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Millennium : or the thousand years of
prosperity, promised to the Church of God
Old Testament and in the New, shortly to c

E. W. Gilbert

M I L

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JONATHAN EDWARDS
President.

Engraved by Amos Oostler, New York

T H E *Millennium!*
M I L L E N N I U M ;

O R, T H E *E. W. Gilbert*
T H O U S A N D Y E A R S O F P R O S P E R I T Y ;

P R O M I S E D T O T H E

C H U R C H O F G O D ;

I N T H E O L D T E S T A M E N T A N D I N T H E N E W ;

S H O R T L Y T O

C O M M E N C E ;

A N D T O B E C A R R I E D O N T O

P E R F E C T I O N ;

U N D E R T H E A U S P I C E S O F *HIM*,

W H O, I N T H E *VISION*, W A S P R E S E N T E D T O S T. *JOHN*.

A N D I S A W, A N D, B E H O L D, A W H I T E H O R S E ; A N D H E T H A T
S A T O N H I M H A D A B O W ; A N D A C R O W N W A S G I V E N U N T O
H I M : A N D H E W E N T F O R T H C O N Q U E R I N G A N D T O C O N Q U E R.

*We are journeying unto the place, of which the Lord said, I will
give it you: come thou with us, and we will do thee good, for the
Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel.* M O S E S :

E L I Z A B E T H T O W N :
P R I N T E D B Y S H E P A R D K O L L O C K — 1 7 9 4 .

P R E F A C E.

IF the prophetic parts of the oracles of God, from what may be stiled “ a sacred Calendar;” or, “ an Almanac of Prophecy,” it is with the greatest propriety, that the Watchmen of Zion are disposed, now and then, to consult this sacred calendar, in view of determining the watch of the night, and, of consequence, how long before the arrival of the long-wished-for promised day. From promises which the sacred scriptures afford, calculations may, with a good degree of precision, be made, respecting the time of the accomplishments of the prophecies which relate to the future prosperity of the Zion of God. The redemption of the church of God from the bondage of Papal Babylon, as well as from the general dominion of the Powers of Darkness, is a glorious and animating subject of prophecy. The Lord hath spoken, and the decree shall be fulfilled.—If, in ancient time, the people of God believed what the Lord had spoken respecting the redemption of his people; if, from the sacred calendar, they discovered the time of the promised redemption—prayed for, and actually saw the fulfilment of the object of their hopes, in temporal and in spiritual deliverance, what forbids that, in this day

of general captivity, the prophets of the Lord should look with the same faith and prayer for the fulfilment of those promises which respect the spiritual deliverance of the Christian Church, both from the bondage of Babylon, and from the thralldom of Satan?—And more especially, as we evidently see marks of the divine progress in this work, in his present judgments among the nations of the earth, and particularly on mystical Babylon; which all allow, are but a little to precede the glorious redemption and prosperity of the Church in the Millennial-day.

—“ One circumstance, saith Dr. Hallifax,* ought not to be passed by unnoticed—namely, the menaces of certain vengeance to be hereafter inflicted on the enemies of the true religion, intimated by the destruction of the body of the fourth beast; and subsequent to that the promise of the universal establishment of the reign of Christ, when the stone cut out of the mountain without hands, shall strike and break to pieces the image on its feet; and become a great mountain, and fill the whole earth. This part of the prophecies is yet unfulfilled; nor is it for us to ascertain

NOTE.

* Hallifax's Sermon, preached at Bishop Warburton's Lecture, Lincoln's-Inn Chapel, London, page 96, published 1776.

the manner in which so important a revolution, in the religious world, will be effected: The use intended by the observation here is, from the symptoms of decline which are now discernible in the system of the Papal power, to point out to you the presumption that arises in favor of the truth of the prophetic denunciations, and from the concussions which have already shook the tottering throne of superstition, to learn to expect, in God's good time, *its full and final demolition.*"

And if this celebrated Author, in his day, thought there was ground to use the following language, in view of prophecies already fulfilled, and events then existing, with how much more reason may we confidently adopt it now, and say, that, "under the auspices of such a guide we may hope to advance, securely, in our projected work; and to have the pleasure of those, who, after long travelling in a dreary night, perceive, at last, the darkness to diminish, and the reddening streaks of the morning, betokening to them, that the day is at hand?"—

The object in publishing Dr. Bellamy's discourse is to establish the doctrine of the Millennium as to matter of fact: and by publishing President Edwards's "Humble Attempt to

promote explicit Agreement and visible Union in Prayer;" *it is hoped attention will be excited to the use of those means which God hath ordained to be used in view of a gracious fulfilment of every promise made to his Church and to his People.* Thus saith the Lord, I will yet for this be enquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them.

The design of the third and last discourse is to support the objects of the two former, by an appeal to existing facts, to the demonstration of present events. By these it appears, that what Dr. Hallifax termed "the reddening streaks of the morning," have become entitled to the stile of the dawn, if not to the morning of the day.—How does our faith grow—our confidence increase, and our joyful hearts exult at the sight, or rather at the sound of the stately steppings of our God in the present revolutions of his providence, fulfilling the purposes of his great decree!—From what we observe to have, already, taken place, may we not confidently anticipate all that is to come?—The testimony of Jesus, saith the angel to St. John, is a spirit of prophecy.—If, in a spirit of prophecy, the Great Head of the Church hath spoken of things to come, to strengthen the faith, and to cheer the hope of his followers, it can-

not be denied, but our time and talents are well employed, whilst, in study, with meekness and prayer, we labor to understand and to possess the blessings he hath so graciously prepared, and so abundantly promised to his Church.

If, in the day in which President Edwards lived, it was thought time for the Zion of God to go into labor, in view of the approach of the time of promised redemption to Israel, with how much more courage and confidence may the Church of God now proceed in the arduous, yet noble and interesting work?

The arguments which his invaluable tract suggests for explicit Agreement and visible Union of God's People in extraordinary Prayer, for the Revival of Religion, and the Advancement of Christ's Kingdom on Earth, pursuant to Scripture-promises and Prophecies, concerning the LAST TIME, are as applicable to the state of the Church, and of the world, now, as they were then, and the encouragement, from present circumstances, much more animating.

If any individual Christian, any society of Christian People, or any Minister, or association of Ministers, should be so far impressed with the propriety of a present compliance with what President Edwards labored to bring about in his day, as to desire that measures should

be taken for the accomplishment of the object of his work, and express a willingness to aid in laying a foundation for a general and united exertion in prayer throughout all the Christian Churches in our land; the Editor pledges his whole heart in aid to any such proposal, and would think himself highly favored by any communications, from any quarter, on the sublime and animating subject.

That the Great Head of the Church would graciously take this humble attempt to the honor of his name, and for the interests of his Zion, under his holy protection, and prosper, and do his own blessed will in all things which it strives to accomplish, is the fervent prayer of one, who knows no higher object of present or future ambition, than to approve himself, and to be approved of his Lord and Master, as an industrious hewer of wood, and drawer of water for the church of God.

DAVID AUSTIN.

ELIZABETH TOWN, }
 May 1, 1794. }

T H E
M I L L E N N I U M.

B Y

JOSEPH BELLAMY, A. M.

MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL AT BETHLEM.

[First published at Boston in 1758.]

REVELATION XX. 1, 2, 3.

And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit, and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil and Satan, and bound him a thousand years. And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled.

IN a great variety of respects the Bible is the most remarkable book in the world. In it we have God's moral character clearly exhibited to view, by a history of his conduct, as moral governor of the world, from the beginning; and the nature of fallen man painted to the life, by a history of their behaviour for four thousand years. In it we have opened the glorious and astonishing method that has been entered upon to disappoint all

Satan's designs, by the interposition of the Son of God; and are informed of his birth, life, death, resurrection, ascension and exaltation; and of the glorious designs he has in view. And the whole is so contrived as to be admirably suited to all the circumstances and needs of a good man, that, as it was designed to be the good man's book, in a peculiar sense, so it is perfectly suited to his case. *It is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished to all good works.*

That sincere concern for the cause of truth and virtue, for the honor of God and interest of true religion, which is peculiar to a good man, whose character it is to love Christ above father and mother, wife and children, houses and lands, yea, better than his own life, must naturally subject him to a peculiar kind of solicitude; even as a child, of a truly filial spirit, is pained when it goes ill with his father's family, to whose interest he is closely attached, and has a whole system of inward sensations that a stranger intermeddles not with. The Bible, the good man's book, is, therefore, wisely adapted to ease the good man's, pained heart, and af-

ford consolation in this interesting and most important point, as it gives the strongest assurances that the cause of virtue shall finally prevail.

How insupportable must the grief of the pious Jews have been, sitting on the sides of the rivers of Babylon? *There we sat down, say they, yea, we wept when we remembered Zion.* And on the willows they hung their harps, nor could any thing divert their minds. *If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning! If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth!*

—How insupportable, I say, must their grief have been, while their glorious holy temple, and their holy city, the place of all their sacred solemnities, were lying desolate, and God's people in captivity, had it not been for that promise, so often repeated, that after seventy years God would visit them, and cause them to return to their own land. God knew before-hand the anguish which would be apt to fill their hearts, the sinking discouragements, and all the train of dark and gloomy thoughts they would be incident to, and before-hand provided a remedy. Yea, no sooner had he denounced their doom in the xxxixth chapter of Isaiah, but immediately

in the next chapter, and for ten or twenty chapters together, does he provide for their support. *Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people; speak comfortably to Jerusalem, &c. &c.*

So, how insupportable would have been the grief of the church of Christ, through the long, dark, cruel reign of mystical Babylon, while they beheld error and wickedness universally prevail, Satan getting his will in almost every thing, and, to appearance, no signs of better times, but all things wearing a dreadful aspect before their eyes:—How great their grief? How sinking their discouragements? How almost insuperable their temptations to apostatize, and forsake a cause that heaven seemed to forsake, had not the day of deliverance been expressly foretold, and the glory that should follow opened to view by the spirit of prophecy? But in a firm belief that the cause they were engaged in, and for which they spilt their blood, would finally prevail, and prevail in this world, where they then beheld Satan reigning and triumphing; I say, in a firm belief of this, the whole army of martyrs could march on to battle courageously, willing to sacrifice their lives in the cause, not doubting of final victory, although they themselves must fall in the field.

Indeed, were the salvation of his own soul the only thing the good man had in view, he would naturally be quite easy upon a full assurance that this was secured. So, had Moses cared for nothing but the welfare of himself and of his posterity, he might have been satisfied, while the whole congregation of Israel were destroyed, if he might become a great nation, and that without any solicitude for the honor of the great name of the God of Israel; yea, although the idolatrous nations round about were fully established in the belief of the divinity of their idols, and brought to look upon the God of the Hebrews with ever so great contempt by the means. But, attached as he was to the honor of the God of Israel, nothing could give him satisfaction, but a prospect that that would be secured. The welfare of himself and of his family was of no importance in his esteem, compared with this. *See Exod. xxxii.*

It must, therefore, be remembered, that, as the Son of God left his father's bosom, and the realms of light and glory, and expired on the cross in the utmost visible contempt, that he might spoil principalities and powers, bruise the serpent's head, destroy the works of the Devil, so his true disciples have

imbibed a measure of the same spirit, and, as volunteers enlisted under his banner, have the same thing in view; they long for the destruction of Satan's kingdom, and these petitions are the genuine language of their hearts; "Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." Nor can the salvation of their own souls, although ever so safely secured, satisfy their minds, without a clear view and fair prospect of Christ's final victory over all his enemies: "But if our great GENERAL, who has sacrificed his life in the cause, may but at last obtain a complete victory, notwithstanding all the present dark appearances, this is enough," says the Christian Soldier; "I am willing to risque all in his service, and die in the battle too. But if Satan were always to carry the day, Oh, who could live under the thought!"

This having been the temper of good men, more or less, even from the early ages of the world, and through all successive generations to this day, they have evidently wanted a peculiar support, which the rest of mankind stood in no need of, to carry them

comfortably through such a long scene of darkness; wickedness prevailing, God dishonored, Satan triumphing, the world perishing, the true church of God more generally in sackcloth. And accordingly the final victory of the cause of truth and virtue was intimated in the very first promise made to fallen man; and, from time to time, God repeated this comfortable prediction to his church and people; and finally made it the chief subject of the last book of holy Scripture he ordered to be wrote for the use of his church.

Now let us take a brief view of the whole series of these divine predictions, from the beginning of the world, even down to this in our text, contained in one of the last chapters in the Bible, that we may see what full evidence there is of this truth, and so what abundant cause for consolation to all the people of God.

1. Immediately after the fall, when the serpent, even the Old Serpent the Devil, had just seduced mankind to revolt from God; and had, to all appearance, laid this whole world in perpetual ruin, even in the depths of this midnight darkness, a ray of light

shone down from heaven—*The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head.* As if God had said, “ I see the scheme that Satan
 “ has laid to ruin the world, and establish his
 “ impious, malicious cause: I see it, and
 “ am determined to defeat it. The feeble
 “ woman he has over-matched, but her al-
 “ mighty seed shall conquer him, and as ef-
 “ fectually subdue him, and prevent all fu-
 “ ture mischief by him, as a serpent is sub-
 “ dued and incapacitated for further mis-
 “ chief when his head is crushed to pieces,
 “ under the indignant heel of one determin-
 “ ed on his death.” This was a complete
 doom, indeed, denounced against Satan, at
 the head of the kingdom of darkness. And
 it fully implied, that the cause of light,
 truth and righteousness, should finally obtain
 a complete victory.

2. After this gracious and glorious promise had been the chief foundation of all the hopes of God's people for two thousand years, God was pleased to point out the particular family from whence this mighty deliverer should spring, and to intimate what a universal blessing he should be to all the nations of the earth. *And in thy SEED shall ALL the families of the earth be blessed;* said

God to Abraham; which again plainly supposed, that the cause of truth and righteousness, notwithstanding the dark state the world then was in, all sinking fast into idolatry, and would for many ages be in, buried in heathenish darkness, should yet, in due time, universally prevail over the whole earth. For *in thy SEED shall ALL the families of the earth be blessed.* This same promise was repeated again and again to Abraham, and afterwards to Isaac and to Jacob.

3. Hitherto God had supported his peoples' hopes chiefly with promises, with verbal predictions; but from the days of Moses to the days of Solomon king of Israel, to assist his peoples' faith, God did, besides repeated promises of the same thing, by a great variety of wonderful works, shadow forth the glorious day; and, at the same time, shew, that he had sufficient wisdom and power to accomplish the greatest designs. That his people might be convinced that he could easily bring to pass, for the good of his church, whatsoever seemed good in his sight.

Israel, in the Egyptian bondage, were a designed type of a fallen world, under the dominion and tyranny of Satan; nor was

Pharaoh more loth to let Israel go, than Satan is to have his subjects desert him, and his kingdom go to ruin; but notwithstanding all the seeming impossibilities in the way of Israel's deliverance, infinite wisdom knew how to accomplish the divine designs. God could even cause a member of Pharaoh's family to educate one to be an instrument of this designed deliverance. And, in due time, behold all the armies of Israel march forth from the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage; and Pharaoh, and his chariots, and all his host, lie buried in the Red Sea! So easily can God bring forth his people, even out of the anti-christian kingdom, which is spiritually called Sodom and Egypt; and, if he pleases, raise up the instruments of this glorious work, even in the court of Rome.

And when the name of the true God was almost forgotten through all the earth, and the Devil worshipped in his room, in idols of various names, through all the nations, God knew how to make his name known, and to cause his fame to spread abroad, and fill the whole earth with his glory, by wonders wrought in the land of Ham; by descending on Mount Sinai; by leading the

armies of Israel forty years in the wilderness, in a pillar of cloud by day, and of fire by night, giving them bread from heaven and water out of the flinty rock; dividing Jordan; delivering up one and thirty idolatrous kings to the sword of Joshua; raising up judges, one after another, in a miraculous manner, to deliver his people, until the days of David and Solomon, types of Christ.—Of David who, Messiah-like, subdued the enemies of Israel all around; of Solomon, who built the Holy Temple, and filled Jerusalem with riches and glory.—He who hath done all these things, can easily accomplish all the designs of his heart, preserve his church, raise up deliverance, break to pieces the kingdoms of the earth for her sake, make truth victorious, and set up the New-Jerusalem in all her spiritual glory, build up his church as a glorious Holy Temple, and set the Son of David upon the Throne; by whose hands Satan, and all the powers of darkness, shall be subdued, chained, sealed up in the bottomless pit, as much afraid, and as much unable, to attempt any mischief, as the subdued nations around Israel were in the very height of David's power.

But when shall the Son of David reign,

and the church have rest? When shall the cause of truth and righteousness thus prevail? Perhaps the very time was designed to be shadowed forth in the law of Moses, in the institution of their holy days. The *seventh day*, said God, who always had this glorious season of rest in view—“*The seventh day shall be a Sabbath of Rest, the seventh month shall be full of holy days, the seventh year shall be a year of rest.*”—So, perhaps, after six thousand years are spent in labour and sorrow by the church of God, the seven thousandth shall be a season of spiritual rest and joy, an holy sabbath to the Lord.—And as God the Creator was six days in forming a confused chaos into a beautiful world, and rested the seventh; so God the Redeemer, after six thousand years labour in the work of the new creation, may rest on the seventh, and then proclaim a general liberty to an enslaved world, and grant a general pardon to a guilty race; as in the year of jubilee, among the Jews, every enslaved Jew was set at liberty, and the debts of all the indebted were cancelled.

4. These things, thus shadowed forth in types, were also expressly declared by the mouths of the ancient prophets, from the

days of David and forward, to the end of that dispensation; and the same things are hinted here and there in the New-Testament, and largely opened to view in the Revelation of St. John. So that both the Old and New Testaments join to raise in us, who live in these ages, the highest assurance that it is God's design to *give his Son the Heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession. For all kings shall bow down before him, and all nations shall serve him. And the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow unto it. They shall beat their swords into plough-shears and their spears into pruning-hooks, and learn war no more. For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. A nation shall be born in a day. All thy people shall be righteous. They shall all know the Lord, from the least to the greatest. And holiness to the Lord shall be written on every thing. Kings shall become nursing fathers, and queens nursing mothers; and there shall be nothing to hurt or offend. The inhabitants shall not [so much as] say I am sick. And this kingdom shall fill the whole*

earth. And all nations and languages shall serve him. And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High God; and the Jews shall be called in, and the fulness of the Gentiles. For the Gospel shall be preached to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people. And Satan shall be bound, and Christ shall reign on earth a thousand years. And as surely as the Jews were delivered out of the Babylonish captivity, and Babylon itself destroyed, even so surely shall all these things be accomplished in their time; and mysti-*

N O T E.

* *Satan shall be bound, &c.* “The church of Christ shall enjoy purity of religion in peace, without any disturbance from those old enemies of mankind, working in the children of disobedience.”

Daubuz on the Place.

“And this seems to imply, that all shall be converted—However, if there be any that remain unconverted, they will, during the imprisonment of Satan, be in so small a number, and so feeble in comparison of the true Christians, that they shall neither dare, nor be able to disturb the peace of Christ’s kingdom.”

Lowman on the Place.

A spirit of strict piety shall rise so high, and so universally prevail, that it shall be as though all the martyrs of former ages were risen from the dead, and appeared upon the stage all at once. This seems to be the sense of those words in *Rev. xx. 4.* The martyrs are said to rise from the dead and reign with Christ a thousand years, much in the same sense as *John the Baptist* is called *Elias*, viz. because he was a man so nearly resembling that celebrated prophet. See *Lowman on the Place.*

cal Babylon shall *sink as a millstone into the sea, and shall be found no more at all.*

5. But when shall these things be? I answer, in the first place, it is plain, as yet they have not been; these great things have not been accomplished. They were not accomplished when the Jews were brought out of their Babylonish captivity; for, from thence to the coming of Christ, they never were in so flourishing a state as they had been before. They were not accomplished in the apostolic age; for St. John, when most, if not all, of the other apostles were dead, spake of these things, in the Revelation, as yet to come to pass. They were not accomplished in the three first centuries, for that was almost one continued scene of blood. They were not accomplished in the days of Constantine the Great; for it is since then that *the Man of Sin has been revealed.* Nor are they accomplished to this day; for Satan is still walking to and fro through the earth, and going up and down therein: Babylon is not fallen; the Jews are not called, nor is the fulness of the Gentiles come in, but the greatest part of the earth, to this day, sit in heathenish darkness.

When then shall they be accomplished? Not till *the holy city has been trodden under foot forty and two months.* Not till *the witnesses have prophesied a thousand two hundred and threescore days, cloathed in sackcloth.* And not till *the woman has been in the wilderness a time, and times, and half a time.* Now a time, and times, and half a time, *i. e.* three years and a half is equal to forty-two months, which is equal to one thousand two hundred and sixty days, which doubtless means one thousand two hundred and sixty years, a day for a year; as the event has proved, was the case in the prophecy of Daniel, who declared it to be seventy weeks, from the going forth of the commandment to build Jerusalem to the death of Christ; for it proved to be four hundred and ninety years, which is seven times seventy, a day for a year. *Dan. ix. 24.*

So that there is no difficulty in determining the downfall of Antichrist, but what arises from the uncertainty we are at when to date the beginning of his rise and reign.—The Bishops of Rome were some hundred years rising gradually from the honest character of a scripture-bishop to the grand title of UNIVERSAL POPE, which was obtained,

A. D. six hundred and six. And it was a long time from this before they got to the height of their grandeur, and the Pope was constituted a TEMPORAL PRINCE, which was not till A. D. seven hundred and fifty-six.* And perhaps he may fall as gradually as he rose. And as now he has been falling two hundred and forty years, even ever since the beginning of the REFORMATION, so we may rationally expect he will continue to fall till BABYLON sinks AS A MILLSTONE INTO THE SEA. And then *the mountains and the hills shall break forth into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.* And all the hosts of heaven, as loud as thunder, shall say, *Hallelujah! For the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to him; for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.*

And thus we have taken a brief view of the scripture-evidence, that the cause of truth and righteousness will finally become gloriously victorious.

6. Nor is there the least reason to doubt the accomplishment of these things; for God

C

NOTE.

See Bower's History of the Popes.

in all times past has been faithful to his word, and is evidently sufficiently engaged in this affair—knows how, and can easily accomplish it, and it will be much to the honor of his great name to do it.

God has been faithful to his promises to his church from the beginning of the world. To all human appearance, it was a very unlikely thing that the Hebrews, enslaved in Egypt, under Pharaoh, a very powerful monarch, and sunk down into idolatry, and very low-spirited, should arise and go forth with all their flocks and herds, and march through the wilderness, and conquer the seven nations of Canaan, and possess their land. And so it was, to all human appearance, equally unlikely, that the Jews in Babylon should ever return to their own land.—But God had promised in both cases, and God performed. And an event more surprising than either of these, yea, the most astonishing that could have happened, has also come to pass, just as God had said.—The promised SEED has been born, and the serpent has *bruised his heel*; and methinks now not only God's faithfulness, but even the nature of the case itself, should lead us to believe, that *the SEED shall bruise his heel*.

For after God has appeared to be so *infinitely engaged* to destroy the works of the Devil, as to give his only begotten Son, it can surely never once be imagined that he wants sufficient resolution to carry him thro' what yet remains to be done.

