterwards, on the same day, as two of his disciples were walking in the country toward *Emmaus*, our Lord appeared to them; and, by a supernatural influence, hindered their discerning him for some time, in his own proper shape and features, till at last he so plainly discovered himself that they certainly knew him. (*Luke xxiv. 16, 31.*)

13 And they went and told it unto the residue: neither believed they them.

13 Then they likewise hastened away to the rest of the disciples, and told them how Jesus had appeared to them; but still they were so very diffident, and slow of heart to believe, that † neither would this further positive evidence, from two other unexceptionable witnesses, fully satisfy them.

14 Afterward he appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen.

14 After this, Jesus appeared again, on the same day, and that was to † all the eleven apostles, except *Thomas*, while they were eating together; and he chid them for persisting in their unbelief, and for being so strangely stupid as not to be convinced by the several plain accounts which they had received from eye-witnesses of his resurrection, in confirmation of what he had often told them before-hand, about his rising again on the third day.

15 And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gos-

15 And having, after this, during his abode on earth, frequently shewn himself to his apostles, for the greater confirmation of their faith, and further instruction about the glorious things of his kingdom, (*Acts i. 3.*) he, a little before his ascension, gave them their final and standing commission, saying,
Go

NOTES.

† Though in *Luke xxiv. 34.* it is said, that, at the return of the two disciples, they heard the eleven saying, *The Lord has risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon*; yet that may be understood rather of their declaring what *Peter* had said, than of their own firmly believing it; for when Jesus himself afterwards appeared to them, doubtful thoughts arose in their hearts, and they, at first, believed not, *Luke xxiv. 38, 41.* And Dr. *Lightfoot* conjectures, that *Peter* was one of the two who saw Christ at *Emmaus*; and that the rest of the eleven, seeing him return so suddenly and unexpectedly to them, cried out, *Certainly the Lord has*

appeared to Simon, else he would never come back so soon. See *Hor. Hebr.* on *Luke xxiv. 34.*

‡ We are told, *John xx. 24.* that *Thomas* was not then present; but Christ's appearing to all the apostles except him, is called his appearing to the *eleven*, because it was at an assembly of the apostles, which then consisted only of eleven, and was therefore denominated from their number, though *Thomas* was absent; as, in *John xx. 24.* and *1 Cor. xv. 5.* they are called the *twelve*, though *Judas* was dead, because that had been their number, which was to be filled up again.

pel to every creature.

16 He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.

17 And these signs shall follow them that believe, In my name shall they cast out devils, they shall speak with new tongues,

18 They shall take up serpents, and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.

19 So then, after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God.

Go ye forth, in my name, into all the nations of the earth, and preach my gospel, as ye have opportunity, to all mankind, whether *Jew* or *Gentile*, without exception*.

16 Whoever shall believe in me, by means of, and according to the word which I order you to preach, and shall solemnly profess his faith in me, and claim the privileges, and yield himself up to the obligations of the gospel covenant, by being baptized, he shall obtain eternal salvation. (See the note on *Mat.* xxviii. 19.) But whoever shall finally reject me, through unbelief, shall suffer the damnation of an everlasting hell.

17, 18 And that my gospel, and my saving character according to it, may be unexceptionably confirmed, and gloriously propagated with great success, and unbelievers may have no excuse for their sin; they who believe in me, and depend upon my power, to assist and own them in my work, shall be enabled to do the following and such like wonders, as signs of spiritual benefits which they shall be the means of conveying to the souls of others: They, by calling on my name, shall cast out evil spirits from those that were corporally possessed; shall readily speak various languages, which they never learnt by human teaching; shall handle the most venomous vipers, without suffering any injury by them; yea, if at any time they take a poisonous draught, it shall not operate to the destroying of their lives or health; and whatsoever diseases others may be afflicted with, they, by laying their hands upon them in my name, shall heal them.

19 When our Lord had delivered many instructions, commands, and promises to his apostles, in frequent converse with them for forty days together, after his resurrection, he visibly ascended before their eyes, from the mount of *Olives*, till a cloud intercepted their sight; (*Acts* i. 2, 3, 9, 12.) and he was received with all acceptance and joy into the highest heaven, where he, as Mediator, took his place with majesty and grandeur, being seated on a throne of glory with God the Father, that he might rule, with all authority and honour, for the good of his people, and the confusion of his implacable enemies.

N O T E.

* This was the plain import of Christ's commission; though the apostles themselves were so dull of apprehension, thro' their prejudices against the *Gentiles*, that they did not understand it in that sense

for some years afterwards; and so confined their ministrations to the *Jews*, till *Peter* was more fully instructed by a vision, and sent to preach the gospel to *Cornelius* and his family, *Acts* x.

30 And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them and confirming the word with signs following. Amen.

20 And, soon after this, the apostles, being filled with the Holy Ghost from their exalted Head and Saviour, (*Acts* ii.) proceeded to execute their commission, beginning at *Jerusalem*: And, travelling from thence to different parts of the world, first among the *Jews*, and afterwards among the *Gentiles*, they preached the gospel, wherever they went, with amazing success; the Lord Jesus, making their words effectual, by the power of his Spirit, on the hearts of innumerable multitudes, and sealing their doctrine with many undeniable miracles. All this is certainly true. May the word of the Lord run and be glorified! Let every one say, Amen.

R E C O L L E C T I O N S.

Blessed be God for a risen and ascended Saviour, that he, who was dead, is now alive, and lives for evermore, with all mercy in his heart, and all power in his hand! And oh how affecting and encouraging were his condescension and grace, in making his resurrection known so soon to a disconsolate *Mary Magdalene*, out of whom he had cast seven devils; and to a set of ungrateful disciples, who had so lately disowned and deserted him; and particularly to *Peter*, who had done enough to have been for ever afterwards discarded by him! And what abundant care did our blessed Lord take to confirm this important fact, that neither their faith and hope, nor ours, might be groundless, or in vain! He introduced the discovery of it by strong circumstances, and employed two angels to attest it; and then he himself appeared to one and another, and to all his apostles again and again, yea, at last, to *above five hundred brethren at once*, (*1 Cor.* xv. 6.) till he had thoroughly conquered their perverse and unreasonable diffidence, and fully satisfied them that he was indeed their risen Lord and Saviour. And since all the evidences which gained such signal conquests over their unbelieving hearts are now transferred in a sure and miraculously-confirmed gospel to us; may we look upon ourselves as concerned in it, and be no more faithless, but believing! And may we, in that way, be healed of all the foul-sicknesses and deadly wounds, which, otherwise, will prove our ruin! For salvation or damnation themselves depend upon our receiving or rejecting the once crucified, and now exalted, Saviour: How awful is the thought! But whilst any of us have a godly jealousy over ourselves, lest we should reject him to our own perdition; may our trust and hope be in his grace, who works with his gospel, that it shall be the power of God to our salvation! And may we experimentally find it to be so! Amen.

THE END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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