And he who could send Pharaoh's daughter to take up Moses, when an infant, out of his basket of bulrushes, and educate him in Pharaoh's court, that he might be skilled in all the arts of government; and when he had spent forty years in this situation banish him into the land of Midian, that in the solitary life of a shepherd for another forty years, he might attain to the meekest man on earth, that he might, by both, be thoroughly qualified for the work designed him; and he, who could take David from feeding his father's sheep, and, after a course of trials, so exceeding necessary to prepare frail man for high honors and great usefulness, exalt him to the throne of Israel, so thoroughly furnished to head their armies and subdue their foes, advance their external grandeur, and put great honor upon their religion; and he, who could take Daniel, one of the Jewish captives in Babylon, and raise him to such high honor and great

authority, to be a father to his people thro' their seventy years captivity, and by his means, perhaps, influence Cyrus so generously to release them, and assist them in their return;* and finally, he, who could take a number of poor illiterate fishermen, and the persecuting Saul, and by them lay the foundation of the Christian church, in spite of the united opposition of earth and hell; and after their death cause the Christian church to live through, yea, at last to triumph over the ten bloody persecutions, and even conquer the Roman empire; and that which is still more wonderful, to subsist to this day, notwithstanding all the subtle and cruel methods which have, for so many hundred years, been taken by Antichrist to

NOTE.

* As Daniel understood the prophecies of Jeremiah, which had determined the time of the captivity to be seventy years, *Dan. ix. 2.* and had his heart so much in the affair of their return, as to *set his face to seek the Lord by fasting and prayer,* verse 3; and being the chief man in the kingdom, must have free access to Cyrus, *Dan. vi.* so nothing could be more natural than to shew him an ancient Jewish prophecy, wherein he was mentioned by name, near two hundred years ago, and pointed out as the person who was to let go the Jewish captives, build Jerusalem, and lay the foundation of the temple. *Isaiab xlv. 28.* and chap. *xlv. 1—3.* To which Cyrus no doubt refers in his proclamation. *Ezra i. 2, 3, 4.* *Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, The Lord God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth, and he hath CHARGED me to build him an house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Who is there among you, &c.*

extirpate Christianity out of the world; I say, he who could do these things, cannot be at a loss for means, or want power to effect the glorious things foretold, which yet remain to be accomplished.

And what if mankind are ever so estranged from God? And what if they are ever so averse to a reconciliation? And what if Satan reigns in the courts of princes, in the councils of the clergy, as well as in the cottages of the poor? And what if even the whole world in a manner lies in wickedness? So that a general conflagration might rather be expected, as it is so eminently deserved—are these things any bar in the way?

What if mankind have abused divine grace from the beginning of the world? What if they have murdered his prophets, his Son, and his apostles? What if they have resisted and grieved the Holy Spirit, and perverted the doctrines, and gone counter to the precepts of his holy word? Yea, what if it appears that mankind are really on Satan's side? And this, after all the kind methods God has taken to reclaim a guilty world, so that even the best man on earth, or the kindest angel in heaven might be discouraged, totally and finally discouraged, and think it

never worth while to take any more pains with such a perverse race, but that it were more suitable to the rules of good government to resign them to destruction!—Are any, or all these things together, a sufficient bar to the accomplishment of God's designs, whose goodness is absolutely infinite? Can they be so, after the Son of God has been offered as a sacrifice of atonement, to secure the honour of the divine government, and open a way for the honourable exercise of his grace?—What! after the Messiah has been exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance and remission of sins?—And after all power and authority in heaven and earth is given into his hands, on purpose to destroy the kingdom of Satan, and bring every nation, kindred and tongue, to bow the knee to God! Yea, when the infinitely wise Governor of the world has before determined to permit the wickedness of mankind to come out and stand in so glaring a light, and to suffer Satan so long to practise and prosper, to this very purpose, that his power, wisdom and grace, might be the more effectually and the more gloriously displayed, in the accomplishment of all his glorious designs?

Instead of being discouraged, from a view of the past, or the present state of the world, as without the light of divine revelation we should naturally have been, methinks now, viewing all things in the light of holy scripture, it must be perfectly rational to conclude, that all these things are only preparatory, as an introduction to the glorious day: even, as all the cruel bondage of Israel in Egypt, and all the haughty conduct of Pharaoh, were but preparatory as an introduction to the glorious event that God had then in his eye. And what unspeakable honour will redound to God most High, if after all the vile conduct of this apostate world, and notwithstanding all their ill-desert; and after all the subtle methods Satan has taken to make his kingdom strong; I say, what unspeakable honour will redound to God most High, if, after all this, he should accomplish his glorious designs? And when things have been ripening these five or six thousand years, and are now so nearly every way prepared for God, to get himself a great name in the total destruction of Satan's kingdom, can we once imagine, that God will let the opportunity slip? Or rather, ought

we not firmly to believe, that when every thing is quite ripe, then God will arise, make bare his arm, and fill the whole world with his glory?

Especially, considering that, as things stand, the honour of all his glorious perfections lies at stake; for ever since the Almighty gave out the word, that *the SEED of the woman should bruise the serpent's head*, even from that very day, that Old Serpent, with all his subtilty, has employed his whole power to defeat the divine designs, maintain his kingdom in the world, and escape the dreadful blow. He stirred up Cain to kill his brother, and never ceased till the whole earth was filled with violence, which brought on the general deluge; and after the flood, he was industrious to divert mankind from the knowledge and worship of the true God, and to establish idolatry and the worship of the Devil, in all the kingdoms of the earth; and since Christianity appeared, he has turned himself into every shape to defeat the gracious designs of the gospel, and has prevailed and reigned above a thousand years, at the head of the grand antichristian apostacy; and should the Al-

mighty suffer him to go on and prosper, and finally prevail, what would become of his own great name? and how great would be their triumph in the infernal regions, to think that in spite of God and of his Son, from the beginning to the end of the world, they have held out in a constant war, kept the field, and at last come off victorious?—Wherefore, as when God repeats the wonderful works which he had done for Israel in the days of old, in the xxth chapter of Ezekiel, he constantly says, *I wrought for mine own great name.* So here, in this case, will he do it again, and that in the most eminent manner; as it is written, *The zeal of the Lord of Hosts will perform this.*

So that, in a word, if almighty power and infinite wisdom, at the head of the universe, infinitely engaged, are a sufficient match for the guilty, impotent powers of darkness, then we may depend upon it, Satan will meet with an overthrow, as notable as did Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea;—and as proud Babylon, once the mistress of kingdoms, is now no more, so mystical Babylon shall sink as a millstone in the sea, and rise no more for ever. And,

D

7. Whatever mistakes the Jewish Rabbies might fall into, in their interpretation of Daniel's seventy weeks, and in their attempts to fix the precise time of the Messiah's coming; and whatever mistaken notions any of them had about the nature of his kingdom, as though it was to be of this world, and he to appear in all earthly grandeur; and although his coming, to some, might seem to be so long delayed, that they began to give up all hopes of it, and to contrive some other meaning to all the ancient prophecies, or even to call in question the inspiration of the prophets; yet neither the mistakes of some, nor the infidelity of others, at all altered the case. Days, and months, and years hastened along, and one revolution among the kingdoms of the earth followed upon another, *till the fulness of time was come*, till all things were ripe, and then, behold, the Messiah was born. Even so it shall be now.

Whatever mistakes Christian Divines may fall into, in their interpretation of six hundred and sixty-six, the number of the beast; or in their endeavours to fix the precise time when the one thousand two hundred and sixty years of Antichrist's reign

shall begin and end; or whatever wrong notions some have had, or may have about the nature of the Millennium, as though Christ was to reign personally on earth; and if some, mean while, begin to think, that all things will go on as they have done, and to conclude, that the expectation of these glorious days, which has prevailed in the Christian Church from the beginning, is merely a groundless fancy: Yet none of these things will at all alter the case. Days, and months, and years will hasten along, and one revolution, among the kingdoms of the earth, follow upon another, until the fulness of time is come—till all things are ripe for the event; and then the ministers of Christ will accomplish in reality, what St. John saw in his visions:—*I saw an angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue and people.* And then shall it come to pass that the veil of ignorance, which hath so long spread over all nations, shall be destroyed: and knowledge shall so greatly increase, that it shall be as though the *light of the moon were as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun sevenfold; until the knowledge of*

the Lord cover the earth as the waters do the sea; and then there shall be nothing to hurt or offend in all God's holy mountain; for Babylon shall fall, Satan be bound, and Christ will reign, and truth and righteousness universally prevail a thousand years.

REMARKS AND INFERENCES.

1. When, therefore, our Saviour, in the days of his flesh, denominated his followers *a little flock*, from the smallness of their number, he had no design to teach us that this would always be the case; for although it was very true, that his flock was at that time *a little flock*, yet the day was coming, when that *little leaven should leaven the whole lump*, and *the stone cut out without hands should become a great mountain, and fill the whole earth*. So, although it was a saying very applicable, not only to our Saviour's day, but to most other periods of the church, that *many are called, and few are chosen*; yet it does not hence follow, that this will be the case, when *a nation shall be born in a day, and all the people shall be righteous*.—And although it has commonly been so, that of the MANY who have sought to enter in at

the strait gate, but FEW have been able, and the GENERALITY have, from age to age, gone in the broad way, which leads down to destruction; yet it shall be quite otherwise, when Satan is bound, that he may deceive the nations no more; and when all shall know the Lord, from the least to the greatest, when the kingdom, and the greatness of the kingdom, under the whole heavens, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High. For it is very plain, that these, and such like expressions used by our Saviour, which were applicable to the then times, and to most other periods, when the number of true converts hath been comparatively very small, were never designed to be applicable to that glorious period yet to come, which is to be the grand harvest time, when *the Jews*, who are, to this day, for that very purpose, no doubt, by divine Providence, preserved a distinct people, and *the fulness of the Gentiles shall come in.* Nor can it be right to interpret such expressions in such a sense, as to render them inconsistent with what the scriptures so plainly teach shall be the case in the latter days: Therefore,

2. Notwithstanding hitherto but few have

been saved, there is no evidence but that yet the greater part of mankind may be saved. Nothing can be argued against this from such expressions as have been just mentioned, for the reason already suggested. Nor can any thing be argued from any other passages of scripture; for the scripture no where teaches, that the greatest part of the whole human race will finally perish. I am sensible, many seem to take this for granted, and they are greatly strengthened in this belief from a view of the awful state mankind have been in from the beginning of the world to this day. But if we should even grant, that hitherto not one in ten thousand have been saved, yet it may come to pass, (there may be time enough for it, and men enough yet born;) I say, it may yet come to pass, that by far the greatest part of mankind may be saved.

For as the scriptures constantly teach that, in these glorious days, universal peace shall prevail, and instead of war the nations shall employ their time in useful labour, *shall beat their swords into plow shares, and their spears into pruning hooks*; so it will naturally come to pass, that mankind, who are now in vast

multitudes destroyed in the wars from one generation to another, will be greatly increased in numbers, and plentifully provided for. Only remove wars, famines, and all those desolating judgments, which the sins of mankind have, from age to age, brought down on a guilty world, and let that universal peace and prosperity take place, which indeed will naturally result from the sincere practice of pure Christianity, and mankind will naturally increase and spread, and fill all the earth. And while every one improves his time well, and is diligent in his calling, according to the rules of our holy religion, and all luxury, intemperance and extravagance are banished from the nations of the earth, it is certain that this globe will be able to sustain with food and raiment a number of inhabitants, immensely greater than ever yet dwelt on it at a time. And now if *all these shall know the Lord from the least to the greatest*, as the scripture asserts, so that *the knowledge of the Lord shall fill the earth as the waters cover the sea*, for a thousand years together, it may easily, yea, it will naturally come to pass, that there will be more saved in these thousand years, than ever before dwelt upon the face of the earth from the foundation of the world.

Some indeed understand the thousand years in the Revelation, agreeable to other prophetic numbers in that book, a day for a year; so *the time, and times, and half a time*, i. e. three years and an half, and the *forty two months*, and the *one thousand two hundred and sixty days* are no doubt to be reckoned; and if the dark period is to be reckoned by this rule, it should seem that the light period should likewise; for otherwise the dark period, which in that book is represented to be the shortest, will indeed be the longest—the one thousand two hundred and sixty days longer than the thousand years; and if the thousand years is reckoned a day for a year, as the scripture-year contains three hundred and sixty days, so the one thousand years will amount to three hundred and sixty thousand years; in which there might be millions saved to one that has been lost. But not to insist upon this, if this glorious period is to last only a thousand years literally, there may be many more saved than lost.

If it be granted, that it is difficult to compute with any exactness in such a case as this, yet it is easy to make such a computation as may satisfy us in the point before us;

for in Egypt the Hebrews doubled at the rate of about one in fourteen years; in New-England the inhabitants double in less than twenty-five years; it will be moderate, therefore, to suppose mankind, in the Millennium, when all the earth is full of peace and prosperity, will double every fifty years. But at this rate, there will be time enough in a thousand years to double twenty times, which would produce such a multitude of people, as that although we should suppose all who live before the Millennium begins to be lost, yet if all these should be saved, there would be above seventeen thousand saved to one that would be lost; as may appear from the table below.

E

1	-	-	-	2	12	-	-	4,096
2	-	-	-	4	13	-	-	8,192
3	-	-	-	8	14	-	-	16,384
4	-	-	-	16	15	-	-	32,768
5	-	-	-	32	16	-	-	65,536
6	-	-	-	64	17	-	-	131,072
7	-	-	-	128	18	-	-	262,144
8	-	-	-	258	19	-	-	524,288
9	-	-	-	512	20	-	-	1,048,576
10	-	-	-	1,024				
11	-	-	-	2,048				
						Sum total		2,097,150

In the first column, we have the twenty periods, which one thousand years will make at fifty years to a period. In the second column, we see in what proportion mankind will increase, if they are supposed to double in every fifty years. At the end of the first fifty years there will be two for one, and so on. At the end of the twentieth period there will be above a million for one. Now sup-

3. The periods past, that have been so dark, ought to be considered as introductory to this bright and glorious scene, and in various respects as preparatory thereto.

An apostate race, who had joined with the fallen angels in a course of rebellion against the Governor of the Universe, might justly have been forsaken of God, and given up to a state of perfect darkness and wo, from generation to generation, entirely un-

pose the world to stand six thousand years before the Millennium, and suppose it in every age to be as full of inhabitants as it will be when the Millennium begins. And suppose, through all the six thousand years, all the inhabitants of the earth to have died off, and new ones come in their room, at the rate of once in fifty years, six thousand years, at fifty years to a period, will be one hundred and twenty periods—one hundred and twenty worlds full, all lost; suppose, yet by the table we see, that the seventh period alone, which is one hundred and twenty-eight, would more than counter-balance the whole—

Suppose all before the Millennium lost = 120

Suppose all in the Millennium saved = 2,097,150

Then 120 : 2,097,150 :: 1 : 17,456 $\frac{1}{2}$ Q. E. D.

That is, above seventeen thousand would be saved to one lost, which was the point to be proved; therefore nothing hinders but that the greatest part of mankind may yet be saved if God so pleases. There is time enough for it, and may be men enough yet born; and if these calculations may serve to clear up this, they answer the proposed end. What proportion of mankind will finally be saved, and what lost, no one can tell—it is no where revealed; God was not obliged to save one out of all this guilty lost world. Hitherto the generality may have perished, and the Lord is righteous; but who can tell to what a degree God may yet glorify his grace? The holy scriptures encourage us to look for things exceeding great and glorious; even for such events as may put a new face on all God's past dispensations.

der the power of the Prince of Darkness.— What has happened in dark ages past, may help us a little to realize what might justly always have been the woful state of a fallen world. We have had a specimen of the dreadful nature and tendency of Satan's government in all the idolatry, wickedness and wo which have filled the world; and we have seen a little what is in the heart of fallen man, who have slain the Lord's prophets, crucified his Son, and shed the blood of thousands, yea, of millions of his servants. And what has happened may help us to realize a little what must have been the state of a fallen world, if grace had never interposed. At the same time it hath appeared, after the best contrived experiments have been sufficiently tried, that it is not in the heart of fallen man to repent, nor can he be brought to it by any external means whatsoever, whereby the absolute necessity of the interposition of supernatural grace hath been set in the most glaring light. And now, if after all, God should effectually interpose, destroy the influence of Satan, scatter the darkness which fills the world, recover mankind to God, and cause truth and righteousness at last to prevail, it would ap-

pear to be altogether of God, of his own mere self-moving goodness and sovereign grace. And after so long and sore a bondage mankind will be the more sensible of the greatness of the deliverance. Nor can it ever be said by a proud and haughty world, “ We did not need the influences of divine “ grace to bring us right;” whereas all other methods had been sufficiently tried, and tried in vain. But God may justly say, “ What “ could have been done more to reclaim “ mankind that I have not done? And to “ what purpose would it have been to have “ taken one step further? I tried them e- “ nough—there was no hope—their heart “ was a heart of stone; therefore, behold I, “ even I, will take away the heart of stone, “ and give an heart of flesh; and an apostate “ world shall be ashamed and confounded, “ and shall never open their mouth when I “ shall do all these things for them.”

We are apt to wonder why these glorious days should be so long delayed, if God, indeed, intends such mercy to men; but God, infinitely wise, knows what is best—knows how to conduct the affairs of the universe—knows when is the fittest time to introduce this glorious state of things—knows when

matters will be all ripened, and every thing in the moral world prepared, so that this glorious day may be ushered in to the best advantage, in a manner most suited to honor God and his Son, to humble a haughty world, and to disappoint Satan most grievously, after all his wily schemes, great successes, and high expectations; I say, God knows when this will be; and this is the very time he has fixed upon for this glorious work.

4. It therefore becomes all the followers of Christ, in their several spheres, under firm belief of these things, to be of good courage, and exert themselves to the utmost, in the use of all proper means, to suppress error and vice of every kind, and promote the cause of truth and righteousness in the world, and so be workers together with God.

If one stood at the head of this glorious army, which has been in the wars above these five thousand years, and has lived thro' many a dreadful campaign, and were allowed to make a speech to these veteran troops upon this glorious theme, he might lift up his voice, and say—"Hail, noble heroes! Brave followers of the Lamb! Your General has sacrificed his life in this glorious

“ cause, and spoiled principalities and pow-
“ ers on the cross, and now he lives and
“ reigns! He reigns on high, with all power
“ in heaven and earth in his hands! Your
“ predecessors, the prophets, apostles and
“ martyrs, with undaunted courage, have
“ marched into the field of battle, and con-
“ quered dying, and now reign in heaven!
“ Behold, ye are risen up in their room, are
“ engaged in the same cause, and the time
“ of the last general battle draws on, when
“ a glorious victory is to be won. And al-
“ though many a valiant soldier may be slain
“ in the field, yet the army shall drive all
“ before them at last; and Satan being con-
“ quered, and all the powers of darkness
“ driven out of the field, and confined to
“ the bottomless pit, ye shall reign with Christ
“ a thousand years—reign in love and peace,
“ while truth and righteousness ride triumph-
“ ant through the earth; wherefore lay aside
“ every weight, and, with your hearts whol-
“ ly intent on this grand affair, gird up your
“ loins, and with all the spiritual weapons of
“ faith, prayer, meditation, watchfulness, &c.
“ with redoubled zeal and courage, fall on
“ your spiritual enemies: Slay every lust that
“ yet lurks within, as knowing your domes-

“tic foes are the most dangerous; and with
 “gentleness, meekness and wisdom, by your
 “holy conduct, your pious examples, your
 “kind instructions, your friendly admoni-
 “tions, spread the favour of divine know-
 “ledge all around you, as ye are scattered
 “here and there through a benighted world,
 “labouring to win souls to Christ, to induce
 “the deluded followers of Satan to desert
 “his camp, and enlist as volunteers under
 “your prince MESSIAH. And if the pow-
 “ers of darkness should rally all their for-
 “ces, and a general battle, through all the
 “Christian world, come on, O love not your
 “lives to the death! Sacrifice every earthly
 “comfort in the glorious cause! Sing the
 “triumphs of your victorious General, in
 “prisons and at the stake, and die courage-
 “ously, firmly believing the cause of truth
 “and righteousness will finally prevail.”

Surely it is infinitely unbecoming the fol-
 lowers of him who is *King of Kings and*
Lord of Lords, to turn aside to earthly pur-
 suits, or to sink down in unmanly discour-
 agements, or to give way to sloth and effe-
 minacy, when there is so much to be done,
 and the glorious day is coming on. How
 should those who handle the pen of the wri-

ter, exert themselves to explain and vindicate divine truths, and paint the Christian Religion in all its native glories! How should the pulpit be animated, from Sabbath to Sabbath, with sermons full of knowledge and light, full of spirit and life, full of zeal for God and love to men, and tender pity to infatuated sinners! Christ loves to have his ministers faithful, whether the wicked will hear or not.—And let pious parents be unwearied in their prayers for, and instructions of their children, and never faint under any discouragements; as knowing, that Christ is exalted to give repentance and remission of sins, and can do it for whom he will. Bring your children and friends, with all their spiritual diseases, and lay them at his feet; as once they did their sick, when this kind Saviour dwelt upon earth.—Let pious persons of every age, and in every capacity, awake from sleep, and arise from the dead, and live and act worthy their glorious character and high expectations; and in their several stations exert themselves to the utmost to promote the Redeemer's glorious cause.—Let this age do their share, as David, although the temple was not to be built in his day, yet exerted himself to lay up

materials for that magnificent edifice, on which his heart was intently set; as knowing that, in his son's day, it would be set up in all its glory.—So let us rise up, and with the greatest alacrity, contribute our utmost towards this building, this living temple, this temple all made of lively stones, of stones alive, in which God is to dwell, and which will infinitely exceed in glory the Temple of Solomon, that was built of dead timber and lifeless stones.—And let this be our daily prayer, an answer to which we may be assured of, whatever other requests are denied us, *Our Father which art in Heaven, &c.—for thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever.* AMEN.

A N
HUMBLE ATTEMPT
TO PROMOTE
EXPLICIT AGREEMENT
A N D
VISIBLE UNION OF GOD'S PEOPLE
I N
EXTRAORDINARY PRAYER,
FOR THE
REVIVAL OF RELIGION
A N D T H E
ADVANCEMENT OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM
O N
E A R T H,
PURSUANT TO
SCRIPTURE-PROMISES AND PROPHECIES
CONCERNING THE
L A S T T I M E.

By JONATHAN EDWARDS, A. M.
Minister of the Gospel at Northampton.

WITH A PREFACE BY SEVERAL MINISTERS.

Printed at Boston, in New-England, 1747. Reprinted at Northampton, in Old England, 1789.

ELIZABETH TOWN:

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P R E F A C E

B Y T H E

E D I T O R, IN ENGLAND.

OLNEY, May 4, 1789.

IF any enquire why the ensuing work is republished, I would beg leave to lay before them the following intelligence :

At an association of the ministers and messengers of the Baptist churches in the counties of Northampton, Leicester, &c. held at Nottingham, in the year 1784, a resolution was formed to establish, through the association, a meeting of prayer for the GENERAL revival and spread of religion. This was to be observed the first Monday evening in every calendar month, by all the churches. It still continues.—In 1786, another Baptist association, commonly called the Midland, held that year at Aulcester, in the county of Warwick, entered into the same resolution. Many other churches, particularly in Yorkshire, have adopted, and now follow the above practice.—

We have the pleasure also to find, that several Pædo-Baptist churches stately meet on those evenings, for the same purpose.

The re-publication of the following work, is with the avowed design of promoting the above agreement and practice. Those concerned in its first institution, never intended it should be confined to any peculiar connection, or particular denomination. Rather they ardently wished it might become general among the real friends of truth and holiness. The advocates of error are indefatigable in their endeavours to overthrow the distinguishing and interesting doctrines of Christianity; those doctrines which are the grounds of our hope, and sources of our joy. Surely it becomes the followers of Christ, to use every effort, in order to strengthen the things which remain.

By re-publishing the following work, I do not consider myself as becoming answerable for every sentiment it contains. An author and an editor are very distinct characters. Should any entertain different views respecting some of the prophecies in the inspired page, from those that are here advanced, yet such may, and I hope will, approve of the general design.

In the present imperfect state, we may reasonably expect a diversity of sentiments upon religious matters. Each ought to think for

himself; and every one has a right, on proper occasions, to shew his opinion. Yet all should remember, that there are but two parties in the world, each engaged in opposite causes; the cause of God and of Satan; of holiness and of sin; of heaven and hell. The advancement of the one, and the downfall of the other, must appear exceedingly desirable to every real friend of God and man. If such, in some respects entertain different sentiments, and practise distinguishing modes of worship, surely they may unite in the above business. O for thousands upon thousands, divided into small bands in their respective cities, towns, villages and neighbourhood, all met at the same time, and in pursuit of one end, offering up their united prayers, like so many ascending clouds of incense before the Most High! May he shower down blessings on all the scattered tribes of Zion! Grace, great grace be with all them that love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity! AMEN!

JOHN SUTCLIFF.

T H E

P R E F A C E.

THE ruin of Satan's miserable kingdom, and the advancement of the universal and happy reign of Christ on the earth, were included and hinted in the sentence denounced on the serpent, that the *seed of the woman should bruise his head*. What was a terrible threatening to Satan, in the surprized ears of our first guilty parents, implied a joyful prophecy, to keep them from despair, and enliven their hopes for themselves and their descendants, of obtaining by this seed of her's an eternal triumph over him who had so sadly foiled them. And it is likely, their hopes and faith immediately arose, laid hold on the reviving prophecy, earnestly desired its happy accomplishment, and transmitted it to their posterity:

But though this prophecy was at first only delivered in the form of a threatening to Satan; it was afterwards directly given in the form of a promise to Abraham, though still in general terms, that *in his seed should all*

the nations of the earth be blessed. Yet this general promise was more clearly by degrees explained in the following ages, to mean a Divine King, no other than the Son of God assuming human nature of the seed of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and David; that should be born of a virgin in Bethlehem of Judah; and at first despised, abused, rejected, and put to death; but should rise to immortal life, ascend to heaven, and thence extend his blessed kingdom over all nations; not by outward force, but inward overcoming influence, by his word and spirit, making them *his willing people in the day of his power*; and reigning in glorious light and holiness, and love and peace for ever; and the advancement of this universal and happy reign has been the earnest desire and prayer of the saints in all ages to the present day.

But how great the honour and how lively the encouragement given in scripture to those their prayers; by representing them as offered by Christ himself with the fragrant incense of his own merits and intercession, on the *golden altar before the throne*, and ascending together in one grateful perfume to God! And how cheering to every saint is that pro-

mise of his—*From the rising of the sun, even to the going down of the same, my name shall be great among the Gentiles, and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering!* How pleasing to God and the heavenly hosts to see, as the sun goes round the globe, this grateful incense rising from every part on high! and the more extensive and incessant are these prayers, ascending from the circle of the earth, the more does this blessed promise go into its desired fulfilment, and the holy God is more pleased and glorified.

To promote the increase, concurrency, and constancy of these acceptable prayers, is the great intention both of the pious memorial of our reverend and dear brethren in Scotland, and of the worthy author of this exciting essay. And this design we cannot but recommend to all who desire the coming of this blissful kingdom in its promised extent and glory, in this wretched world.

As to the author's ingenious observations on the prophecies, we entirely leave them to the reader's judgment: with only observing, though it is the apprehension of many learned men, that there is to be a very ge-

neral slaughter of the witnesses of Christ about the time of their finishing their testimony to the pure worship and truths of the gospel, about three or four years before the seventh angel sounds his trumpet for the ruin of Antichrist;—yet we cannot see that this is any just objection against our joint and earnest prayers for the glorious age succeeding, or for the hastening of it.

For if such a terrible time is coming in Europe, which we in depending America are likely to share in; the more need we have of joining in earnest and constant prayers for extraordinary suffering graces for ourselves and others. And that such a time is coming on the members of Christ, is no more an objection against their prayers for the hastening of the following glory, than it was before the incarnation of him their head, that his most bitter sufferings were to precede the spreading of this joyous kingdom among the nations. And the nearer the day approaches, the more need we have to be awakened to continual watchfulness and prayer.

May God pour out on all his people abundantly, the spirit of grace and supplication, and prepare them for the amazing

changes hastening on the earth, both for previous trials and for following glories!

Joseph Sewall,
Thomas Prince,
John Webb,
Thomas Foxcroft,
Joshua Gee. } Ministers
in Boston.

BOSTON, N. E. *January 12, 1747-8.*

62.

An HUMBLE ATTEMPT to promote an explicit AGREEMENT and visible UNION of God's People through the World, in EXTRAORDINARY PRAYER, for the REVIVAL of RELIGION, and the Advancement of CHRIST'S KINGDOM on Earth, pursuant to Scripture-Promises and Prophecies concerning the LAST TIME.

O C C A S I O N E D

By a late Memorial published by a Number of Ministers in Scotland, and sent over to America, giving an Account of a certain Concert for Prayer, which has already been come into by many Ministers and others in Great Britain and some other Parts, and in which they desire the general Concurrence of their Christian Brethren every where.

C O N T A I N I N G

A Copy of the said Memorial, with a more particular View of the Affair it relates to; a Variety of Arguments and Persuatives to comply with the Motion therein made, for united and extraordinary Prayer; and Answers to some Objections.

T O G E T H E R W I T H

Seasonable Considerations on the Aspects of Providence in many late wonderful Dispensations, and the present State of Things in the Church and moral World; pointing out the Fulfilling of the Scriptures, and the Voice of God to his People, in these Events.

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P A R T I.

The text opened, and an account given of the affair proposed in the memorial from Scotland.

ZECHARIAH viii. 20, 21, 22.

Thus saith the Lord of Hosts—It shall yet come to pass, that there shall come people, and the inhabitants of many cities; and the inhabitants of one city shall go unto another, saying—Let us go speedily to pray before the Lord, and to seek the Lord of Hosts. I will go also. Yea, many people and strong nations shall come to seek the Lord of Hosts in Jerusalem, and to pray before the Lord.

IN this chapter we have a prophecy of a future glorious advancement of the church of God; wherein it is evident, something further is intended than ever was fulfilled to the nation of the Jews under the Old Testament. For here are plain prophecies of such things as never were fulfilled before the coming of the Messiah; particularly what is said in the two last verses in the chapter, of *many people and strong nations worshipping and seeking the true God*, and of so great an accession of Gentile nations to the church of God, that by far the greater part of the visible worshippers of God should consist of this new accession, so that they should be to the other as *ten to one*—a certain number

for an uncertain. There never happened any thing, from the time of the prophet Zechariah to the coming of Christ, to answer this prophecy; and it can have no fulfilment but either in the calling of the Gentiles, in and after the days of the apostles, or in the future glorious enlargement of the church of God in the latter ages of the world, so often foretold by the prophets of the Old Testament, and by the prophet Zechariah in particular, in the latter part of his prophecy. It is most probable, that what the spirit of God has chief respect to, is that last and greatest enlargement and most glorious advancement of the church of God on earth, in the benefits of which especially the Jewish nation were to have a share, and a very eminent and distinguishing share. There is a great agreement between what is here said and other prophecies, that must manifestly have respect to the church's latter-day-glory; as that in Isaiah lx. 2, 3, 4. *The Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee; and the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising. Lift up thine eyes round about, and see; all they gather themselves together, they come to thee.* That whole chapter, beyond all dif-

pute, has respect to the most glorious state of the church of God on earth. So chap. lxxvi. 8. *Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? Shall a nation be born at once?*—verse 10. *Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all ye that love her.*—verse 12. *I will extend peace to her like a river, and the glory of the Gentiles like a flowing stream.*—Mich. iv. at the beginning: *but in the last day it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established in the top of the mountain, and it shall be exalted above the hills, and people shall flow unto it; and many nations shall come and say, come, and let us go up unto the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob. And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.*—See also, *Isaiah ii.* at the beginning. There has been nothing yet brought to pass in any measure to answer these prophecies. And as the prophecy in my text and the following verse does agree with them, so there is rea-

son to think it has a respect to the same times. And indeed there is a remarkable agreement in the description given throughout the chapter, with the representations made of those times elsewhere in the prophets, as may be seen by comparing ver. 3. with *Isaiah* lx. 14.—ver. 4. with *Isaiah* lxxv. 20, 22. and xxxiii. 24.—ver. 6, 7, 8. with *Ezek.* xxxvii. 2, 11, 12, 21.—ver. 7. with *Isaiah* xliiii. 5, 6. and xlix. 12. and lix. 19.—ver. 12, 13. with *Hosea* ii. 21, 22. and *Ezek.* xxxiv. 22—29.—ver. 8, 12, 13. with *Ezek.* xxxvi. 28—30.—ver. 13. with *Zeph.* iii. 20. and *Isaiah* xix. 24.—ver. 19. with *Isaiah* lxi. 3. and *Fer.* xxxi. 12, 13, 14.

So that however the prophet, in some things that are said in this chapter, may have respect to future smiles of heaven on the nation of the Jews, lately returned from the Babylonish captivity, and resettled in the land of Canaan, in a great increase of their numbers and wealth, and the return of more captives from Chaldea and other countries, &c. yet the spirit of God has doubtless respect to things far greater than these, and of which these were but faint resemblances.—We find it common in the prophecies of the Old Testament, that when the prophets are

speaking of the favours and blessings of God on the Jews, attending or following their return from the Babylonish captivity, the spirit of God takes occasion from thence to speak of the incomparably greater blessings on the church, that shall attend and follow her deliverance from the spiritual or mystical Babylon, of which those were a type; and is, as it were, led away to speak almost wholly of these latter, and vastly greater things, so as to seem to forget the former.

And whereas the prophet, in this chapter, speaks of God's *bringing his people again from the east and west to Jerusalem*, (ver. 7, 8.) *And multitudes of all nations taking hold of the skirts of the Jews*; so far as we may suppose that this means literally that nation of the posterity of Jacob, it cannot have chief respect to any return of the Jews from Babylon and other countries in those ancient times before Christ, for no such things as are here spoken of, attended any such return; but it must have respect to the great calling and gathering of the Jews into the fold of Christ, and their being received to the blessings of his kingdom, after the fall of Antichrist, or the destruction of mystical Babylon.

In the text we have an account how this future glorious advancement of the church of God should be brought on, or introduced, viz. By great multitudes in different towns and countries taking up a joint resolution, and coming into an express and visible agreement, that they will, by united and extraordinary prayer, seek to God that he would come and manifest himself, and grant the tokens and fruits of his gracious presence.—Particularly we may observe,

1. The duty, with the attendance on which the glorious event foretold shall be brought on, viz. The duty of prayer.—Prayer, some suppose, is here to be taken synecdochically, for the whole of the worship of God—prayer being a principal part of the worship of the church of God in the days of the gospel, when sacrifices are abolished; and so, that this is to be understood only as a prophecy of a great revival of religion, and of the true worship of God among his visible people, the accession of others to the church, and turning of multitudes from idolatry to the worship of the true God. But it appears to me reasonable, to suppose, that something more special is intended, with regard to the duty of prayer; considering that prayer is

here expressly and repeatedly mentioned; and also considering how parallel this place is with many other prophecies, that speak of an extraordinary spirit of prayer, as preceding and introducing that glorious day of revival of religion, and advancement of the church's peace and prosperity, so often foretold, (which I shall have occasion to mention hereafter) and particularly the agreeableness of what is here said, with what is said afterwards by the same prophet, of the *pouring out of a spirit of grace and supplications*, as that with which this great revival of religion shall begin, chap. xii. 10.

2. The good, that shall be sought by prayer; which is God himself.—It is said once and again, *They shall go to pray before the Lord, and to seek the Lord of Hosts*. This is the good they ask for and seek by prayer, *The Lord of Hosts* himself.—To seek God, as the expression may, perhaps, be sometimes used in scripture, may signify no more than seeking the favour or mercy of God. And if it be taken so here, *praying before the Lord*, and *seeking the Lord of Hosts*, must be looked upon as synonymous expressions. And it must be confessed to be a common thing in scripture, to signify the same thing re-

peatedly, by various expressions of the same import, for the greater emphasis.—But certainly that expression of *seeking the Lord*, is very commonly used to signify something more than merely, in general, to seek some mercy of God: It implies that God himself is the great good desired and sought after; that the blessings pursued are God's gracious presence, the blessed manifestations of him, union and intercourse with him; or, in short, God's manifestations and communications of himself by his Holy Spirit. Thus the psalmist desired God, thirsted after him, and sought him. *O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee. My flesh longeth for thee, in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is, to see thy power and thy glory, so as I have seen thee in the sanctuary.—My soul followeth hard after thee.—Whom have I in heaven but thee? And there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee.* The psalmist earnestly pursued after God, *his soul thirsted after him, he stretched forth his hands unto him, &c.* And therefore it is in scripture the peculiar character of the faints, that they are *those that seek God. This is the generation of them that seek him. Your heart shall live that seek God.* And in many other places. If the expres-

sion in the text be understood agreeably to this sense, then by seeking the Lord of Hosts, we must understand a seeking that God, who had withdrawn, or as it were hid himself, for a long time, would return to his church, and grant the tokens and fruits of his gracious presence, and those blessed communications of his spirit to his people, and to mankind on the earth, which he had often promised, and which his church had long waited for.

And it seems reasonable to understand the phrase, *seeking the Lord of Hosts*, in this sense here, and not as merely signifying the same thing with praying to God; not only because the expression is repeatedly added to praying before the Lord, in the text, as signifying something more; but also because the phrase, taken in this sense, is exactly agreeable to other parallel prophetic representations. Thus God's people's seeking, by earnest prayer, the promised restoration of the church of God, after the Babylonish captivity, and the great apostacy that occasioned it, is called their *seeking God, and searching for him*; and God's granting this promised revival and restoration is called his being *found of them*. *For thus saith the Lord,*

that after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon, I will visit you, and perform my good word towards you, in causing you to return to this place. For I know the thoughts that I think towards you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end. Then shall ye go and call upon me, and I will hearken unto you; and ye shall seek me and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart; and I will be found of you, saith the Lord, and I will turn away your captivity. And the prophets, from time to time, represent God, in a low and afflicted state of his church, as being withdrawn, and hiding himself. Verily thou art a God that hidest thyself, O God of Israel, the Saviour. I hid me, and was wroth. And they represent God's people, while his church is in such a state, before God delivers and restores the same, as seeking him, looking for him, searching and waiting for him, and calling after him. I will go and return unto my place, 'till they acknowledge their offence, and seek my face from the house of Jacob, and I will look for him. And when God, in answer to their prayers and succeeding their endeavors, delivers, restores, and advances his church, according to his promise, then

he is said to answer, and come, and say, here am I, and to shew himself; and they are said to find him, and see him plainly. *Then shalt thou cry, and he shall say, HERE I AM. But Israel shall be saved in the Lord, with an everlasting salvation. I said not unto the seed of Jacob, Seek ye me in vain. The Lord will wipe away the tears from off all faces, and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off the earth. And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God, we have waited for him, and he will save us: This is the Lord, we have waited for him; we will be glad, and rejoice in his salvation. We have waited for thee: The desire of our soul is to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee. With my soul have I desired thee in the night; yea, with my spirit within me will I seek thee early. For when thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness. Therefore my people shall know my name; therefore they shall know in that day, that I am he that doth speak: behold, IT IS I. How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace, that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation, that saith unto Zion—Thy*

God reigneth! Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice, together shall they sing; for they shall see eye to eye, when the Lord shall bring again Zion.

3. We may observe who they are, that shall be united in thus seeking the Lord of Hosts; *the inhabitants of many cities, and of many countries, yea, many people and strong nations*; great multitudes in different parts of the world shall conspire in this business. From the representation made in the prophecy, it appears rational to suppose, that it will be fulfilled something after this manner—First, that there shall be given much of a spirit of prayer to God's people, in many places, disposing them to come into an express agreement, unitedly to pray to God in an extraordinary manner, that he would appear for the help of his church, and in mercy to mankind, and pour out his Spirit, revive his work, and advance his spiritual kingdom in the world, as he has promised; and that this disposition to such prayer, and union in it, will gradually spread more and more, and increase to greater degrees; with which at length will gradually be introduced a revival of religion, and a disposition to greater engagedness in the worship and ser-

vice of God, amongst his professing people; that this being observed will be the means of awakening others, making them sensible of the wants of their souls, and exciting in them a great concern for their spiritual and everlasting good, and putting them upon earnestly crying to God for spiritual mercies, and disposing them to join with God's people in that extraordinary seeking and serving of God, which they shall see them engaged in; and that in this manner religion shall be propagated, until the awakening reaches those that are in the highest stations, and until whole nations be awakened, and there be at length an accession of many of the chief nations of the world to the church of God. Thus after the inhabitants of many cities of Israel, or of God's professing people, have taken up, and pursued a joint resolution, to go and pray before the Lord, and seek the Lord of Hosts, others shall be drawn to worship and serve him with them; till at length many people and strong nations shall join themselves to them; and there shall, in process of time, be a vast accession to the church, so that it shall be ten times as large as it was before; yea, at length all nations shall be converted unto God.—

Thus ten men shall take hold, out of all languages of the nations, of the skirt of him that is a Jew, (in the sense of the Apostle) saying, "We will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you." And thus that shall be fulfilled, *O thou that hearest prayer, unto thee shall all flesh come.*

4. We may observe the mode of their union in this duty. It is a visible union, an union by explicit agreement, a joint resolution declared by one to another, come into by being first proposed by some, and readily and expressly fallen in with by others.—The inhabitants of one city shall apply themselves to the inhabitants of another, saying, *let us go, &c.* Those to whom the motion is made, shall comply with it, the proposal shall take with many, it shall be a prevailing, spreading thing; one shall follow another's example, one and another shall say, *I will go also.* Some suppose, that those words—*I will go also*—are to be taken as the words of him that makes the proposal; as much as to say, I do not propose that to you, which I am not willing to do myself, I desire you to go, and I am ready to go with you. But this is to suppose no more to be expressed in these latter words, than was expressed be-

fore in the proposal itself; for these words, *let us go*, signify as much, as that I am willing to go, and desire you to go with me. It seems to me much more natural, to understand these latter words as importing the consent of those to whom the proposal is made, or the reply of one and another that falls in it. This is much more agreeable to the plain design of the text, which is to represent the concurrence of great numbers in this affair, and more agreeable to the representation made in the next verse, of one following another, many taking hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew. And though if the words are thus understood, we must suppose an ellipsis in the text, something understood that is not expressed, as if it had been said—Those of other cities shall say—I will go also;—yet this is not difficult to be supposed, such ellipsis are very common in scripture. We have one exactly parallel with it in Jer. iii. 22. *Return, ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backslidings: behold, we come unto thee, for thou art the Lord our God*, i. e. the backsliding children shall say—“Behold we come unto thee,” &c. And in Cant. iv. *Let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits.*—

I am come into my garden, my sister, my spouse, i. e. her beloved shall say—"I am come into my garden." We have the like throughout that song. So Pſal. l. 6, 7. *The heavens shall declare his righteousness, for God is judge himself. Hear, O my people, and I will speak,* i. e. the Judge shall say—"Hear, O my people," &c. The psalms and prophets abound with such figures of speech.

5. We may observe the manner of prayer agreed on, or the manner in which they agree, to engage in and perform the duty. Let us go speedily to pray; or as it in the margin, let us go continually. The words literally translated are, *let us go in going*. Such an ingemination or doubling of words, is very common in the Hebrew language, when it is intended that a thing shall be very strongly expressed; it generally implies the superlative degree of a thing; as the holy of holies signifies the most holy; but it commonly denotes, not only the utmost degree of a thing, but also the utmost certainty; as when God said to *Abraham, in multiplying, I will multiply thy seed*. It implies both that God would certainly multiply his seed, and also multiply it exceedingly. So when God said to *Adam, in the day that thou eatest thereof, in*

dying thou shalt die (as the words are in the original) it implies, both that he should surely die, and also that he should die most terribly, should utterly perish, and be destroyed to the utmost degree. Yea, sometimes it seems to imply something else still; and, in short, as this ingemination of words in the Hebrew, in general, denotes the strength of expression, so it is used to signify almost all those things that are wont to be signified by the various forms of strong speech in other languages: sometimes it signifies the utmost degree of a thing; sometimes certainty; sometimes peremptoriness and terribleness of a threatening, or the greatness and positiveness of a promise, the strictness of a command, and the earnestness of a request.—When God says to *Adam*, *dying thou shalt die*, it is equivalent to such strong expressions in English, as, thou shalt die indeed, or, thou shalt die with a witness. So when it is said in the text, *let us go in going, and pray before the Lord*, the strength of the expression represents the earnestness of those that make the proposal, their great engagedness in the affair; and with respect to the duty proposed, it may be understood to signify that they should be speedy, fervent, and

constant in it; or, in one word, that it should be thoroughly performed.

6. We may learn from the tenor of this prophecy, together with the context, that this union in such prayer is foretold as a becoming and happy thing, and that which would be acceptable to God, and attended with glorious success.

From the whole we may infer, that it is a very suitable thing, and well pleasing to God, for many people, in different parts of the world, by express agreement, to come into a visible union, in extraordinary, speedy, fervent, and constant prayer, for those great effusions of the Holy Spirit, which shall bring on that advancement of Christ's church and kingdom, that God has so often promised shall be in the latter ages of the world.

And so from hence I would infer the duty of God's people, with regard to the memorial lately sent over into America, from Scotland, by a number of ministers there, proposing a method for such an union as has been spoken of, in extraordinary prayer for this great mercy.

And it being the special design of this discourse, to persuade such as are friends to

the interests of Christ's kingdom, to a compliance with the proposal and request made in that memorial, I shall first give a short historical account of the affair it relates to, from letters, papers, and pamphlets, that have come over from Scotland; to which I shall annex the memorial itself; and then I shall offer some arguments and motives, tending to induce the friends of religion to fall in with what is proposed; and lastly, make answer to some objections that may possibly be made against it.

As to the first of these things, viz. an historical account of the concert, which the memorial relates to, the following observations may give a sufficient view of that affair.

In October. A. D. 1744, a number of ministers in Scotland, taking into consideration the state of God's church, and of the world of mankind, judged that the providence of God, at such a day, did loudly call such as were concerned for the welfare of Zion, to united extraordinary applications to the God of all grace, suitably acknowledging Him as the fountain of all the spiritual benefits and blessings of his church, and ear-

neſtly praying to him, that he would appear in his glory, and favour Zion, and manifeſt his compaſſion to the world of mankind, by an abundant effuſion of his Holy Spirit on all the churches, and the whole habitable earth, to revive true religion in all parts of Chriſtendom, and to deliver all nations from their great and manifold ſpiritual calamities and miſeries, and bleſs them with the unſpeakable benefits of the kingdom of our glorious Redeemer, and fill the whole earth with his glory. And conſulting one another on the ſubject, they looked on themſelves, for their own part, obliged to engage in this duty; and, as far as in them lay, to perſuade others to the ſame; and to endeavour to find out, and fix on ſome method, that ſhould moſt effectually tend to promote, and uphold ſuch extraordinary application to heaven among God's people. And after ſeeking to God by prayer for direction, they determined on the following method, as what they would conform to in their own practice, and propoſe to be practiſed by others, for the two years next following, viz. To ſet apart ſome time on Saturday evening, and Sabbath morning, every week, for the purpoſe aforeſaid, as other duties would al-

low to every one respectively; and more solemnly, the first Tuesday of each quarter, (beginning with the first Tuesday of November, then next ensuing) either the whole day, or part of the day, as persons find themselves disposed, or think their circumstances will allow; the time to be spent either in private praying societies, or in public meetings, or alone in secret, as shall be found most practicable, or judged most convenient, by such as are willing, in some way or other, to join in this affair; but not that any should make any promises, or be looked upon as under strict bonds in any respect, constantly and without fail to observe every one of these days, whatever their circumstances should be, or however other duties and necessary affairs might interfere; or that persons should look upon themselves bound with regard to these days in any wise as tho' the time were holy, or the setting them apart for religious purposes were established by sacred authority; but yet, as a proper guard against negligence and unsteadiness, and a prudent preservative, from yielding to a disposition, which persons might be liable to, through the prevalence of indolence

and listlessness, to excuse themselves on trivial occasions, it was proposed, that those who unite in this affair should resolve with themselves, that if, by urgent business, or otherwise, they are hindered from joining with others, on the very day agreed on, yet they would not wholly neglect bearing their part in the duty proposed, but would take the first convenient day following, for that purpose.

The reason why Saturday evening and Lord's-day morning were judged most convenient for the weekly seasons, was, that these times being so near the time of dispensing gospel ordinances through the Christian world, which are the great means, in the use of which God is wont to grant his Spirit to mankind, and the principal means that the Spirit of God makes use of to carry on his work of grace, it may be well supposed, that the minds of Christians, in general, will, at these seasons, be especially disengaged from secular affairs, and disposed to pious meditations and the duties of devotion, and more naturally led to seek communications of the Holy Spirit, and success of the means of grace. And as to the quarterly times, it was thought helpful to memory, that they

should be on one or other of the first days of each quarter; Tuesday was preferred to Monday, because in some places people might have public prayers and sermon on the stated day, which might not be so convenient on Monday, as on some day at a greater distance from the Sabbath.

It was reckoned a chief use of such an agreement and method as this, that it would be a good expedient for the maintaining and keeping up, amongst the people of God, that great Christian duty of prayerfulness for the coming of Christ's kingdom, in general, which Christ has directed his followers to be so much in, that it may not be out of mind, and in a great measure sunk. Things, that we are too little inclined to, through sloth, carnality, or a fulness of our own worldly and private concerns, and that are to be attended at some seasons or other, but have no special seasons stated for them, are apt to be forgotten, or put off from time to time, and, as it were, adjourned without day; and so, if not wholly neglected, yet too little attended. But when we fix certain seasons, which we resolve, unless extraordinarily hindered, to devote to the duty, it tends to prevent

forgetfulness, and a settled negligence of it. The certain returns of the season will naturally refresh the memory, will tend to put us in mind of the precept of Christ, and the obligations that lie on all his followers, to abound in such a duty, and renewedly engage us to the consideration of the importance, necessity and unspeakable value of the mercy sought; and so, by frequent renovation, to keep alive the consideration, and sense of these things at all times. Thus the first promoters of this agreement judged that it would be subservient to more abundant prayerfulness for effusions of the Holy Spirit at all times through the year, both in secret and social worship; particularly as to this last, in congregations, families, and other praying societies. And then they also judged, that such an agreed union would tend to animate and encourage God's people in the duty proposed; and that particular persons and societies, knowing that great multitudes of their fellow-Christians, in so many distant places, were, at the same time, (as a token of the union of their hearts with them in this affair) by agreement, engaged in the same holy exercise, would naturally be enlivened in the duty by such a consideration.

It was not thought best to propose at first a longer time for the continuance of this precise method than two years; it being considered, that it is not possible, before any trial, so well to judge of the expedience of a particular method and certain circumstances of the managing and ordering such an affair, as after some time of experience. And it was not known, but that, after long consideration, and some trial, it might be thought best to alter some circumstance; or whether others that had not yet been consulted, might not propose a better method. The time first agreed on, though but short, was thought sufficient to give opportunity for judgment and experience, and for such as were disposed to union in an affair of such a nature, in distant places, mutually to communicate their sentiments on the subject.

The way, which those that first projected and came into this agreement, thought best for the giving notice of it and proposing it to others, was not by any thing published from the press, but by personal conversation with such as they could conveniently have immediate access to, and by private correspondence with others at a distance. At first it was intended, that some formal paper, pro-

posing the matter, should be sent about for proper amendments and improvements, and then concurrence; but on more mature deliberation, it was considered how this might give a handle to objections, (which they tho't it best, to the utmost, to avoid in the infancy of the affair) and how practicable it was, without any such formality, to spread the substance of the proposal by private letters, together with a request to their correspondents, mutually to communicate their tho'ts. Therefore this was fixed on, as the method that was preferable at the beginning. Accordingly, they proposed and endeavoured to promote the affair in this way, and with such success, that great numbers in Scotland and England fell in with the proposal, and some in North America. As to Scotland, it was complied with by numbers, in the four chief towns, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Aberdeen, and Dundee, and many country towns and congregations in various parts of the land. One of the ministers, that was primarily concerned in this affair, in a letter to one of his correspondents, speaks of an explicit declaration of the concurrence of the praying societies in Edinburgh, which they had made in a letter. The number of the

praying societies in that city is very considerable. Mr. Robe, of Kilsyth, (in a letter to Mr. Prince, of Boston, dated November 3, 1743,) says—There were then above thirty societies of young people there, newly erected, some of which consisted of upwards of thirty members.—As to Glasgow, this union was unanimously agreed to by about forty-five praying societies there, as an eminent minister in that city informs, in a letter.

The two years, first agreed on, ended last November. A little before this time expired, a number of ministers in Scotland agreed on a memorial, to be printed and sent abroad to their brethren in various parts, proposing to them, and requesting of them, to join with them in the continuance of this method of united prayer, and in endeavours to promote it. Copies of which memorial have lately been sent over into New-England, to the number of near five hundred, directed to be distributed in almost every county in this province of the Massachusetts-Bay, and also in several parts of Connecticut, New-Hampshire, Rhode-Island, New-York, New-Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, Carolina, and Georgia. The most, I sup-

pose, of these were sent to one of the congregational ministers in Boston, with a letter subscribed by twelve ministers in Scotland, about the affair; many of them to another of the said ministers of Boston, and some to a minister in Connecticut. It being short, I shall here insert a copy of it at length—It is as follows:

A MEMORIAL from several Ministers in Scotland, to their Brethren in different places, for continuing a CONCERT for PRAYER, first entered into in the Year 1744.

WHEREAS it was the chief scope of this concert, to promote more abundant application to a duty that is perpetually binding, *prayer that our Lord's kingdom may come*, joined with *praises*; and it contained some circumstantial expedients, apprehended to be very subservient to that design, relating to stated times for such exercises, so far as this would not interfere with other duties; particularly a part of Saturday evening and Sabbath morning, every week; and more solemnly of some one of the first days of each of the four great divisions of the year, that is, of each quarter; as the first Tuesday, or first convenient day af-

ter;* and the concert, as to this circumstance, was extended only to two years; it being intended that, before these expired, persons engaged in the concert should reciprocally communicate their sentiments and inclinations, as to the prolonging of the time, with or without alteration, as to the circumstance mentioned; and it was intended by the first promoters, that others at a distance should propose such circumstantial amendments or improvements, as they should find proper; it is hereby earnestly intreated, that such would communicate their sentiments accordingly, now that the time first proposed is near expiring.

2. To induce those already engaged to adhere, and others to accede to this concert, it seems of importance to observe, that declarations of concurrence, the communicating and spreading of which are so evidently useful, are to be understood in such a latitude, as to keep at the greatest distance from entangling mens' minds: not as binding men to set apart any stated days from secular affairs, or even to fix on any part of

N O T E.

* The meaning is the first Tuesdays of February, May, August and November, or the first convenient days after these.

such and such precise days, whether it be convenient or not; nor as absolute promises in any respect, but as friendly, harmonious resolutions, with liberty to alter circumstances as shall be found expedient. On account of all which latitude, and that the circumstantial part extends only to a few years, it is apprehended, the concert cannot be liable to the objections against periodical religious times of human appointment.

3. It is also humbly offered to the consideration of ministers, and others furnished with gifts for the most public instructions, whether it might not be of great use, by the blessing of God, if short and nervous scripture persuasives and directions to the duty in view, were composed and published, (either by particular authors, or several joining together, which last way might sometimes have peculiar advantages) and that, from time to time, without too great intervals, the better to keep alive on mens' minds a just sense of the obligations to a duty so important in itself, and in which many may be in danger to faint and turn remiss, without such repeated incitements; and whether it would not also be of great use, if ministers would be pleased to preach frequently on the im-

portance and necessity of prayer for the coming of our Lord's kingdom, particularly near the quarterly days, or on these days themselves, where there is public worship at that time.

4. They who have found it incumbent on them to publish this Memorial at this time, having peculiar advantages for spreading it, do intreat that the desire of concurrence and assistance, contained in it, may, by no means, be understood as restricted to any particular denomination or party, or to those who are of such or such opinions about any former instances of remarkable religious concern; but to be extended to all who shall vouchsafe any attention to this paper, and have at heart the interest of vital christianity, and the power of godliness; and who, however differing about other things, are convinced of the importance of fervent prayer, to promote that common interest, and of scripture persuasives to promote such prayer.

5. As the first printed account of this concert was not a proposal of it, as a thing then to begin, but a narration of it, as a design already set on foot, which had been brought about with much harmony, by means of private letters, so the farther continuance, and,

it is hoped, the farther spreading of it seems in a promising way of being promoted by the same means, as importunate desires of the renewing the concert have been transmitted already from a very distant corner abroad, where the regard to it has of late increased; but, notwithstanding of what may be done by private letters, it is humbly expected, that a memorial spread in this manner may, by God's blessing, farther promote the good ends in view, as it may be usefully referred to in letters, and may reach where they will not.

6. Whereas in a valuable letter, from the corner just now mentioned, as a place where regard to the concert has lately increased, it is proposed, that it should be continued for seven years, or at least for a much longer time than what was specified in the first agreement; those concerned in this memorial, who would wish rather to receive and spread directions and proposals on this head, than to be the first authors of any, apprehend no inconvenience, for their part, in agreeing to the seven years, with the latitude above described, which reserves liberty to make such circumstantial alterations, as may be hereafter found expedient; on the con-

trary, it seems of importance, that the labour of spreading a concert, which has already extended to so distant parts, and may, it is hoped, extend farther, may not need to be renewed sooner, at least much sooner, as it is uncertain but that may endanger the dropping of it, and it seems probable, there will be less zeal in spreading of it, if the time proposed for its continuance be too inconsiderable. Mean time, declarations of concurrence for a less number of years may greatly promote the good ends in view, tho' it seems very expedient, that it should exceed what was first agreed on, seeing it is found on trial, that that time, instead of being too long, was much too short.

7. If persons who formerly agreed to this concert, should now discontinue it, would it not look too like that fainting in prayer, against which we are so expressly warned in scripture? And would not this be the more unsuitable at this time, in any within the British dominions, when they have the united calls of such public chastisements and deliverances, to more concern than ever about public reformation, and consequently about that which is the source of all thorough reformation, the regenerating and

sanctifying influence of the almighty Spirit of God?

August 26, 1746.

The minister in Boston afore-mentioned, (to whom most of the copies of this memorial were sent) who, I suppose, has had later and more full intelligence than I have had, says, concerning the proposal, in a letter—
 “ The motion seems to come from above,
 “ and to be wonderfully spreading in Scot-
 “ land, England, Wales, Ireland and North
 “ America.

P A R T II.

Motives to a Compliance with what is proposed in the Memorial.

I NOW proceed to the second thing intended in this discourse, viz. to offer to consideration some things, which may tend to induce the people of God to comply with the proposal and request made to them in the Memorial.

And I desire that the following things may be considered:

1. It is evident, from the scripture, that there is yet remaining a great advancement of the interest of religion, and the kingdom of Christ, in this world, by an abundant outpouring of the Spirit of God, far greater and more extensive than ever yet has been. It is certain, that many things, which are spoken concerning a glorious time of the church's enlargement and prosperity, in the latter days, have never yet been fulfilled. There has never yet been any propagation and prevailing of religion, in any wise, of that extent and universality, which the prophecies

represent. It is often foretold and signified, in a great variety of strong expressions, that there should a time come, when all nations, through the whole habitable world, should embrace the true religion, and be brought into the church of God. It was often promised to the patriarchs, that *in their seed all the nations, or, (as it is sometimes expressed) all the families of the earth should be blessed.* Agreeably to this, it is said of the Messiah, *That all nations shall serve him, and men shall be blessed in him, and all nations shall call him blessed.* And it is said, that *all nations shall flow unto the mountain of the house of the Lord.* And, that *all nations shall be gathered unto the name of the Lord to Jerusalem, and shall walk no more after the imagination of their evil heart.* So it is said, that *all flesh shall come and worship before the Lord.* And that *all flesh should see the glory of God together.* And that *all flesh should come to him that hears prayer.* Christ compares the kingdom of heaven, in this world, to leaven, *which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.* It is natural and reasonable to suppose, that the whole world should finally be given to Christ, as one whose right it is to reign, as the proper heir of him who

is originally the king of all nations, and the possessor of heaven and earth; and the scripture teaches us, that God the Father had constituted his Son, as God-Man, and in his kingdom of grace, or mediatorial kingdom, to be the *heir of the world*, that he might in this kingdom have *the heathen for his inheritance, and the utmost ends of the earth for his possession*. Thus Abraham is said to be *the heir of the world*, not in himself, but in *his seed*, which is Christ. And how was this to be fulfilled to Abraham, but by God's fulfilling that great promise. that *in his seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed?* For that promise is what the apostle is speaking of; which shews, that God has appointed Christ to be the heir of the world in his kingdom of grace, and to possess and reign over all nations, through the propagation of his gospel, and the power of his Spirit communicating the blessings of it. God had appointed him to this universal dominion by a most solemn oath: *I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, that unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear*. Though this solemn oath of God the Father is to be understood in so comprehensive a

ſenſe, as to extend to what ſhall be accompliſhed at the day of judgment, yet it is evident by the foregoing and following verſes, that the thing moſt directly intended, is what ſhall be fulfilled by the ſpreading of the goſpel of his ſalvation, and power of the Spirit of grace, bringing *all the ends of the earth to look to him that they may be ſaved*, and come to him for *righteouſneſs and ſtrength* that, *in him they might be juſtified, and might glory*. God has ſuffered many earthly princes to extend their conqueſts over a great part of the face of the earth, and to poſſeſs a dominion of a vaſt extent, and one monarchy to conquer and ſucceed another, the latter being ſtill the greater; it is reaſonable to ſuppoſe that a much greater glory in this reſpect ſhould be reſerved for Chriſt, God's own ſon and rightful heir, who has purchaſed the dominion by ſo great and hard a ſervice; it is reaſonable to ſuppoſe, that his dominion ſhould be far the largeſt, and his conqueſts vaſtly the greateſt and moſt extenſive. And thus the ſcriptures repreſent the matter, in Nebuchadnezzar's viſion, and the prophet's interpretation, Dan. ii. There the four great monarchies of the earth, one ſucceeding another, are repreſented by *the great image of*

*gold, silver, brass, iron and clay; but at last a stone, cut out of the mountains without hands, smites the image upon his feet, which breaks the iron, clay, brass, silver and gold in pieces, that all becomes as the chaff of the summer threshing floors, and the wind carries them away, that no place is found for them; but the stone waxes great, becomes a great mountain, and FILLS THE WHOLE EARTH; signifying the kingdom which the Lord God of heaven should set up in the world, last of all, which should break in pieces and consume all other kingdoms. Surely this representation leads us to suppose, that this last kingdom shall be of vastly greater extent than any of the preceding. The like representation is made in the viith chapter of Daniel; there the four monarchies are represented by four great beasts that arose successively, one conquering and subduing another; the fourth and last of these is said to be *dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly, and to have great iron teeth, and to devour and break in pieces, and stamp the residue with his feet; yea, it is said, verse 23, that the kingdom represented by this beast shall devour the whole earth; but last of all, one like the Son of Man appears, coming to the Ancient of**

Days, and being brought near before him, and receiving of him a dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, THAT ALL PEOPLE, NATIONS AND LANGUAGES should serve him. This last circumstance, of the vast extent and universality of his dominion, is manifestly spoken of as one thing greatly distinguishing this holy kingdom from all the preceding monarchies; although of one of the former it was said, that it should *devour the whole earth*, yet we are naturally led, both by the much greater emphasis and strength of the expressions, as well as by the whole connexion and tenor of the prophecy, to understand the universality here expressed in a much more extensive and absolute sense; and terms used in the interpretation of this vision are such, that scarcely any can be devised more strong, to signify an absolute universality of dominion over the inhabitants of the face of the earth; ver. 27. *And the kingdom, and dominion, and GREATNESS OF THE KINGDOM UNDER THE WHOLE HEAVEN, shall be given to the people of the most high God.* Agreeably to this, the gospel is represented as *preached unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and tongue, and kindred, and people.* The universality of the prevalance of true reli-

gion in the latter days, is sometimes expressed by its reaching to *the utmost ends of the earth. To all the ends of the earth, and of the world. All the ends of the earth with those that are far off upon the sea. From the rising of the sun to the going down of the same. The outgoings of the morning and of the evening.* It seems that all the most strong expressions, that were in use among the Jews to signify the habitable world in its utmost extent, are made use of to signify the extent of the church of God in the latter days, and in many places a variety of these expressions are used, and there is an accumulation of them, expressed with great force.

It would be unreasonable to say, these are only bold figures, used after the manner of the eastern nations, to express the great extent of the Christian church, at and after the days of Constantine; to say so, would be in effect to say, that it would have been impossible for God, if he had desired it, plainly to have foretold any thing that should absolutely have extended to all nations of the earth. I question whether it be possible to find out a more strong expression, to signify an absolute universality of the knowledge of the true religion through the habitable

world, than that in *Isai. xi. 9.* *The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord,* AS THE WATERS COVER THE SEAS. Which is as much as to say, as there is no place in the vast ocean where there is not water, so there shall be no part of the world of mankind where there is not the knowledge of the Lord; as there is no part of the wide bed or cavity possessed by the sea, but what is covered with water, so there shall be no part of the habitable world, that shall not be covered by the light of the gospel, and possessed by the true religion. Waters are often in prophecy put for nations and multitudes of people; so the waters of the main ocean seem sometimes to be put for the inhabitants of the earth in general; as in *Ezekiel's* vision of the waters of the sanctuary which flowed from the sanctuary, and ran east, till they came to the ocean, and were at first a small stream, but continually increased till they became a great river; and when they came to the sea, the water even of the vast ocean was healed, representing the conversion of the world to the true religion in the latter days.—It seems evident, that the time will come, when there will not be one nation remaining in the world, which

shall not embrace the true religion, in that God has expressly revealed, that no one such nation shall be left standing on the earth; *The nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted.*—God has declared that heathen idolatry and all the worship of false gods shall be wholly abolished, in the most universal manner, so that it shall be continued in no place under the heavens, or upon the face of the earth; *the gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, even they shall perish from the earth, and from under these heavens. They are vanity, and the work of errors, in the time of their visitation they shall perish.* This must be understood as what shall be brought to pass while this earth and these heavens remain, *i. e.* before the end of the world. Agreeable to this is that in Isaiah. *Sing, O barren, and thou that didst not bear;—for more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, saith the Lord. Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thy habitation; spare not; lengthen thy cords, strengthen thy stakes. For thy maker is thy husband; the Lord of Hosts is his name; and*

thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; THE GOD OF THE WHOLE EARTH SHALL HE BE CALLED.

The prophecies of the New Testament do no less evidently shew, that a time will come when the gospel shall universally prevail, and the kingdom of Christ be extended over the whole habitable earth, in the most proper sense. Christ says, *I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.* It is fit, that when the Son of God becomes man, he should have dominion over all mankind: it is fit, that since he became an inhabitant of the earth, and shed his blood on the earth, he should possess the whole earth: it is fit, seeing here he became a servant, and was subject to men, and was arraigned before them, and judged, condemned and executed by them, and suffered ignominy and death in a most public manner, before Jews and Gentiles, being lifted up to view on the cross upon an hill, near that populous city Jerusalem, at a most public time, when there were many hundred thousand spectators, from all parts, that he should be rewarded with an universal dominion over mankind; and it is here declared he shall be. The apostle, in the xith of Ro-

mans, teaches us to look on that great out-pouring of the Spirit and in-gathering of souls into Christ's kingdom, that was in those days, first of the Jews, and then of the Gentiles, to be but as the first-fruits of the intended harvest, both with regard to Jews and Gentiles; and to look on the in-gathering of those first fruits as a sign that all the remainder both of Jews and Gentiles shall in due time be gathered in. *For if the first-fruit be holy, the lump is also holy: and if the root be holy, so are the branches.* And in that context, the apostle speaks of the FULNESS of both Jews and Gentiles, as what shall hereafter be brought in, as distinct from that in-gathering from among both, which was in those primitive ages of Christianity; we read of the fulness of the Jews, and of the fulness of the Gentiles; and the apostle teaches us to look upon that infidelity and darkness, which first prevailed over all Gentile nations, before Christ came, and then over the Jews after Christ came, as what was wisely permitted of God, as a preparation for the manifestation of the glory of God's mercy, in due time, on the whole world, constituted of Jews and Gentiles. God hath concluded them all in unbelief,

that he might have mercy upon all. These things plainly shew, that the time is coming when the whole world of mankind shall be brought into the church of Christ; and not only a part of the Jews, and a part of the Gentile world, as the first-fruits, as it was in the first ages of the Christian church; but the fulness of both, the whole lump, all the nation of the Jews, and all the world of Gentiles.

In the last great conflict between the church of Christ and her enemies, before the commencement of the glorious time of the church's peace and rest, the kings of the earth, and the *whole world*, are represented as gathered together, and then the seventh angel pours out his vial into the air, which limits that kingdom that Satan has, as god of this world, in its utmost extent;—and that kingdom is represented as utterly overthrown. In another description of that great battle, Christ is represented as riding forth, having on his head many crowns, and on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS. Which we may well suppose signifies, that he is now going to that conquest, whereby he shall set up a kingdom, in which he shall be

king of kings, in a far more extensive manner than either the Babylonish, Persian, Grecian, or Roman monarchs were. And an angel appears standing in the sun, that overlooks the whole world, calling on all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, to come and eat the flesh of kings, &c. And in consequence of the great victory Christ gains at that time, *an angel comes down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit, and a great chain in his hand, and lays hold on the devil, and binds him, and casts him into the bottomless pit, and shuts him up, and sets a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more.* Satan's being dispossessed of that highest monarchy on earth, the Roman empire, and cast out, in the time of Constantine, is represented by his being cast down from heaven to the earth; but now there is something far beyond that; he is cast out of the earth, and is shut up in hell, and confined to that alone, so that he has no place left him in this world of mankind, high or low.

Now will any be so unreasonable as to say, that all these things do not signify more than that one third part of the world should be brought into the church of Christ, beyond

which it cannot be pretended that the Christian religion has ever yet reached, in its greatest extent? Those countries, which belonged to the Roman empire, that were brought to the profession of Christianity, after the reign of Constantine, are but a small part of what the habitable world now is; as to extent of ground, they altogether bear, I suppose, no greater proportion to it, than the land of Canaan did to the Roman empire.—And our Redeemer, in his kingdom of grace, has hitherto possessed but a little part of the world, in its most flourishing state, since arts are arisen to their greatest height, and a very great part of the world is but lately discovered, and much remains undiscovered to this day.

These things make it very evident, that the main fulfilment of those prophecies that speak of the glorious advancement of Christ's kingdom on earth, is still to come.

And as there has been nothing as yet, with regard to the flourishing of religion, and the advancement of Christ's kingdom, of such extent as to answer the prophecies, so neither has there been any thing of that duration that is foretold. The prophecies speak of Jerusalem's being made *the joy of the whole*

*earth, and also the joy of many generations. That God's people should long enjoy the work of their hands. That they should reign with Christ a thousand years; by which we must at least understand a very long time. But it would be endless to mention all the places, which signify that the time of the church's great peace and prosperity should be of long continuance: almost all the prophecies that speak of her latter-day glory, imply it; and it is implied in very many of them, that when once this day of the church's advancement and peace is begun, it shall never end, till the world ends; or, at least, that there shall be no more a return of her troubles and adversity for any considerable continuance; that then *the days of her mourning shall be ended*; that her tribulations *should then be as the waters of Noah unto God*; that as he has sworn that *the waters of Noah should no more pass over the earth*, so he will swear that he will no more be wroth with his people, or rebuke them; that *God's people should no more walk after the imagination of their evil heart*; that *God would hide himself no more from the house of Israel*, because he has poured out his Spirit upon them; that *their sun should no more go down, nor the moon withdraw itself*;*

that *the light should not be clear and dark*; (i. e. there should be no more an interchange of light and darkness, as used to be) but that it *should be all one continued day; not day and night*, (for so the words are in the original in Zech. xiv. 7.) alternately, *but it shall come to pass, that at evening-time* (i. e. at the time that night and darkness used to be) *it shall be light*; and that *the nations should beat their swords into plow-shares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; and that nation shall not lift up sword against nation, nor learn war anymore*; but that *there should be abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth*. And innumerable things of this nature are declared.

But the church of Christ has never yet enjoyed a state of peace and prosperity for any long time; on the contrary, the times of her rest, and of the flourishing state of religion, have ever been very short. Hitherto the church may say, *Return, for thy servants' sake, the tribes of thine inheritance; the people of thy holiness have possessed it but a little while*. The quietness that the church of God enjoyed after the beginning of Constantine's reign was very short; the peace the empire enjoyed, in freedom from war, was not more

than twenty years; no longer nor greater than it had enjoyed under some of the heathen emperors. After this the empire was rent in pieces by intestine wars, and wasted almost every where by the invasions and incursions of barbarous nations, and the Christian world was soon all in contention and confusion, by heresies and divisions in matters of religion. And the church of Christ has never as yet been for any long time, free from persecution; especially when truth has prevailed, and true religion flourished. It is manifest, that hitherto the people of God have been kept under, and Zion has been in a low afflicted state, and her enemies have had the chief sway.

And another thing that makes it exceeding manifest, that that day of the church's greatest advancement on earth, which is foretold in scripture, has never yet come, is that, it is so plainly and expressly revealed that this day should succeed the last of the four monarchies, even the Roman, in its last state, wherein it is divided into ten kingdoms, and after the destruction of Antichrist, signified by the little horn, whose reign is contemporary with the reign of the ten kings. These

things are very plain in the second and seventh chapters of Daniel, and also in the Revelation of St. John. And it is also plain by the ninth chapter of Româns, that it shall be after the national conversion of the Jews, which shall be as life from the dead to the Gentiles, and the fulness of both Jews and Gentiles should be come in, and all the nation of the Jews, and all other nations, shall obtain mercy, and there shall be that general in-gathering of the harvest of the whole earth, of which all that had been converted before, either of Jews or Gentiles, were but the first fruits. And many other evidences of this point might be mentioned, which for brevity's sake I omit.

And thus it is meet, that the last kingdom which shall take place on earth, should be the kingdom of God's own Son and heir, whose right it is to rule and reign; and that whatever revolutions and confusions there may be in the world, for a long time, the cause of truth, the righteous cause, should finally prevail, and God's holy people should at last inherit the earth, and reign on earth; and that the world should continue in tumults, and great revolutions, following one another, from age to age, the world being,

as it were, in travail, till truth and holiness are brought forth; that all things should be shaken, till that comes which is true and right, and agreeable to the mind of God, which cannot be shaken; and that the wisdom of the ruler of the world should be manifested in the bringing all things ultimately to so good an issue. The world is made for the Son of God; his kingdom is the end of all changes that come to pass in the state of the world of mankind; all are only to prepare the way for this; it is fit therefore that the last kingdom on earth should be his.— It is wisely and mercifully ordered of God that it should be so, on this account, as well as many others, viz. that the church of God, under all preceding changes, should have this consideration to encourage her, and maintain her hope, and animate her faith and prayers, from generation to generation, that God has promised, her cause should finally be maintained and prevail in this world.

Let it now be considered,

2. The future promised advancement of the kingdom of Christ is an event unspeakably happy and glorious. The scriptures speak of that time, as a time wherein God and his Son Jesus Christ will be most emi-

nently glorified on earth; a time, wherein God, who till then had dwelt between the cherubims, and concealed himself in the holy of holies, in the secret of his tabernacle, behind the veil, in the thick darkness, should openly shine forth, and all flesh should see his glory, and God's people in general have as great a privilege as the high priest alone had once a year, or as Moses had in the mount; a time, wherein *the temple of God in heaven should be opened, and there should be seen the ark of his testament*; a time, wherein both God will be greatly glorified, and his saints made unspeakably happy in the view of his glory; a time, wherein God's people should not only once see the light of God's glory, as Moses, or see it once a year with the high priest, but should dwell and walk continually in it, and it should be their constant daily light, instead of the light of the sun, which light should be so much more glorious than the light of the sun or moon, that *the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the Lord of Hosts should reign in Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, before his ancients gloriously.*

It is represented as a time of vast increase of knowledge and understanding, especially

in divine things; a time, wherein God would *destroy the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil spread over all nations; wherein the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun seven-fold. And the eyes of them that see shall not be dim, and the heart of the rash shall understand knowledge. And they shall no more teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord, because they shall all know him from the least to the greatest. A time of general holiness. Thy people shall be all righteous. A time of great prevailing of eminent holiness, when little children should, in spiritual attainments, be as though they were a hundred years old. Wherein he that is feeble among God's people should be as David. A time wherein holiness should be, as it were, inscribed on everything, on all mens' common business and employments, and the common utensils of life, all shall be dedicated to God, and improved to holy purposes. Her merchandize and hire shall be holiness to the Lord. In that day shall there be upon the bells of the horses, HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD; and the pots in the Lord's house shall be like the bowls before the altar; yea, every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall*

be holiness unto the Lord of Hosts. A time wherein religion and true Christianity shall, in every respect, be uppermost in the world; wherein God will cause his church to arise and shake herself from the dust, and put on her beautiful garments, and sit down on a throne; and the poor shall be raised from the dust, and the beggar from the dunghill, and shall be set among princes, and made to inherit the throne of God's glory. A time wherein vital piety shall take possession of thrones and palaces, and those that are in most exalted stations shall be eminent in holiness. And kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers. Thou shalt suck the breasts of kings. The daughter of Tyre shall be there with a gift, the rich among the people shall entreat thy favour. A time of wonderful union, and the most universal peace, love and sweet harmony, wherein the nations shall beat their swords into plow-shares, &c. and God will cause wars to cease to the ends of the earth, and break the bow, and cut the spear in sunder, and burn the chariot in the fire; and the mountains shall bring forth peace to God's people, and the little hills by righteousness; wherein the wolf should dwell with the lamb, &c. and wherein God's people shall dwell in a peaceable habita-

tion, and in sure dwellings, and quiet resting places. A time wherein all heresies, and false doctrines shall be exploded, and the church of God shall not be rent with a variety of jarring opinions. *The Lord shall be king over all the earth; in that day there shall be one Lord and his name one.* And all superstitious ways of worship shall be abolished, and all agree in worshipping God in his own appointed way, and agreeable to the purity of his institutions. *I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear me for ever, for the good of them and their children after them.* A time wherein the whole earth shall be united as one holy city, one heavenly family, men of all nations shall as it were dwell together, and sweetly correspond one with another as brethren and children of the same father; as the prophecies often speak of all God's people at that time as the children of God, and brethren one to another, all appointing over them one head, gathered to one house of God, to worship the king, the Lord of Hosts.—A time wherein this whole great society shall appear in glorious beauty, in genuine amiable christianity, and excellent order, as a city compact together, the perfection of beauty, and eter-

nal excellency, shining with a reflection of the glory of Jehovah risen upon it, which shall be attractive and ravishing to all kings and nations, and it shall appear as a bride adorned for her husband.—A time of great temporal prosperity; of great health. *The inhabitant shall not say, I am sick. As the days of a tree, are the days of my people.* A time wherein the earth shall be abundantly fruitful. A time wherein the world shall be delivered from that multitude of sore calamities that before had prevailed, and there shall be an universal blessing of God upon mankind, in soul and body, and in all their concerns, and all manner of tokens of God's presence and favour, and *God shall rejoice over them, as the bridegroom rejoiceth over his bride, and the mountains shall as it were drop down new wine, and the hills shall flow with milk.* A time of great and universal joy throughout the earth, when *from the utmost ends of the earth shall be heard songs, even glory to the righteous, and God's people shall with joy draw water out of the well of salvation, and God shall prepare in his holy mountain, a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined,* which feast is repre-

mented, as *the marriage supper of the Lamb*. Yea, the scriptures represent it not only as a time of universal joy on earth, but extraordinary joy in heaven, among the angels and saints, the holy apostles and prophets there. Yea, the scriptures represent it as a time of extraordinary rejoicing with Christ himself, the glorious head, in whom all things in heaven and earth shall then be gathered together in one. *The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; he will save; he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love; he will joy over thee with singing.* And the very fields, trees and mountains shall then, as it were, rejoice, and break forth into singing. *Ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace; the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.— Sing, O heavens, for the Lord hath done it; shout, ye lower parts of the earth; break forth into singing, ye mountains; O forest, and every tree therein; for the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and glorified himself in Israel.*

Such being the state of things in this future promised glorious day of the church's prosperity, surely it is worth praying for.

Nor is there any one thing whatsoever, if we viewed things aright, which a regard to the glory of God, a concern for the kingdom and honour of our Redeemer, a love to his people, pity to perishing finners, love to our fellow-creatures in general, compassion to mankind under its various and sore calamities and miseries, a desire of their temporal and spiritual prosperity, love to our country, our neighbours and friends, yea, and to our own souls, would dispose us to be so much in prayer for, as for the dawning of this happy day, and the accomplishment of that glorious event.

It may be worthy to be considered,

3. How much Christ prayed and laboured and suffered, in order to the glory and happiness of that day.

The sum of the blessings Christ sought, by what he did and suffered in the work of redemption, was the Holy Spirit. So is the affair of our redemption constituted; the Father provides and gives the Redeemer, and the price of redemption is offered to him, and he grants the benefit purchased; the Son is the redeemer who gives the price, and also is the price offered; and the Holy Spirit is the grand blessing obtained by the

price offered, and bestowed on the redeemed. The Holy Spirit, in his in-dwelling, his influences and fruits, is the sum of all grace, holiness, comfort and joy; or in one word, of all the spiritual good Christ purchased for men in this world; and is also the sum of all perfection, glory and eternal joy, that he purchased for them in another world. The Holy Spirit is that great benefit, which is the subject-matter of the promises, both of the eternal covenant of redemption, and also of the covenant of grace; the grand subject of the promises of the Old Testament, in the prophecies of the blessings of the Messiah's kingdom; and the chief subject of the promises of the New Testament; and particularly of the covenant of grace delivered by Jesus Christ to his disciples, as his last will and testament, in the xiv. xv. and xvi. chapters of John; the grand legacy that he bequeathed to them, in that his last and dying discourse with them. Therefore the Holy Spirit is so often called the spirit of promise, and emphatically, the promise, the promise of the Father, &c. This being the great blessing Christ purchased by his labours and sufferings on earth, it was the blessing he received of the Father, when he ascended

into heaven, and entered into the holy of holies with his own blood, to communicate to those that he had redeemed. *It is expedient for you, that I go away; for if I go not away, the comforter will not come; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. Being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear.* This is the sum of those gifts, which Christ received for men, even for the rebellious, at his ascension. This is the sum of the benefits Christ obtains for men by his intercession. *I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another comforter, that he may abide with you for ever—even the spirit of truth.* Herein consists Christ's communicative fulness, even in his being full of the Spirit, and so full of grace and truth, that we might of this fulness receive, and grace for grace. He is anointed with the Holy Ghost; and this is the ointment that goes down from the head to the members. God gives the Spirit not by measure unto him, that every one that is his might receive according to the measure of the gift of Christ. This, therefore, was the great blessing he prayed for in that wonderful prayer, that he uttered for

his disciples, and all his future church, the evening before he died. The blessing he prayed for to the Father, in behalf of his disciples, was the same he had insisted on in his preceding discourse with them; and this, doubtless, was the blessing he prayed for when, as our High Priest, he offered up strong crying and tears with his blood. The same that he shed his blood for, he also shed tears for, and poured out prayers for.

But the time that we have been speaking of, is the chief time of the bestowment of this blessing—the main season of the success of all that Christ did and suffered in the work of our redemption. Before this the Spirit of God is given but very sparingly, and but few are saved; but then it will be far otherwise; wickedness shall be rare then, as virtue and piety had been before; and, undoubtedly, by far the greatest number of them that ever receive the benefits of Christ's redemption, from the beginning of the world to the end of it, will receive it in that time. The number of the inhabitants of the earth will, doubtless, then be vastly multiplied, and the number of redeemed ones much more. If we should suppose that glorious day to last no more than (literally) a thou-

thousand years, and that at the beginning of that thousand years the world of mankind should be but just as numerous as it is now, and that the number should be doubled, during that time of great health and peace, and the universal blessing of heaven, once only in an hundred years, the number at the end of the thousand years would be more than a thousand times greater than it is now; and if it should be doubled once in fifty years, (which probably the number of inhabitants of New-England has ordinarily been, in about half that time) then at the end of the thousand years, there would be more than a million inhabitants on the face of the earth, where there is one now. And there is reason to think, that through the greater part of this period, at least, the number of saints will, in their increase, bear a proportion to the increase of the number of inhabitants. And it must be considered, that if the number of mankind at the beginning of this period be no more than equal to the present number, yet we may doubtless conclude, that the number of true saints will be immensely greater, when instead of the few true and thorough Christians now in some few countries, every nation on the face of the whole

earth shall be converted to Christianity, and every country shall be full of true Christians, so that the successive multiplication of true saints through the thousand years, will begin with that vast advantage, beyond the multiplication of mankind; where the latter is begun from units, the other, doubtless, will begin with hundreds, if not thousands. How much greater then will be the number of true converts, that will be brought to a participation of the benefits of Christ's redemption, during that period, than in all other times put together? I think, the foregoing things considered, we shall be very moderate in our conjectures, if we say, it is probable that there will be an hundred thousand times more, that will actually be redeemed to God by Christ's blood, during that period of the church's prosperity that we have been speaking of, than ever had been before, from the beginning of the world to that time.

That time is represented in scripture, as the proper appointed season of Christ's salvation; eminently the elect season, the accepted time and day of salvation, the year of Christ's redeemed. This period is spoken of as the proper time of the dominion of the

Redeemer, and reign of his redeeming love, in the second and seventh chapters of Daniel, and many other places; the proper time of his harvest, or in-gathering of his fruits from this fallen world; the appointed day of his triumph over Satan, the great destroyer, and the appointed day of his marriage with his elect spouse. The time given to the Sun of Righteousness to rule, as the day is the time God has appointed for the natural sun to bear rule; therefore the bringing on of this time is called *Christ's coming in his kingdom, wherein he will rent the heavens and come down, and the Sun of Righteousness shall arise.*

The comparatively little saving good there is in the world, as the fruit of Christ's redemption, before that time, is, as it were, granted by way of anticipation; as we anticipate something of the sun's light by reflection before the day-time, the proper time of the sun's rule; and as the first-fruits are gathered before the harvest: Then more especially will be the fulfilment of those great promises, made by God the Father to the Son, for his pouring out his soul unto death; then *shall he see his seed, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand; then shall*

he see of the travail of his soul, and be satisfied, and shall justify many by his knowledge; then will God divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; then shall Christ, in an eminent manner, obtain his chosen spouse, that he loved and died for, that he might sanctify and cleanse her, with the washing of water, by the word, and present her to himself, a glorious church. He will obtain the joy that was set before him, for which he endured the cross, and despised the shame, chiefly in the events and consequences of that day: That day, as was observed before, is often represented as eminently the time of the rejoicing of the bridegroom. The fore-knowledge and consideration of it was what supported him, and that which his soul exulted in, at a time when his soul had been troubled at the view of his approaching sufferings; as may be seen in John xii. 23, 24, 27, 31, 32.

Now, therefore, if it be so, that this is what Jesus Christ, our great Redeemer and the Head of the Church, did so much desire, and set his heart upon, from all eternity, and which he did and suffered so much for, offering up strong crying and tears, and his

precious blood, to obtain it; surely his disciples and members should also earnestly seek it, and be much and earnest in prayer for it.

Let it be considered,

4. The whole creation is, as it were, earnestly waiting for that day, and constantly groaning and travailing in pain to bring forth the felicity and glory of it. For that day is above all other times, excepting the day of judgment, the day of the manifestation of the sons of God, and of their glorious liberty; and, therefore, that elegant representation the apostle makes of the earnest expectation and travail of the creation, in Rom. viii. 19—22 is applicable to the glorious event of this day. *The earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope. Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.—* The visible world has now, for many ages,

been subjected to sin, and made, as it were, a servant to it, through the abusive improvement that man, who has the dominion over the creatures, puts the creatures to. Thus the sun is a sort of servant to all manner of wickedness, as its light, and other beneficial influences are abused by men, and made subservient to their lusts and sinful purposes. So of the rain, and fruits of the earth, and the brute animals, and all other parts of the visible creation; they all serve mens' corruption, and obey their sinful will; and God doth, in a sort, subject them to it, for he continues his influence and power to make them to be obedient, according to the same law of nature, whereby they yield to mens' command when used to good purposes. It is by the immediate influence of God upon things, acting upon them, according to those constant methods which we call the laws of nature, that they are ever obedient to mens' will, or that we can use them at all. This influence God continues to make them obedient to mens' will though wicked; which is a sure sign that the present state of things is not lasting, it is confusion, and God would not suffer it to be, but that he designs, in a little time, to put an end to it, when it shall

no more be so. Seeing it is to be but a little while, God chuses rather to subject the creature to man's wickedness, than to disturb and interrupt the course of nature according to its stated laws; but it is, as it were, a force upon the creature; for the creature is abused in it, perverted to far meaner purposes than those for which the author of its nature made it, and to which he adapted it. The creature, therefore, is, as it were, unwillingly subject, and would not be subject, but that it is but for a short time, and it, as it were, hopes for an alteration. It is a bondage the creature is subject to, from which it was partly delivered when Christ came, and the gospel was promulgated in the world, and will be more fully delivered at the commencement of the glorious day we are speaking of, and perfectly at the day of judgment. This agrees with the context, for the apostle was speaking of the present suffering state of the church. The reason why the church in this world is in a suffering state, is, that the world is subjected to the sin and corruption of mankind. By vanity, in scripture, is very commonly meant sin and wickedness, and also by corruption, as might be shewn in many places would my intended brevity allow.

Though the creature is thus subject to vanity, yet it does not rest in this subjection, but is constantly acting and exerting itself, in order to that glorious liberty that God has appointed at the time we are speaking of, and, as it were, reaching forth towards it. All the changes that are brought to pass in the world, from age to age, are ordered by infinite wisdom, in one respect or other, to prepare the way for that glorious issue of things, that shall be when truth and righteousness shall finally prevail, and he, whose right it is, shall take the kingdom. All the creatures, in all their operations and motions, continually tend to this; as in a clock, all the motions of the whole system of wheels and movements, tend to the striking of the hammer at the appointed time. All the revolutions and restless motions of the sun and other heavenly bodies, from day to day, from year to year, and from age to age, are continually tending thither; as all the many turnings of the wheels of a chariot, in a journey, tend to the appointed journey's end.—The mighty struggles and conflicts of nations, and shakings of kingdoms, and those vast successive changes that are brought to pass, in

the kingdoms and empires of the world, from one age to another, are, as it were, travail-pangs of the creation, in order to bring forth this glorious event. And the scriptures represent the last struggles and changes that shall immediately precede this event, as being the greatest of all—as the last pangs of a woman in travail are the most violent.

The creature thus earnestly expecting this glorious manifestation and liberty of the children of God, and travailing in pain in order to it, therefore the scriptures, by a like figure, do very often represent, that when this shall be accomplished, the whole inanimate creation shall greatly rejoice: That *the heavens shall sing, the earth be glad, the mountains break forth into singing, the hills be joyful together, the trees clap their hands, the lower parts of the earth shout, the sea roar and the fulness thereof, and the floods clap their hands.*

All the intelligent elect creation, all God's holy creatures in heaven and earth, are truly and properly waiting for, and earnestly expecting that event. It is abundantly represented in scripture as the spirit and character of all true saints, that they set their hearts upon, love, long, wait and pray for

the promised glory of that day; they are spoken of as those that *prefer Jerusalem to their chief joy; that take pleasure in the stones of Zion, and favour the dust thereof; that wait for the consolation of Israel.* It is the language of the church of God, and the breathing of the soul of every true saint, that we have in Psal. xiv. 7. *O that the salvation of Israel were come out of Zion! when the Lord bringeth back the captivity of his people, Jacob shall rejoice, and Israel shall be glad.* Agreeably to this was the spirit of old Jacob, which he expressed when he was dying, in faith in the great promise made to him and Isaac and Abraham, that *in their seed all the families of the earth should be blessed. I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord.* The same is represented as the spirit of his true children, or the family of Jacob. *I will wait upon the Lord, that hideth himself from the house of Jacob, and I will look for him.*—*They that love Christ's appearing,* is a name that the apostle gives to true christians.

The glorious inhabitants of the heavenly world, the saints and angels there, that rejoice when one sinner repents, are earnestly waiting, in an assured and joyful depend-

ance on God's promises of that conversion of the world, and marriage of the Lamb, which shall be when that glorious day comes; and therefore they are represented as all with one accord rejoicing and praising God with such mighty exultation and triumph, when it is accomplished, in Rom. xix.

5. The word of God is full of precepts, encouragements and examples, tending to excite and induce the people of God to be much in prayer for this mercy.

The spirit of God is the chief of the blessings that are the subject-matter of christian prayer; for it is the sum of all spiritual blessings; which are those that we need infinitely more than others; and are those wherein our true and eternal happiness consists.—That which is the sum of the blessings that Christ purchased, is the sum of the blessings that Christians have to pray for; but that, as was observed before, is the Holy Spirit; and therefore when the disciples came to Christ, and desired him to teach them to pray, Luke xi. he accordingly gave them particular directions for the performance of this duty;—the conclusion of his whole discourse, in the 13th verse, plainly shews that the Holy Spirit is the sum of the blessings

that are the subject-matter of that prayer about which he had instructed them. *If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?* From which words of Christ we may also observe, that there is no blessing that we have so great encouragement to pray for, as the Spirit of God; the words imply, that our heavenly Father is especially ready to bestow his Holy Spirit on them that ask him. Of the more excellent nature any benefit is, which we stand in need of, the more ready God is to bestow it in answer to prayer. The infinite goodness of God's nature is the more gratified, and the grand design and aim of the contrivance and work of our redemption, is the more answered, and Jesus Christ the Redeemer has the greater success in his undertaking and labours; and those desires that are expressed in prayer for the most excellent blessings are the most excellent desires, and consequently such as God most approves of, and is most ready to gratify.

The scriptures do not only direct and encourage us in general to pray for the Holy Spirit above all things else, but it is the ex-

preſly revealed will of God, that his church ſhould be very much in prayer for that glorious out-pouring of the Spirit that is to be in the latter days, and the things that ſhall be accompliſhed by it. God ſpeaking of that bleſſed event, Ezek. xxxvi. under the figure of *cleaſing the houſe of Iſrael from all their iniquities, planting and building their waſte and ruined places, and making them to become like the garden of Eden, and filling them with men like a flock, like the holy flock, the flock of Jeruſalem in her ſolemn feaſts*; wherein he, doubtleſs, has reſpect to the ſame glorious reſtoration and advancement of his church that is ſpoken of in the next chapter, and in all the following chapters to the end of the book, he ſays, ver. 37. *Thus ſaith the Lord, I will yet for this be enquired of by the houſe of Iſrael, to do it for them.* Which, doubtleſs, implies, that it is the will of God that extraordinary prayerfulneſs in his people for this mercy ſhould precede the beſtowment of it.

I know of no place in the Bible, where ſo ſtrong an expreſſion is made uſe of to ſignify importunity in prayer, as is uſed in Iſai. lxii. 6, 7. where the people of God are called upon to be importunate for this mercy :

Ye that make mention of the Lord, keep not silence, and give him no rest, till he establish, and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth. How strong is the phrase? And how loud is this call to the church of God, to be fervent and incessant in their cries to him for this great mercy? How wonderful are the words to be used, concerning the manner in which such worms of the dust should address the high and lofty One that inhabits eternity? And what encouragement is here, to approach the mercy-seat with the greatest freedom, boldness, earnestness, constancy, and full assurance of faith, to seek of God this greatest thing that can be sought in christian prayer?

It is a just observation of a certain eminent minister of the church of Scotland, in a discourse of his, on social prayer, in which, speaking of pleading for the success of the gospel, as required by the Lord's prayer, he says, " That notwithstanding of its being so
 " compendious, yet the one half of it, that
 " is, three petitions in six, and these the first
 " prescribed, do all relate to this great case;
 " so that to put up any one of these petiti-
 " ons apart, or all of them together, is upon
 " the matter, to pray that the dispensation

“ of the gospel may be blessed with divine
 “ power.” That glorious day we are speak-
 ing of is the proper and appointed time, a-
 bove all others, for the bringing to pass the
 things requested in each of these petitions ;
 as the prophecies every where represent that
 as the time, which God has especially ap-
 pointed for the hallowing or glorifying his
 own great name in this world, causing *his*
glory to be revealed, that all flesh may see it
together, causing it openly to be manifested in
the sight of the heathen, filling the whole
world with the light of his glory to such a
degree, that the moon shall be confounded and
the sun ashamed before that brighter glory ; the
 appointed time for the glorifying and mag-
 nifying the name of Jesus Christ, causing
every knee to bow, and every tongue to confess
to him. This is the proper time of *God’s*
kingdom’s coming, or of Christ’s coming in his
kingdom : that is the very time foretold in
 the i^{id} of Daniel, when the *Lord God of hea-*
ven shall set up a kingdom, in the latter times
 of the last monarchy, when it is divided in-
 to ten kingdoms ; and that is the very time
 foretold in the vith of Daniel, when there
 should be *given to One like to the Son of Man,*
dominion, glory, and a kingdom, that all peo-

*ple, nations, and languages, should serve him; and the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the most high God, after the destruction of the little horn, that should continue for a time, times, and the dividing of time. And that is the time wherein God's will shall be done on earth, as it is done in heaven; when heaven shall, as it were, be bowed, and come down to the earth, as God's people shall be all righteous, and holiness to the Lord shall be written on the bells of the horses, &c. So that the three first petitions of the Lord's prayer are, in effect, no other than requests for the bringing on this glorious day.—And as the Lord's prayer begins with asking for this, in the three first petitions, so it concludes with it, in these words, *For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory for ever. Amen.* Which words imply a request, that God would take to himself his great power, and reign, and manifest his power and glory in the world. Thus Christ teaches us, that it becomes his disciples to seek this above all other things, and make it the first and the last in their prayers, and that every petition should be put up in a subordination to the*

advancement of God's kingdom and glory in the world.

Besides what has been observed of the Lord's prayer, if we look through the whole Bible, and observe all the examples of prayer that we find there recorded, we shall not find so many prayers for any other mercy, as for the deliverance, restoration, and prosperity of the church, and the advancement of God's glory and kingdom of grace in the world. If we well consider the prayers that we find recorded in the book of Psalms, I believe we shall see reason to think, that a very great, if not the greater part of them, are prayers uttered, either in the name of Christ, or in the name of the church, for such a mercy; and undoubtedly, the greatest part of that book of Psalms, is made up of prayers for this mercy, prophecies of it, and prophetic praises for it.

The prophets, in their prophecies of the restoration and advancement of the church, very often speak of it as what shall be done in answer to the prayers of God's people. *Isai.* xxv. 9.—xxvi. 9, 12, 13, 16, 17. to the end. *Chap.* xxxiii. 2. *Pfal.* cii. 13—22. *Jer.* iii. 21. *Isai.* lxv. 24.—xli. 17. *Hof.* v. 15. with vi. 1, 2, 3. and xiv. 2. to the

end.—Zech. x. 6.—xii. x. and xiii. 9. Ifai. lv. 6. with ver. 12, 13. Jer. xxxiii. 3. The prophecies of future glorious times of the church, are often introduced with a prayer of the church for her deliverance and advancement, prophetically uttered, as in Ifai. li. 9, &c. Chap. lxiii. 11. to the end, and lxiv. throughout.

In order to Christ's being mystically born into the world, in the advancement and flourishing of true religion, and great increase of the number of true converts who are spoken of as having Christ formed in them, the scriptures represent it as requisite, that the church should first be in travail, crying, and pained to be delivered. And one thing that we have good reason to understand by it, is her exercising strong desires, and wrestling and agonizing with God in prayer for this event; because we find such figures of speech used in this sense elsewhere. *My little children, of whom I travail in birth again, until Christ be formed in you. Lord, in trouble have they visited thee; they poured out a prayer when thy chastening was upon them. Like as a woman with child, that draweth near the time of her delivery, is in pain, and cryeth out in her pangs, so have we been in thy sight, O*

Lord. And certainly it is fit, that the church of God should be in travail for that, which (as I before observed) the whole creation travails in pain for.

The scriptures do not only abundantly manifest it to be the duty of God's people to be much in prayer for this great mercy, but they also abound with manifold considerations to encourage them in it, and animate them with hopes of success. There is, perhaps, no one thing that so much of the Bible is taken up in the promises of, in order to encourage the faith, hope, and prayers of the saints as this, which at once affords to God's people the clearest evidences that it is their duty to be much in prayer for this mercy, (for, undoubtedly, that which God does abundantly make the subject of his promises, God's people should abundantly make the subject of their prayers) and also affords them the strongest assurances that their prayers shall be successful. With what confidence may we go before God, and pray for that, of which we have so many exceeding precious and glorious promises to plead? The very first promise of God to fallen man, even that *it shall bruise thy head*, is a promise which is to have its chief fulfilment at

that day; and the whole Bible concludes with a promise of the glory of that day, and a prayer for its fulfilment. *He that testifieth these things, saith—Surely, I come quickly—Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.*

The scripture gives us great reason to think, that when once there comes to appear much of a spirit of prayer in the church of God for this mercy, then it will soon be accomplished. It is evidently with reference to this mercy, that God makes that promise, *When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I, the Lord, will hear them; I, the God of Israel, will not forsake them; I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the vallies; I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water; I will plant in the wilderness the cedar, the shittah-tree, and the myrtle, and the oil-tree; I will set in the desert the fir-tree, the pine, and the box-tree together.* Spiritual waters and rivers are explained by the apostle John, to be the Holy Spirit. It is now a time of scarcity of these spiritual waters; there are, as it were, none: If God's people, in this time of great drought, were but made duly

sensible of this calamity, and their own emptiness and necessity, and brought earnestly to thirst and cry for needed supplies, God would, doubtless, soon fulfil this blessed promise.— We have another promise much like this, in Psal. cii. 16, 17. *When the Lord shall build up Zion, he shall appear in his glory; he will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer.* And remarkable are the words that follow in the next verse: *This shall be written for the generation to come; and the people which shall be created shall praise the Lord.* Which seems to signify, that this promise shall be left on record to encourage some future generation of God's people to pray and cry earnestly for this mercy, to whom he would fulfil the promise, and thereby give them, and great multitudes of others, that should be converted through their prayers, occasion to praise his name. Who knows but that the generation here spoken of, may be this present generation? One thing mentioned in the character of that future generation, is certainly true concerning the present, viz. That it is destitute; the church of God is in very low, sorrowful and needy circumstances; and if the next thing, there supposed, were also verified in us, viz.

That we were made sensible of our great calamity, and brought to cry earnestly to God for help, I am persuaded that the third would be also verified, viz. That our prayers would be turned into joyful praises, for God's gracious answers of our prayers. It is spoken of as a sign and evidence, that the time to favour Zion is come, when God's servants are brought, by their prayerfulness for her restoration, in an eminent manner, to shew that *they favour her stones and dust. Thou shalt arise, and have mercy upon Zion; for the time to favour her, yea, the set time is come; for thy servants take pleasure in her stones, and favour the dust thereof.*

God has respect to the prayers of his saints in all his government of the world, as we may observe by the representation made, Revelations viii. at the beginning. There we read of seven angels standing before the throne of God, and receiving of him seven trumpets, at the sounding of which great and mighty changes were to be brought to pass in the world, through many successive ages. But when these angels had received their trumpets, they must stand still, and all must be in silence, not one of them must be allowed to sound, until the prayers of the

saints are attended to. The angel of the covenant, as a glorious High Priest, comes and stands at the altar, with much incense, to offer with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar, before the throne; and the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, ascends up with acceptance before God, out of the angel's hand; and then the angels prepare themselves to sound.—

And God, in the events of every trumpet, remembers those prayers, as appears at last, by the great and glorious things he accomplishes for his church, in the issue of all, in answer to these prayers, in the event of the last trumpet, which brings the glory of the latter days, when these prayers shall be turned into joyful praises. Rev. xi. 15, 16, 17.

And the seventh angel sounded, and there were great voices in heaven, saying—The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever. And the four-and-twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God, saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come, because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and

hast reigned. Since it is thus, that it is the pleasure of God so to honor his people, as to carry on all the designs of his kingdom in this way, viz. by the prayers of his saints; this gives us great reason to think, that whenever the time comes that God gives an extraordinary spirit of prayer for the promised advancement of his kingdom on earth, (which is God's great aim in all preceding providences, and which is the main thing that the spirit of prayer in the saints aims at) then the fulfilling this event is nigh.

God, in wonderful grace, is pleased to represent himself, as it were, at the command of his people, with regard to mercies of this nature, so as to be ready to bestow them whenever they shall earnestly pray for them. *Thus saith the Lord, the holy One of Israel, and his maker, Ask of me of things to come, concerning my sons, and concerning the work of my hands, command ye me.* What God is speaking of in this context, is the restoration of his church; not only a restoration from temporal calamity, and an outward captivity by Cyrus; but also a spiritual restoration and advancement, by God's commanding the heavens to *drop down from above, and the skies to pour down righteousness, and cau-*

sing the earth to open and bring forth salvation, and righteousness to spring up together. God would have his people ask of him, or enquire of him by earnest prayer, to do this for them; and manifests himself as being at the command of earnest prayers for such a mercy: and a reason why God is so ready to hear such prayers, is couched in the words, viz. Because it is prayer for his own church, his chosen and beloved people, *his sons and daughters, and the work of his hands;* and he cannot deny any thing that is asked for their comfort and prosperity.

God speaks of himself as standing ready to be gracious to his church, and to appear for its restoration, and only waiting for such an opportunity to bestow this mercy, when he shall hear the cries of his people for it, that he may bestow it in answer to their prayers. *Therefore will the Lord wait, that he may be gracious to thee; and therefore will he be exalted, that he may have mercy upon you: For the Lord is a God of judgment; blessed are all they that wait for him. For the people shall dwell in Zion at Jerusalem.— Thou shalt weep no more; he will be very gracious unto thee, at the voice of thy cry:— when he shall hear it, he shall answer thee.—*

The words imply as much as that when God once sees his people much engaged in praying for this mercy, it shall be no longer delayed. Christ desires to hear the voice of his spouse, *that is in the clefts of the rock, in the secret places of the stairs*; in a low and obscure state, driven into secret corners: he only waits for this, in order to put an end to her state of affliction, and cause *the day to break, and the shadows to flee away*. If he once heard her voice in earnest prayer, he would come swiftly over *the mountains of separation* between him and her, *as a roe, or young hart*. When his church is in a low state, and oppressed by her enemies, and cries to him, he will swiftly fly to her relief, as birds fly at the cry of their young. Yea, when that glorious day comes, that I am speaking of, *before they call, he will answer them, and while they are yet speaking, he will hear*; and, in answer to their prayers, he will make *the wolf and the lamb feed together*, &c. When the spouse prays for the effusion of the Holy Spirit, and the coming of Christ, by granting the tokens of his spiritual presence in the church, saying, *Awake, O north wind, and come, thou south, blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out*;

let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits; there seems to be an immediate answer to her prayer, in the next words, in abundant communications of the Spirit, and bestowment of spiritual blessings; I am come into my garden, my sister, my spouse; I have gathered my myrrh with my spice; I have eaten my honey-comb with my honey; I have drunk my wine with my milk. Eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved.

Scripture instances and examples of success in prayer, give great encouragement to pray for this mercy. Most of the remarkable deliverances and restorations of the church of God, that we have account of in the scriptures, were in answer to prayer. So was the redemption of the church of God from the Egyptian bondage. The great restoration of the church in the latter day, is spoken of as resembled by this; as in Isai. lxiv. 1—4. xi. 11, 15, 16. xliii. 2, 3, 16—19. li. 10, 11, 15. lxiii. 11, 12, 13. Zech. x. 10, 11. Hof. ii. 14, 15. It was in answer to prayer, that the sun stood still over Gibeon, and the moon in the valley of Ajalon, and God's people obtained that great victory over their enemies: in which

wonderful miracle, God seemed to have some respect to a future more glorious event to be accomplished for the christian church, in the day of her victory over her enemies, in the latter days; even that event foretold, Isai. xl. 20. *Thy sun shall no more go down, neither shall thy moon withdraw itself.* It was in answer to prayer, that God delivered his church from the mighty host of the Assyrians, in Hezekiah's time; which dispensation is abundantly made use of, as a type of the great things God will do for the christian church in the latter days, in the prophecies of Isaiah. The restoration of the church of God from the Babylonish captivity, as abundantly appears both by scripture-prophecies and histories, was in answer to extraordinary prayer; see Jer. xxix. 10—14. and l. 4, 5. Dan. ix. throughout. Ezra viii. 21, &c. Neh. i. 4. to the end.—iv. 4, 5. and chap. ix. throughout. This restoration of the Jewish church, after the destruction of Babylon, is evidently a type of the glorious restoration of the christian church, after the destruction of the kingdom of Antichrist; which, as all know, is abundantly spoken of in the revelation of St. John, as the anti-type of Babylon. Sampson, out of

weakness, received strength to pull down Dagon's temple, through prayer. So the people of God, in the latter days, will, out of weakness, be made strong, and will become the instruments of pulling down the kingdom of Satan, by prayer.

The Spirit of God was poured out upon Christ himself, in answer to prayer. *Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass, that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened, and the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove, upon him; and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son, in Thee I am well pleased.* The Spirit descends on the church of Christ, the same way, in this respect, that it descended on the head of the church. The greatest effusion of the Spirit that ever yet has been, even that which was in the primitive times of the christian church, which began in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost, was in answer to extraordinary prayer. When the disciples were gathered together to their Lord, a little before his ascension, *he commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me, i. e. the pro-*

mise of the Holy Ghost; Acts i. 4. What they had their hearts upon was the restoration of the kingdom of Israel: *Lord, say they, wilt thou, at this time, restore again the kingdom to Israel*, ver. 6. And according to Christ's direction, after his ascension, they returned to Jerusalem, and continued in united fervent prayer and supplication. It seems they spent their time in it from day to day, without ceasing; until the spirit came down in a wonderful manner upon them, and that work was begun which never ceased, until the world was turned upside down, and all the chief nations of it were converted to christianity; and that glorious deliverance and advancement of the christian church, that was in the days of Constantine the Great, followed the extraordinary cries of the church to God, as the matter is represented, Rev. vi. at the opening of the fifth seal. The church, in her suffering state, is represented crying with a loud voice, *How long, Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge, and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?* And the opening of the next seal brings on that mighty revolution, in the days of Constantine, compared to those great changes that shall be at the end of the world.

As there is so great and manifold reason from the word of God, to think that if a spirit of earnest prayer for that great effusion of the Spirit of God which I am speaking of, prevailed in the christian church, the mercy would be soon granted; so those that are engaged in such prayer might well expect the first benefit. God will come to those that are seeking him and waiting for him; *Isai. xxv. 9. and xxxvi. 8.* When Christ came in the flesh, he was first revealed to them who were *waiting for the consolation of Israel, and looking for redemption in Jerusalem.* And in that great out-pouring of the Spirit that was in the days of the apostles, which was attended with such glorious effects among the Jews and Gentiles, the Spirit came down first on those that were engaged in united earnest prayer for it.—A special blessing is promised to them that love and pray for the prosperity of the church of God. *Pray for the peace of Jerusalem. They shall prosper, that love thee.*

7. We are presented with many motives in the dispensations of Divine Providence, at this day, to excite us to be much in prayer for this mercy.

There is much in Providence to shew us

our need of it, and put us on desiring it.— The great outward calamities, in which the world is involved, and particularly the bloody war that embroils and wastes the nations of Christendom, and in which our nation has so great a share, may well make all that believe God's word, and love mankind, earnestly long and pray for that day, when the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the nations shall beat their swords into plow-shares, &c. But especially do the spiritual calamities, and miseries of the present time, shew our great need of that blessed effusion of God's Spirit; there having been, for so long a time, so great a with-holding of the Spirit, from the greater part of the Christian world, and such dismal consequences of it, in the great decay of vital piety, and the exceeding prevalence of infidelity, heresy, and all manner of vice and wickedness; and especially in our land and nation; of which a most affecting account has lately been published in a pamphlet, printed in London, and re-printed in Scotland, entitled, Britain's Remembrancer; by which it seems that luxury, and wickedness of almost every kind, is well nigh come to the utmost extremity in the nation; and if vice should continue to

prevail and increase for one generation more, as it has the generation past, it looks as tho' the nation could hardly continue in being, but must sink under the weight of its own corruption and wickedness. And the state of things in the other parts of the British dominions, besides England, is very deplorable. The church of Scotland has very much lost her glory, greatly departing from her ancient purity, and excellent order; and has of late been bleeding with great and manifold wounds, occasioned by their divisions and hot contentions. And there are frequent complaints from thence, by those that lament the corruptions of that land, of sin and wickedness, of innumerable kinds, abounding and prevailing of late, among all ranks and sorts of men there. And how lamentable is the moral and religious state of these American colonies? Of New-England in particular! How much is that kind of religion, that was professed and much experienced and practised, in the first, and apparently the best times in New-England, grown and growing out of credit? What fierce and violent contentions have been of late among ministers and people, about things of a religious nature? How much is the gospel-

ministry grown into contempt? and the work of the ministry, in many respects, laid under uncommon difficulties, and even in danger of sinking amongst us? How many of our congregations and churches rending in pieces? Church-discipline weakened, and ordinances less and less regarded. What wild and extravagant notions, gross delusions of the devil, and strange practices have prevailed, and do still prevail, in many places, under a pretext of extraordinary purity, spirituality, liberty, and zeal against formality, usurpation, and conformity to the world? How strong and deeply rooted and general are the prejudices that prevail against vital religion, and the power of godliness, and almost every thing that appertains to it, or tends to it? How apparently are the hearts of people, every where, uncommonly shut up against all means and endeavours to awaken sinners and revive religion? Vice and immorality, of all kinds, withal increasing and unusually prevailing?—May not an attentive view and consideration of such a state of things well influence the people that favour the dust of Zion, to earnestness in their cries to God for a general out-pouring of his Spirit, which only can be an effectual remedy for these evils?

Besides the things that have been mentioned, the fresh attempts made by the Antichristian powers against the Protestant interest, in their late endeavours to restore a Popish government in Great Britain, the chief bulwark of the Protestant cause; as also the persecution lately revived against the Protestants in France, may well give occasion to the people of God, to renewed and extraordinary earnestness in their prayers to him, for the fulfilment of the promised downfall of Antichrist, and that liberty and glory of his church that shall follow.

As there is much in the present state of things to shew us our great need of this mercy, and to cause us to desire it; so there is very much to convince us, that *God alone can bestow it*, and shew us our entire and absolute dependence on him for it. The insufficiency of human abilities to bring to pass any such happy change in the world as is foretold, or to afford any remedy to mankind, from such miseries as have been mentioned, does now remarkably appear. Those observations of the apostle, 1 Cor. i. *The world by wisdom knows not God, and God makes foolish the wisdom of this world*, never were verified to such a degree as they are

now. Great discoveries have been made in the arts and sciences, and never was human learning carried to such a height, as in the present age; and yet never did the cause of religion and virtue run so low, in nations professing the true religion. Never was an age wherein so many learned and elaborate treatises have been written, in proof of the truth and divinity of the Christian religion; yet never were there so many infidels among those that were brought up under the light of the gospel. It is an age, as is supposed, of great light, freedom of thought, and discovery of truth in matters of religion, and detection of the weakness and bigotry of our ancestors, and of the folly and absurdity of the notions of those that were accounted eminent divines in former generations; which notions, it is imagined, did destroy the very foundations of virtue and religion, and enervate all precepts of morality, and, in effect, annul all difference between virtue and vice; and yet vice and wickedness did never so prevail, like an overflowing deluge. It is an age wherein those mean and stingy principles as they are called, of our forefathers, which, as is supposed, deformed religion, and led

to unworthy thoughts of God, are very much discarded, and grown out of credit, and supposed more free, noble and generous tho'ts of the nature of religion, and of the Christian scheme are entertained; but yet never was an age, wherein religion in general was so much despised and trampled on, and Jesus Christ and God Almighty so blasphemed and treated with open daring contempt.

The exceeding weakness of mankind, and their insufficiency in themselves for the bringing to pass any thing great and good in the world, with regard to its moral and spiritual state, remarkably appears in many things that have attended and followed the extraordinary religious commotion, that has lately been in many parts of Great Britain and America. The infirmity of the human nature has been manifested, in a very affecting manner, in the various passions that men have been the subjects of, and innumerable ways that they have been moved, as a reed shaken with the wind, on occasion of the changes and incidents, both public and private, of such a state of things. How many errors and extremes are we liable to? How quickly over-topped, blinded, misled, and confounded? And how easily does Satan

make fools of men, if confident in their own wisdom and strength, and left to themselves? Many, in the late wonderful season, were ready to admire and trust in men, as if all depended on such and such instruments, at least did ascribe too much to their skill and zeal, because God was pleased to improve them a little while to do extraordinary things; but what great things does the skill and zeal of instruments do now, when the Spirit of God is withdrawn?

As the present state of things may well excite earnest desires, after the promised general revival and advancement of true religion, and serve to shew our dependence on God for it, so there are many things in Providence, of late, that tend to encourage us in prayer for such a mercy. That infidelity, heresy and vice do so prevail, and that corruption and wickedness are risen to such an extreme height, is that which is exceeding deplorable; but yet, I think, considering God's promises to his church, and the ordinary method of his dispensations, hope may justly be gathered from it, that the present state of things will not last long, but that a happy change is nigh. We know, that God never will desert the cause of truth and ho-

lines, nor suffer the gates of hell to prevail against the church; and that it has usually been so from the beginning of the world, that the state of the church has appeared most dark, just before some remarkable deliverance and advancement. *Many a time may Israel say—Had not the Lord been on our side, then our enemies would have swallowed us up quick—The waters had overwhelmed us.* The church's extremity has often been God's opportunity for the magnifying his power, mercy and faithfulness towards her. The interest of vital piety has long been in general decaying, and error and wickedness prevailing; it looks as though the disease were now come to a crisis, and that things cannot long remain in such a state, but that a change may be expected in one respect or other. And not only God's manner of dealing with his church in former ages, and many things in the promises and prophecies of his word, but also several things appertaining to present and late aspects of Divine Providence, seem to give reason to hope that the change will be such, as to magnify God's free grace and sovereign mercy, and not his revenging justice and wrath. There are certain times, that are days of vengeance, ap-

pointed for the more ſpecial diſplays of God's juſtice and indignation; and God has alſo his days of mercy, accepted times, choſen ſeaſons, wherein it is his pleaſure to ſhew mercy, and nothing ſhall hinder it; they are times appointed for the magnifying of the Redeemer and his merits, and the triumphs of his grace, wherein his grace ſhall triumph over men's unworthineſs in its greateſt height. And if we conſider God's late dealings with our nation and this land, it appears to me that there is much to make us think that this day is ſuch a day; particularly God's preſerving and delivering the nation, when in ſo great danger of ruin by the late rebellion, and his preſerving New-England, and the other Britiſh colonies in America, in ſo remarkable a manner, from the great armament from France, prepared and ſent againſt us the laſt year; and the almoſt miraculous ſucceſs given to us againſt our enemies at Cape-Breton the year before, diſappointing their renewed preparations and freſh attempt againſt theſe colonies, this preſent year 1747, by delivering up the ſtrength of their fleet into the hands of the Engliſh, as they were in their way hither. And alſo in protecting us, from time to time, from armies by land,

that have come against us from Canada since the beginning of the present war with France. Besides many strange instances of protection of particular forts and settlements, shewing a manifest interposition of the hand of heaven, to the observation of some of our enemies, and even of the savages. And added to these, the late unexpected restoring of the greater part of our many captives in Canada, by those that held them prisoners there. It appears to me, that God has gone much out of his usual way, in his exercises of mercy, patience and long-suffering in these instances. God's patience was very wonderful of old, towards the ten tribes, and the people of Judah and Jerusalem, and afterwards to the Jews in Christ's and the apostles times; but it seems to me, all things considered, not equal to his patience and mercy to us. God does not only forbear to destroy us, notwithstanding all our provocations and their aggravations, which it would be endless to recount; but he has, in the fore-mentioned instances, wrought great things for us, wherein his hand has been most visible, and his arm made bare; especially those two instances in America, God's succeeding us against Cape-Breton, and confounding the ar-

mada from France the last year; dispensations of Providence which, if considered in all their circumstances, were so wonderful, and apparently manifesting an extraordinary divine interposition, that they come, perhaps, the nearest to a parallel with God's wonderful works of old, in Moses's, Joshua's, and Hezekiah's time, of any that have been in these latter ages of the world. And it is to my present purpose to observe, that God was pleased to do great things for us in both these instances, in answer to extraordinary prayer. Such remarkable appearances of a spirit of prayer, on any particular public occasion, have not been in the land, at any time within my observation and memory, as an occasion of the affair of Cape-Breton.— And it is worthy to be noted and remembered, that God sent that great storm on the fleet of our enemies the last year, that finally dispersed, and utterly confounded them, and caused them wholly to give over their designs against us, the very night after our day of public fasting and prayer, for our protection and their confusion.

Thus, although it be a day of great apostacy and provocation, yet it is apparently a day of the wonderful works of God; wonders

of power and mercy, which may well lead us to think on those two places of scripture, Pſal. cxix. 126. *It is time for thee, Lord, to work, for they have made void thy law.*—And Pſal. lxxv. 1. *That thy name is near, thy wonderous works declare.*—God appears, as it were, loth to deſtroy us, or deal with us according to our iniquities, as great and aggravated as they are, and ſhews that mercy pleaſes him. As corrupt a time as it is, it is plain, by experience, that it is a time wherein God may be found, and ſtands ready to ſhew mercy in answer to prayer. He that has done ſuch great things, and has ſo wonderfully and ſpeedily answered prayer for temporal mercies, will much more give the Holy Spirit if we aſk him. He marvelouſly preſerves us, and waits to be gracious to us, as though he choſe to make us monuments of his grace, and not his vengeance, and waits only to have us open our mouths wide, that he may fill them.

The late remarkable religious awakenings, that have been in many parts of the Chriſtian world, are another thing that may juſtly encourage us in prayer for the promiſed glorious and univerſal out-pouring of

the Spirit of God. “ In or about the year
 “ 1732 or 1733, God was pleased to pour
 “ out his Spirit on the people of Saltzburg,
 “ in Germany, who were living under Pop-
 “ ish darkness, in a most uncommon man-
 “ ner; so that above twenty thousand of
 “ them, ~~merely~~ by reading the Bible, which
 “ they made a shift to get in their own lan-
 “ guage, were determined to throw off Pop-
 “ ery, and embrace the reformed Religion;
 “ yea, and to become so very zealous for
 “ the truth and gospel of Jesus Christ, as to
 “ be willing to suffer the loss of all things in
 “ the world, and actually to forsake their
 “ houses, lands, goods and relations, that
 “ they might enjoy the pure preaching of
 “ the gospel;—with great earnestness, and
 “ tears in their eyes, beseeching Protestant
 “ ministers to preach to them, in different
 “ places where they came, when banished
 “ from their own country.”—In the year
 1734 and 1735, there appeared a very great
 and general awakening in the county of
 Hampshire, in the province of the Massa-
 chusetts-Bay, in New-England, and also in
 many parts of Connecticut. Since this, there

has been a far more extensive awakening of many thousands in England, Wales, and Scotland, and almost all the British provinces in North America. There has also been something remarkable of the same kind in some places of the United Netherlands; and about two years ago, a very great awakening and reformation of many of the Indians in the Jerseys and Pennsylvania, even among such as never embraced Christianity before; and within these two years, a great awakening in Virginia and Maryland. Notwithstanding the great diversity of opinions about the issue of some of these awakenings, yet I know of none that have denied that there have been great awakenings of late, in these times and places, and that multitudes have been brought to more than common concern for their salvation, and for a time were made more than ordinarily afraid of sin, and bro't to reform their former vicious courses, and take much pains for their salvation. If I should be of the opinion of those that think these awakenings and stirrings of God's Spirit have been generally not well improved, and so, as to most, have not issued well, but have ended in enthusiasm and delusion, yet,

that the Spirit of God has been of late so wonderfully awakening and striving with such multitudes, in so many different parts of the world, and even to this day, in one place or other, continues to awaken men, is what I should take great encouragement from, that God was about to do something more glorious, and would, before he finishes, bring things to a greater ripeness, and not finally suffer this work of his to be frustrated and rendered abortive by Satan's crafty management; and that these unusual commotions are the forerunners of something exceeding glorious approaching; as the wind, earthquake and fire, at Mount Sinai, were forerunners of that voice, wherein God was, in a more eminent manner; although they also were caused by a divine power, as it is represented, that these things were caused by the *Lord passing by*. 1 Kings xix. 11, 12.

8. How condecant, how beautiful, and of good tendency would it be, for multitudes of Christians, in various parts of the world, by explicit agreement, to unite in such prayer as is proposed to us.

Union is one of the most amiable things that pertains to human society; yea, it is

one of the most beautiful and happy things on earth, which indeed makes earth most like heaven. God has made of one blood all nations of men, to dwell on all the face of the earth; hereby teaching us this moral lesson, that it becomes mankind all to be united as one family. And this is agreeable to the nature that God has given men, disposing them to society; and the circumstances God has placed them in, so many ways obliging and necessitating them to it. A civil union, or an harmonious agreement among men, in the management of their secular concerns, is amiable; but much more a pious union, and sweet agreement in the great business for which man was created, and had powers given him beyond the brutes; even the business of religion, the life and soul of which is love. Union is spoken of in scripture as the peculiar beauty of the church of Christ, Cant. vi. 9. *My dove, my undefiled is but one, she is the only one of her mother, she is the choice one of her that bare her; the daughters saw her and blessed her, yea, the queens and the concubines, and they praised her.* Psal. cxxii. 5. *Jerusalem is builded as a city that is compact together.* Eph. iv.

3—5. *Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one spirit; even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God, and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. Ver. 15. The whole body fitly framed together and compacted, by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body, unto the edifying itself in love.*

As it is the glory of the church of Christ, that she, in all her members, however dispersed, is thus one, one holy society, one city, one family, one body; so it is very desirable, that this union should be manifested, and become visible; and so, that her distant members should act as one, in those things that concern the common interest of the whole body, and in those duties and exercises wherein they have to do with their common lord and head, as seeking of him the common prosperity. It becomes all the members of a particular family, who are strictly united, and have in so many respects one common interest, to unite in prayer to God for the things they need; it becomes a

nation, in days of prayer, appointed by national authority, at certain seasons, visibly to unite in prayer for those public mercies that concern the interest of the whole nation; so it becomes the church of Christ, which is one holy nation, a peculiar people, one heavenly family, more strictly united, in many respects, and having infinitely greater interests that are common to the whole, than any other society; I say, it especially becomes this society, visibly to unite, and expressly to agree together in prayer to God for the common prosperity; and above all, that common prosperity and advancement that is so unspeakably great and glorious, which God has so abundantly promised to fulfil in the latter days.

It is becoming of Christians, with whose character a narrow selfish spirit, above all others, disagrees, to be much in prayer for that public mercy, wherein consists the welfare and happiness of the whole body of Christ, of which they are members, and the greatest good of mankind. And union or agreement in prayer is especially becoming, when Christians pray for that mercy, which above all other things concerns them unit-

edly, and tends to the relief, prosperity and glory of the whole body, as well as of each individual member.

Such an union in prayer for the general out-pouring of the Spirit of God, would not only be beautiful, but profitable too. It would tend very much to promote union and charity between distant members of the church of Christ, to promote public spirit, love to the church of God, and concern for the interest of Zion, as well as be an amiable exercise and manifestation of such a spirit.— Union in religious duties, especially in the duty of prayer, in praying one with and for another, and jointly for their common welfare, above almost all other things, tends to promote mutual affection and endearment. And if ministers and people should, by particular agreement and joint resolution, set themselves, in a solemn and extraordinary manner, from time to time, to pray for the revival of religion in the world, it would naturally tend more to awaken in them a concern about things of this nature, and more of a desire after such a mercy; it would engage them to more attention to such an affair, make them more inquisitive about it, more ready to use endeavours to promote

that which they, with so many others, spend so much time in praying for, and more ready to rejoice and praise God when they see or hear of any thing of that nature or tendency; and in a particular manner, would it naturally tend to engage ministers (the business of whose life it is, to seek the welfare of the church of Christ, and the advancement of his kingdom) to greater diligence and earnestness in their work; and it would have a tendency to the spiritual profit and advantage of each particular person. For persons to be thus engaged in extraordinary praying for the revival and flourishing of religion in the world, will naturally lead each one to reflect on himself, and consider how religion flourishes in his own heart, and how far his example contributes to the thing that he is praying for.

9. There is great and particular encouragement given in the word of God, to express union and agreement in prayer. Daniel, when he had a great thing to request of God, viz. That God, by his Holy Spirit, would miraculously reveal to him a great secret, which none of the wise men, astrologers, magicians, or sooth-sayers of Babylon could find out, he goes to Hananiah, Mi-

shael and Azariah, his companions, and they agree together, that they will unitedly desire mercies of the God of heaven, concerning this secret; and their joint request was soon granted; and God put great honor upon them, above all the wise men of Babylon, to the filling their mouths with praise, and to the admiration and astonishment of Nebuchadnezzar; insomuch, that that great and haughty monarch, as we are told, fell upon his face and worshipped Daniel, and owned that *his God was of a truth a God of gods*, and greatly promoted Daniel and his praying companions in the province of Babylon. Esther, when she had a yet more important request to make, for the saving of the church of God, and whole nation of the Jews, dispersed through the empire of Persia, when on the brink of ruin, sends to all the Jews in the city Shushan, to pray and fast with her and her maidens; and their united prayers prevail, so that the event was wonderful; instead of the intended destruction of the Jews, the Jews enemies are destroyed every where, and they are defended, honored and promoted, and their sorrow and distress is turned into great gladness, feasting, triumph, and mutual joyful congratulations.

The encouragement to explicit agreement in prayer is great from such instances as these; but it is yet greater from those wonderful words of our blessed Redeemer. Mat. xviii. 19. *I say unto you, that if any two of you shall agree on earth touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven.* Christ is pleased to give this great encouragement to the union of his followers in this excellent and holy exercise of seeking and serving God; an holy union and communion of his people being that which he greatly desires and delights in, that which he came into the world to bring to pass, that which he especially prayed for with his dying breath, John xvii. that which he died for, and which was one chief end of the whole affair of our redemption by him. Eph. i. *In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace, wherein he hath abounded towards us in all wisdom and prudence; having made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure, which he hath proposed in himself; that in the dispensation of the fulness of times, he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him.*

P A R T III.

OBJECTIONS ANSWERED.

I COME now, as was proposed, in the *third* place, to answer and obviate some objections, which some may be ready to make against the thing that has been proposed to us.

Object. 1. Some may be ready to say, That for Christians, in such a manner to set apart certain seasons, every week, and every quarter, to be religiously observed and kept for the purposes proposed, from year to year, would be, in effect, to establish certain periodical times of human invention and appointment, to be kept holy to God, and so to do the very thing, that has ever been objected against, by a very great part of the most eminent Christians and Divines among Protestants, as what men have no right to do, it being for them to add to God's institutions, and introduce their own inventions and establishments into the stated worship of God, and lay unwarrantable bonds on mens' consciences, and do what naturally tends to superstition.

Ans. To this I would say, There can be no justice in such an objection against this

propofal, as made to us in the forementioned memorial. Indeed, that caution and prudence appears in the projection itfelf, and in the manner in which it is propofed to us, that there is not fo much as any colour for the objection. The propofal is fuch, and fo well guarded; that there feems to be no room for the weakeft Chriftian that well obferves it, fo to miftake it, as to underftand thofe things to be implied in it, that have, indeed, been objected againft, by many eminent Chriftians and Divines among Proteftants, as entangling mens' confciences, and adding to divine inftitutions, &c.—Here is no pretence of eftablifhing any thing by authority; no appearance of any claim of power in the propofers, or right to have any regard paid to their determinations or propofals, by virtue of any deference due to them, in any refpect, any more than to every individual perfon of thofe that they apply themfelves to. So far from that, that they exprefsly mention that which they have thought of, as what they would propofe to the thoughts of others, for their amendments and improvements, declaring that they chufe rather to receive and fpread the directions and propofals of others, than to be the firft authors

of any.—No times, not sanctified by God's own institution, are proposed to be observed more than others, under any notion of such times being, in any respect, more holy, or more honorable, or worthy of any preference, or distinguishing regard; either as being sanctified, or made honorable, by authority, or by any great events of Divine Providence, or any relation to any holy persons or things; but only as circumstantially convenient, helpful to memory, especially free from worldly business, near to the times of the administration of public ordinances, &c. None attempts to lay any bonds on others, with respect to this matter, or to desire that they should lay any bonds on themselves, or look on themselves as under any obligations, either by power or promise; or so much as come into any absolute determination in their own minds, to set apart any stated days from secular affairs, or even to fix on any part of such days, without liberty to alter circumstances, as shall be found expedient, and also liberty left to a future alteration of judgment, as to expediency, on further trial and consideration. All that is proposed is, that such as fall in with what is proposed in their judgments and inclinations, while they do

fo, fhall ftrengthen, affift and encourage their brethren that are of the fame mind, by vifibly confenting and joining with them in the affair. Is here any thing like making laws in matters of confcience and religion, or adding mens' institutions to God's, or any fhew of imposition, or fuperftitious esteeming and preferring one day above another, or any poffible ground of entanglement of any one's confcience?

For men to go about by law to eftablifh and limit circumftances of worship, not eftablifhed or limited by any law of God, fuch as precise time, place, and order, may be in many refpects of dangerous tendency. But furely it cannot be unlawful or improper for Chriftians to come into fome agreement with regard to thefe circumftances, for it is impoffible to carry on any focial worship without it. There is no institution of fcripture requiring any people to meet together to worship God in fuch a fpot of ground, or at fuch an hour of the day; but yet thefe muft be determined by agreement, or elfe there will be no focial worship, in any place, or any hour. So we are not determined by institution, what the precise order of the different parts of worship fhall be, what fhall

precede, and what shall follow; whether praying or singing shall be first, and what shall be next, and what shall conclude; but yet some order must be agreed on by the congregation that unite in worship, otherwise they cannot jointly carry on divine worship, in any way or method at all. If a congregation of Christians do agree to begin their public worship with prayer, and next to sing, and then to attend on the preaching of the word, and to conclude with prayer; and do by consent carry on their worship in this order from year to year, though this order is not appointed in scripture, none will call this superstition. And if a great number of congregations, through a whole land, or more lands than one do, by common consent, keep the same method of public worship, none will pretend to find fault with it. But yet for any to go about to bind all to such a method, would be usurpation and imposition. And if such a precise order should be regarded as sacred, as though no other could be acceptable to God, this would be superstition.—If a particular number of Christians shall agree, that besides the stated public worship of the sabbath, they will, when their circumstances allow, meet together to carry on

some religious exercises on a sabbath-day night, for their mutual edification; or if several societies agree to meet together in different places at that time, this is no superstition, though there be no institution for it. If people in different congregations voluntarily agree to take turns to meet together in the house of God, to worship him and hear a public lecture, once a month, or once in six weeks; it is not unlawful, though there be no institution for it; but yet to do this as a thing sacred, indispensable, and binding on mens' consciences, would be superstition. If Christians of several neighbouring congregations, instead of a lecture, agree on some special occasion to keep a circular fast, each congregation taking its turn in a certain time and order, fixed on by consent; or instead of keeping fast by turns, on different days, one on one week, and one on another, they should all agree to keep a fast on the same day, and to do this either once or frequently, according as they shall judge their own circumstances, or the dispensations of the Divine Providence, or the importance of the mercy they seek, do require; neither is there any more superstition in this than the other.

Object. 2. Some may be ready to say, there seems to be something whimsical in its being insisted on that God's people, in different places, should put up their prayers for this mercy at the same time, as though their prayers would be more forcible on that account, and as if God would not be so likely to hear prayers offered up by many, tho' they happened not to pray at the same time, as he would if he heard them all at the same moment.

Ans. To this I would say, If such an objection be made, it must be through misunderstanding. It is not signified or implied in any thing said in the proposal, or in any arguments made use of to enforce it that I have seen, that the prayers of a great number, in different places, will be more forcible, merely because of that circumstance, of their being put up at the same time. It is, indeed, supposed, that it will be very expedient, that certain times for united prayer should be agreed on; which it may be without implying the thing supposed in the objection, on the following accounts.

1. This seems to be a proper expedient for the promoting and maintaining an uni-

on among Christians of distant places, in extraordinary prayer for such a mercy. It appears, from what was before observed, that there ought to be extraordinary prayers among Christians for this mercy; and that it is fit, that God's people should agree and unite in it. Though there be no reason to suppose that prayers will be more prevalent, merely from that circumstance, that different persons pray exactly at the same time; yet there will be more reason to hope, that prayers for such mercy will be prevalent, when God's people are very much in prayer for it, and when many of them are united in it. If therefore agreeing on certain times for united and extraordinary prayer, be a likely means to promote an union of many in extraordinary prayer, then there is more reason to hope that there will be prevalent prayer for such a mercy, for certain times for extraordinary prayer being agreed on. But, that agreement on certain times for united extraordinary prayer, is a likely and proper means to promote and maintain such prayer, I think will be easily evident to any one that considers the matter. If there should be only a loose agreement or consent to it as a duty, or a thing fit and proper, that Chris-

tians should be much in prayer for the revival of religion, and much more in it than they used to be, without agreeing on particular times, how liable would such a lax agreement be to be soon forgotten, and that extraordinary prayerfulness, which is fixed to no certain times, to be totally neglected? To be sure, distant parts of the church of Christ could have no confidence in one another, that this would not be the case. If these ministers in Scotland, instead of the proposal they have made, or any other ministers or Christians in any part of the Christian world, had sent abroad only a general proposal, that God's people should, for the time to come, be much more in prayer for the advancement of Christ's kingdom, than had been common among Christians heretofore; and they should hear their proposal was generally allowed to be good, and that ministers and people, in one place and another, that had occasion to speak their minds upon it, owned that it was a very proper thing, that Christians should pray more for this mercy than they generally used to do; could they, from this only, have, in any measure, the like grounds of dependence, that God's people, in various parts of the

Christian world, would, indeed, henceforward act unitedly, in maintaining extraordinary prayer for this mercy, as if they should not only hear that the duty in general was approved of, but also that particular times were actually fixed on for the purpose, and an agreement and joint resolution was come into, that they would, unless extraordinarily hindered, set apart such particular seasons to be spent in this duty, from time to time, maintaining this practice for a certain number of years?

2. For God's people, in distant places, to agree on certain times for extraordinary prayer, wherein they will unitedly put up their requests to God, is a means fit and proper to be used, in order to the visibility of their union in such prayer. Union among God's people in prayer is truly beautiful, as has been before observed and shewn; it is beautiful in the eyes of Christ, and it is justly beautiful and amiable in the eyes of Christians. And if so, then it must needs be desirable to Christians that such union should be visible. If it would be a lovely sight in the eyes of the church of Christ, and much to their comfort, to behold various and dif-

ferent parts of the church united in extraordinary prayer for the general out-pouring of the Spirit, then it must be desirable to them that such an union should be visible, that they may behold it; for if it be not visible, it cannot be beheld. But agreement and union in a multitude in their worship becomes visible, by an agreement in some external visible circumstances. Worship itself becomes visible worship, by something external and visible belonging to the worship, and no other way; therefore union and agreement of many in worship becomes visible no other way, but by union and agreement in the external and visible acts and circumstances of the worship. Such union and agreement becomes visible, particularly by an agreement in those two visible circumstances, time and place. When a number of Christians live near together, and their number and situation is convenient, and they have a desire visibly to unite in any acts of worship, they are wont to make their union and agreement visible by an union in both these circumstances. But when a much greater number of Christians, dwelling in distant places, so that they cannot unite by worshipping in the same place, yet desire a visible

union in some extraordinary worship, they are wont to make their union and agreement visible, by agreeing only in the former of those circumstances, viz. that of time; as is common in the appointment of public fasts and thanksgivings; the same day is appointed, for the performance of that extraordinary worship, by all those Christians, in different places, that it is intended should be united therein, as a visible note of their union. This the common light and sense of God's people leads Christians to in all countries. And the wisdom of God seems to dictate the same thing, in appointing that his people, through the world, in all ages, in their stated and ordinary public worship, every week, should manifest this union and communion one with another, in their worship, as one holy society, and great congregation of worshippers, and servants of God, by offering up their worship on the same day, for the greater glory of their common Lord, and the greater edification and comfort of the whole body.

If any yet find fault with the proposal of certain times to be agreed on by God's people in different places, in the manner set forth in the memorial, I would ask whether

they object against any such thing, as a visible agreement of God's people, in different parts of the world, in extraordinary prayer, for the coming of Christ's kingdom? Whether such a thing, being visible, would not be much for the public honor of God's name? And whether it would not tend to Christians assistance, quickening and encouragement in the duty united in, by mutual example, and also to their mutual comfort, by a manifestation of that union which is amiable to Christ and Christians, and to promote a Christian union among professing Christians in general? And whether we have not reason to think, from the word of God, that before that great revival of religion foretold is accomplished, there will be a visible union of the people of God, in various parts of the world, in extraordinary prayer, for this mercy? If these things are allowed, I would then ask further, whether any method can be thought of or devised, whereby an express agreement, and visible union of God's people, in different parts of the world, can be come into, and maintained, but this, or some other equivalent to it? If there be any express agreement about any extraordinary

prayer at all, it must first be proposed by some, and others must fall in, in the manner as is represented in my text. And if extraordinary prayer be agreed on and maintained by many in different places, visibly one to another, then it must be agreed in some respect, and with regard to some circumstances, what extraordinary prayer shall be kept up; and it must be seen and heard of, from one to another, what extraordinary prayer is kept up. But how shall this be, when no times are agreed upon, and it is never known nor heard, by those in different parts, nor is in any respect visible to them, when, or how often, those in one town or country, and another do attend this extraordinary prayer? The consequence must necessarily be, that it can never be known how far, or in what respect others join with them in extraordinary prayer, or whether they do it at all; and not so much as one circumstance of extraordinary prayer will be visible; and indeed nothing will be visible about it. So that I think any body that well considers the matter, will see, that he who determines to oppose such a method as is proposed to us in the memorial, and all others equivalent to

it is, in effect, determined to oppose there ever being any such thing at all, as an agreed and visibly united extraordinary prayer, in the church of God, for a general out-pouring of the Spirit.

3. Though it would not be reasonable to suppose, that merely such a circumstance of prayer, as many people's praying at the same time will directly have any influence or prevalence with God, to cause him to be the more ready to hear prayer; yet such a circumstance may reasonably be supposed to have influence on the minds of men; as the consideration of it may tend to encourage and assist those in praying, that are united in prayer. Will any deny, that it has any reasonable tendency to encourage, animate, or in any respect to help the mind of a Christian in serving God in any duty of religion, to join with a Christian congregation, and to see an assembly of his dear brethren around him, at the same time engaged with him in the same duty? And supposing one in this assembly of saints is blind, and sees no one there, but has by other means ground of satisfaction that there is present at that

time a multitude of God's people, that are united with him in the same service, will any deny, that his supposing this, and being satisfied of it, can have any reasonable influence upon his mind, to excite and encourage him, or in any respect to assist him in his worship? The encouragement or help that one that joins with an assembly in worshipping God, has in his worship, by others being united with him, is not merely by any thing that he immediately perceives by sight, or any other of the external senses (for union in worship is not a thing objected to the external senses;) but by the notice or knowledge the mind has of that union, or the satisfaction the understanding has that others, at that time, have their minds engaged with him in the same service; which may be when those unitedly engaged are at a distance one from another, as well as when they are present. If one be present in a worshipping assembly, and is not blind, and sees others present, and sees their external behaviour, their union and engagedness with him in worship is what he does not see, and what he sees encourages and assists him in his worship, only as he takes it as an evidence of that union and concurrence in his worship, that

is out of his sight. And persons may have evidence of this concerning persons that are absent, that may give him as much satisfaction of their union with him, as if they were present. And therefore the consideration of others being at the same time engaged with him in worship, that are absent, may as reasonably animate and encourage him in his worship as if they were present.

There is no wisdom in finding fault with human nature, as God has made it. Things that exist now, at this present time, are, in themselves, no more weighty or important, than like things, and of equal reality, that existed in time past, or are to exist in time to come; yet it is evident, that the consideration of things being present (at least in most cases) does especially affect human nature. As for instance, if a man should be certainly informed, that his dear child, at a distance, was now under some extreme suffering, or that an absent most dear friend was at this time thinking of him, and in the exercise of great affection towards him, or in the performance of some great deed of friendship; or if a pious parent should know that now his child was in the act of some enormous wickedness; or that, on the contrary, he was

now in some eminent exercise of grace, and in the performance of an extraordinary deed of virtue and piety; would not those things be more affecting to the human nature, for being considered as things that are in existence at the present time, than if considered as at some distance of time, either past or future? Hundreds of other instances might be mentioned wherein it is no less plain, that the consideration of the present existence of things gives them advantage to affect the minds of men. Yea, it is undoubtedly so with things in general, that take any hold at all of our affections, and towards which we are not indifferent. And if the mind of a particular child of God is disposed to be affected by the consideration of the religion of other saints, and with their union and concurrence with him in any particular duty or act of religion, I can see no reason why the human mind should not be more moved by the object of its affection, when considered as present, as well in this case, as in any other case; yea, I think, we may on good grounds determine there is none.

Nor may we look upon it as an instance of the peculiar weakness of the human na-

ture, that men are more affected with things that are considered as present, than those that are distant; but it seems to be a thing common to finite minds, and so to all created intelligent beings. Thus, the angels in heaven have peculiar joy, on occasion of the conversion of a sinner, when recent, beyond what they have in that which has been long past. If any therefore shall call it silly and whimsical in any, to value and regard such a circumstance, in things of religion, as their existing at the present time, so as to be the more affected with them for that, they must call the host of angels in heaven a parcel of silly and whimsical beings.

I remember, the Spectator (whom none will call a whimsical author) somewhere speaking of different ways of dear friends mutually expressing their affection, and maintaining a kind of intercourse, in absence one from another, mentions such an instance as this, with much approbation, viz. That two friends, that were greatly endeared one to another, when about to part, and to be for a considerable time necessarily absent, that they might have the comfort of the enjoyment of daily mutual expressions of friendship, in their absence, agreed that they would, eve-

ry day, precisely at such an hour, retire from all company and business, to pray for one another. Which agreement they so valued, and so strictly observed, that when the hour came, scarce any thing would hinder them. And rather than miss this opportunity, they would suddenly break off conversation, and abruptly leave the company they were engaged with.—If this be a desirable way of intercourse of particular friends, is it not a desirable and amiable way of maintaining intercourse and fellowship between brethren in Christ Jesus, and the various members of the holy family of God, in different parts of the world, to come into an agreement, that they will set apart certain times, which they will spend with one accord, in extraordinary prayer to their heavenly Father, for the advancement of the kingdom, and the glory of their common dear Lord and Saviour, and for each other's prosperity and happiness, and the greatest good of all their fellow-creatures through the world?

Object. 3. Some perhaps may object, That it looks too much like Pharisaism, when persons engage in any such extraordinary religious exercises, beyond what is appointed by express institution, for them thus design-

edly to make it manifest abroad in the world, and so openly to distinguish themselves from others.

Ans. 1. All openly engaging in extraordinary exercises of religion, not expressly enjoined by institution, is not Pharisaism, nor has ever been so reputed in the Christian church. As when a particular church or congregation of Christians agree together to keep a day of fasting and prayer, on some special occasion; or when public days of fasting and thanksgiving are kept, throughout a Christian province or country; and though it be ordinarily the manner for the civil magistrate to lead, in the setting apart such days, yet that alters not the case; if it be Pharisaism in the society openly to agree in such extraordinary exercises of religion, it is not less Pharisaism for the heads of the society leading in the affair. And if that were now the case with the Christian church, that once was, for about three hundred years together, that the civil magistrate was not of the society of Christians, nor concerned himself in their affairs; yet this would not render it the less suitable for Christians, on proper occasions, jointly, and visibly one to another, to engage in such extraordinary ex-

ercises of religion, and to keep days of fasting and thanksgiving by agreement.

Ans. 2. As to the latter part of the objection, there can be no room for it in this case. It cannot be objected against what is proposed in the memorial, that if persons should comply with it, it would look like affecting singularity, and open distinction from others of God's professing people, in extraordinary religion, such as was in the Pharisees of old; because it is evident, the very design of the memorial, is not to promote singularity and distinction, but as much as possible to avoid and prevent it. The end of the memorial is not to confine and limit the thing proposed, that it may be practised only by a few, in distinction from the generality; but on the contrary to extend it, and make it as general among professing Christians as possible. Some had complied with the extraordinary duty proposed, and therein had been distinguished from others, for two years, before the memorial was published; and they were more distinguished than they desired, and therefore send abroad this memorial, that the practice might be more spread, and become more general, that they might be less distinguished. What they evidently seek, is

to bring to pass as general a compliance as possible of Christians of all denominations, “ intreating, that the desire of concurrence “ and assistance, contained in the memorial, “ may by no means be understood, as restric- “ ting to any particular denomination or “ party, or those who are of such or such “ opinions about any former instances of re- “ markable religious concern; but to be ex- “ tended to all, who shall vouchsafe any at- “ tention to the proposal, and have at heart “ the interest of vital Christianity, and the “ power of godliness; and who, however dif- “ fering about other things, are convinced “ of the importance of fervent prayer, to “ promote that common interest, and of “ scripture persuasives, to promote such “ prayer.

Object. 4. Another objection, that is very likely to arise in the minds of many against such extraordinary prayer as is proposed for the speedy coming of Christ’s kingdom, is that we have no reason to expect it, until there first come a time of most extreme calamity to the church of God, and prevalence of her anti-christian enemies against her; even that which is represented, Rev. xi. by the slaying

of the witnesses; but have reason to determine the contrary.

Ans. It is an opinion that seems pretty much to have obtained, that before the fulfilment of the promises relating to the church's latter-day glory, there must come a most terrible time, a time of extreme suffering, and dreadful persecution of the church of Christ, wherein Satan and Antichrist are to obtain their greatest victory over her, and she is to be bro't lower than ever by her enemies. Which opinion has chiefly risen from the manner of interpreting and applying the fore-mentioned prophecy of the slaying of the witnesses. This opinion, with such persons as retain it, must needs be a great restraint and hindrance, with regard to such an affair as is proposed to us in the memorial. If persons expect no other, than that the more the glorious times of Christ's kingdom are hastened, the sooner will come this dreadful time, wherein the generality of God's people must suffer so extremely, and the church of Christ be almost extinguished, and blotted out from under heaven; how can it be otherwise, than a great damp to their hope, courage and activity, in praying for and reaching after the speedy introduction of

those glorious promised times? As long as this opinion is retained, it will undoubtedly ever have this unhappy influence on the minds of those that wish well to Zion, and favor her stones and dust. It will tend to damp, deaden, and keep down life, hope, and joyful expectation in prayer; and even in great measure, to prevent all earnest, animated and encouraged prayer, in God's people, for this mercy, at any time before it is actually fulfilled. For they that proceed on this hypothesis in their prayers, must, at the same time that they pray for this glorious day, naturally conclude within themselves, that they shall never live to see on the earth any dawning of it, but only to see the dismal time that shall precede it, in which the far greater part of God's people, that shall live until then, shall die under the extreme cruelties of their persecutors. And the more they expect that God will answer their prayers, by speedy bringing on the promised glorious day, the more must they withal expect themselves to have a share in those dreadful things, that nature shrinks at the thoughts of, and also expect to see things that a renewed nature shrinks at and dreads; even the prevailing of God's enemies, and

the almost total extinguishing the true religion in the world. And on this hypothesis, these discouragements are like to attend the prayers of God's people, until that dismal time be actually come; and when that is come, those that had been prophesying and praying in sackcloth, shall generally be slain; and after that time is over, then the glorious day shall immediately commence. So that this notion tends to discourage and hinder all earnest prayer in the church of God for that glorious coming of Christ's kingdom, until it be actually come; and that is to hinder its ever being at all.

It being so, this opinion being of such hurtful tendency, certainly it is a thousand pities it should prevail and be retained, if truly there be no good ground for it.

Therefore in answer to this objection, I would, with all humility and modesty, examine the foundation of that opinion, of such a dreadful time of victory of Antichrist over the church, yet to be expected: and particularly shall endeavour to shew that the *slaying of the witnesses*, foretold, Rev. xi. 7—10. is not an event that remains yet to be fulfilled.—To this end, I would propose the following things to consideration.

1. The time wherein the *witnesses lie dead in the streets of the great city*, doubtless, signifies the time wherein the true church of Christ is lowest of all, most of all prevailed against by Antichrist, and nearest to an utter extinction; the time wherein there is left the least visibility of the church of Christ yet subsisting in the world, least remains of any thing appertaining to true religion, whence a revival of it can be expected, and wherein all means of it are most abolished, and the state of the church is, in all respects, furthest from any thing whence any hopes of its ever flourishing again might arise. For before this the witnesses *propheesy in sackcloth*, but now they are *dead*; before this they were kept low indeed, yet there was life, and power to bring plagues on their enemies, and so much of true religion left, as to be a continual eye-fore and torment to them; but now their enemies rejoice and feast, and have a general public triumph, as having obtained a full victory over them, and having entirely extirpated them, and being completely delivered from them, and all that might give them any fear of being troubled with them any more. This time, wherever it be fixed, doubtless, is the time, not only wherein fewest

professors of the true religion are left in the world, but a time wherein the truth shall be farthest out of sight, and out of reach, and most forgotten; wherein there are left fewest beams of light, or traces of truth, fewest means of information, and opportunities of coming to the knowledge of the truth; and so a time of the most barbarous ignorance, most destitute of all history, reliques, monuments and memory of things appertaining to true religion, or things, the knowledge of which hath any tendency to bring truth again to light, and most destitute of learning, study and enquiry.

Now, if we consider the present state of mankind, it is credible that a time will yet come in the world, that in these respects exceeds all times that were before the Reformation? And that such a time will come before the fall of Antichrist, unless we set that at a much greater distance, than the farthest that any yet have supposed? It is next to impossible, that such a change should be brought about in so short a time—it cannot be without a miracle. In order to it, not only must the Popish nations so prevail, as utterly to extirpate the Protestant religion through the earth, but must do many other

things, far more impossible for them to effect, in order to cover the world with so gross and confirmed a darkness, and to bury all light and truth in so deep an oblivion, and so far out of all means and hopes of a revival. And not only must a vast change be made in the Protestant world, but the Popish nations must be strangely metamorphosed, and they themselves must be terribly persecuted by some other power, in order to bring them to such a change; nor would persecution without extirpation be sufficient for it. If there should be another universal deluge, it might be sufficient to bring things in the world to such a pass, provided a few ignorant barbarous persons only were preserved in an ark; and it would require some catastrophe, not much short of this, to effect it.

2. In the Reformation, that was in the days of Luther, Calvin, and others their contemporaries, the threatened destruction of Antichrist, that dreadful enemy that had long oppressed and worn out the saints, was begun; nor was it a small beginning, but Antichrist hath fallen, at least, halfway to the ground, from that height of power and

grandeur, that he was in before. Then began the vials of God's wrath to be *poured out on the throne of the beast*, to the great shaking of its foundations, and diminution of its extent; so that the Pope lost near half of his former dominions, and as to degree of authority and influence over what is left, he is not possessed of what he had before. God now at length, in answer to the long continued cries of his people, awaked as one out of sleep, and began to deliver his church from her exceeding low state, that she had continued in for many ages, under the great oppression of this grand enemy, and to restore her from her exile and bondage in the spiritual Babylon and Egypt. And it is not agreeable to the analogy of God's dispensations, that after this, God should desert his people, and hide himself from them, even more than before, and leave them more than ever in the hands of their enemy, and all this advantage of the church against Antichrist should be entirely given up and lost, and the power and tyranny of Antichrist be more confirmed, and the church brought more under, and more entirely subdued than ever before, and further from all help and means to recover. This is not God's way

of dealing with his people, or with their enemies; his work of salvation is perfect—when he has begun such a work he will carry it on—when he once causes the day of deliverance to dawn to his people, after such a long night of dismal darkness, he will not extinguish the light, and cause them to return again to midnight darkness—when he has begun to enkindle the blessed fire, he will not quench the smoking flax, until he hath brought forth judgment unto victory. When once the church, after her long labour and fore travail, has brought forth her man-child, and wrought some deliverance, her enemies shall never be able to destroy this child, though an infant, but it shall ascend up to heaven, and be set on high out of their reach.

The destruction that God often foretold and threatened to ancient Babylon (which is often referred to in the Revelation, as a great type of the anti-christian church) was gradually accomplished, and fulfilled by various steps, at a great distance of time one from another; it was begun in the conquest of Cyrus, and was further accomplished by Darius, about eighteen years after, by a yet

greater destruction, wherein it was brought much nearer to utter desolation; but it was about two hundred and twenty-three years after this, before the ruin of it was perfected, and the prophecies against it fully accomplished, in its being made an utter and perpetual desolation, without any human inhabitant, becoming the dwelling-place for owls, dragons, and other doleful creatures. But yet when God had once begun to destroy her, he went on until he finished, and never suffered her any more to recover and establish her former empire. So the restitution of the Jewish church, after the Babylonish captivity, was gradual, by various steps; there were several times of return of the Jews from captivity, and several distinct decrees of the Persian emperors, for the restoring and rebuilding Jerusalem, and re-establishing the Jewish church and state; and it was done in turbulent times, there were great interruptions and checks, and violent oppositions, and times wherein the enemy did much prevail: But yet, when God had once begun the work he also made an end; he never suffered the enemies of the Jews to bring Jerusalem to such a state of desolation as it had been in before, until

the promised restoration was complete. Again, the deliverance of God's church from the oppression of Antiochus Epiphanes, (another known type of Antichrist) was gradual; they were first assisted in a small degree, by the Maccabees, and afterwards the promised deliverance was completed, in the recovery of Jerusalem, the restoration of the temple, the miserable end of Antiochus, and the consequent more full deliverance of the whole land. But after God once began to appear for the help of his church in that instance, after it seemed dead and past all hope, he never suffered Antiochus to prevail against his people, to that degree, again; though the utmost strength of this great monarch was used, from time to time, in order to it, and his vast empire was engaged against an handful that opposed them: God never forsook the work of his own hands; when he had begun to deliver his people, he also made an end. And so Haman, that proud and inveterate enemy of the Jews, that tho't to extirpate the whole nation, who also was probably another type of Antichrist, when he began to fall before Esther and Mordecai, never stayed, until his ruin, and the church's deliverance was complete. Haman's wife

speaks of it, as an argument of his approaching inevitable full destruction, that he *had begun to fall*, Esth. vi. 15.

3. If it should be so, that anti-christian tyranny and darkness should hereafter so prevail against the Protestant church, and the true religion, and every thing appertaining to it, as to bring things to the pass fore-mentioned, this would hardly so properly answer the prophecy of slaying the two witnesses; for, doubtless, one reason why they are called two witnesses is, that the number of the remaining witnesses for the truth was, though sufficient, yet very small. Which was remarkably the case, in the dark times of Popery; but since the Reformation the number of those appearing on the side of true religion, has been far from being so small. —The visible church of Christ has been vastly large, in comparison of what it was before; the number of Protestants has sometimes been thought nearly equal to that of the Papists; and, doubtless, the number of true saints has been far greater than before.

4. It seems to be signified in prophecy, that after the Reformation, Antichrist should never prevail against the church of Christ any more, as he had done before. I cannot

but think, that whoever reads and well considers what the learned Mr. Lowman has written on the five first vials, Rev. xvi. in his late Exposition on the Revelation, must think it to be very manifest, that what is said, verse 10, of the pouring out of the fifth vial *on the throne of the beast*, (for so it is in the original) is a prophecy of the Reformation. Then the vial of God's wrath was poured out on the throne of the beast, *i. e.* according to the language of scripture, on his authority and dominion, greatly to weaken and diminish it, both in extent and degree. But when this is represented in the prophecy, then it is added, *and his kingdom was full of darkness, and they gnawed their tongues for pain*. If we consider what is commonly intended by such like phrases in the scripture, I think we shall be naturally, and, as it were, necessarily led to understand those words thus: Their policy, by which heretofore they have prevailed, shall now fail them; their authority shall be weakened, and their dominion greatly diminished, and all their craft and subtilty shall not avail them to maintain and support the throne of the beast, or even again to extend his authority so far as it had been before extended,

and to recover what it lost; but all their crafty devices to this end shall be attended with vexatious tormenting disappointment; they that have the management of the affairs of the beast's kingdom, shall henceforward grope as in the dark, and stumble, and be confounded in their purposes, plots and enterprizes; formerly their policy was greatly successful, was as a light to guide them to their ends, but now their kingdom shall be full of darkness, and their wisdom shall fail them in all their devices to subdue, and again to bring under the church of God.—The scripture takes notice of the great policy and subtilty of the powers that support this kingdom, Dan. vii. 8. *And, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of a man.* So it is said of Antiochus Epiphanes, that great type of Antichrist, Dan. viii. 23. *A king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up. Ver. 25. And thro' his policy also, shall he cause craft to prosper in his hand.* This understanding and policy is the light of this kingdom, as true wisdom is the light of the spiritual Jerusalem. And, therefore, when the light fails, then may the kingdom of this spiritual Egypt be said to be full of darkness. God hencefor-

ward will defend his people from these mystical Egyptians, as he defended Israel of old from Pharaoh and his host, when pursuing after them, by placing a cloud and darkness in their way, and so not suffering them to come nigh. So he will protect his church from the men of that city that is spiritually called Sodom, as Lot's house, wherein were the angels, was defended from the men of Sodom, by their being smitten with darkness or blindness, so that they wearied themselves to find the door; and as God defended the city in which was Elisha the prophet, and witness of the Lord, from the Syrians, when they compassed it about with horses and chariots, and a great host to apprehend him, by smiting them with blindness. The scripture teaches us, that God is wont in this way to defend his church and people from their crafty and powerful enemies, Job v. 11, &c. *To set up on high those that be low, that those which mourn may be exalted to safety: He disappointeth the devices of the crafty, so that their hands cannot perform their enterprize: He taketh the wise in their own craftiness, and the counsel of the forward is carried headlong: They meet with darkness in the day-time, and grope in the*

noon-day as in the night; but he saveth the poor from the sword, from their mouth, and from the hand of the mighty. Psal. xxxv. 4. 6. Let them be confounded and put to shame, that seek after my soul; let them be turned back, and brought to confusion. that devise my hurt — Let their way be dark and slippery.

Upon the account of such defence of God's Protestant church, and disappointment and confusion of all the subtle devices, deep-laid schemes, and furious attempts of their anti-christian enemies, to bring them under; and root them out, and their seeing them still maintaining their ground, and subsisting in an independency on them, in spite of all that they do, it makes them as it were gnash their teeth, and bite their tongues for mere rage and vexation; agreeable to Psal. cxii. 9, 10. *His righteousness endureth for ever, his horn shall be exalted with honour: The wicked shall see it and be grieved, and gnash with his teeth and melt away: The desire of the wicked shall perish.*

Hitherto this prophecy has been very significantly fulfilled; since the Reformation, the kingdom of Antichrist has been remarkably filled with darkness in this respect. Innu-

merable have been the crafty devices, and great attempts of the church of Rome, wherein they have exerted their utmost policy and power, to recover their lost dominions, and again to subjugate the Protestant nations, and subdue the northern heresy, as they call it. They have wearied themselves in these endeavours for more than two hundred years past; but have hitherto been disappointed, and have often been strangely confounded. When their matters seemed to be brought to a ripeness, and they triumphed as though their point was gained, their joy and triumph has suddenly turned into vexation and torment. How many have been their politic and powerful attempts against the Protestant interest in our nation in particular? And how wonderfully has God disappointed them from time to time! And as God has hitherto so remarkably fulfilled his word in defending his Protestant church from Antichrist, so I think we have ground to trust in him, that he will defend it to the end.

5, The hypothesis of those who suppose the slaying of the witnesses is a thing that yet remains to be fulfilled, makes the prophecies of the Revelation to be inconsistent

one with another. According to their hypothesis, that battle, Rev. xi. 7. wherein the beast makes war with the witnesses, and overcomes them, and kills them, is the last and greatest conflict between Antichrist and the church of Christ, which is to precede the utter overthrow of the anti-christian kingdom. And they must suppose so, for they suppose, that immediately after the sufferings the church shall endure in that war, she shall arise, and, as it were, ascend into heaven; *i. e.* as they interpret it, the church shall be directly advanced to her latter-day rest, prosperity and glory. And consequently, this conflict must be the same with that great battle between Antichrist and the Church, that is described, chap. xvi. 13. to the end, and more largely, chap. xix. 11. to the end. For that which is described in these places, is most evidently and indisputably the greatest and last battle or conflict that shall be between the church and her anti-christian enemies, on which the utter downfall of Antichrist, and the church's advancement to her latter-day glory, shall be immediately consequent. And so the earthquake that attends the resurrection of the witnesses, chap. xi. 13. must be the same with that

great earthquake that is described, chap. xvi. 18. And the falling of the tenth part of the city must be the same with that terrible and utter destruction of Antichrist's kingdom, chap. xvi. 17. to the end.

But these things cannot be. The battle, chap. xi. 7. cannot be the same with that last and great battle between the Church and Antichrist, described, chap. xvi. and xix.—For the things that are said of one and the other, and their issue, are in no wise consistent. In that battle, chap. xi. the church of God conflicts with her enemies in sorrow, sackcloth, and blood; but in the other the matter is represented exceedingly otherwise—the church goes forth to fight with Antichrist, not in sackcloth and blood, but clothed in white raiment, Christ himself before them, as their captain, going forth in great pomp and magnificence, upon a *white horse*, and *on his head many crowns*, and *on his vesture, and on his thigh, a name written, KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS*; and the saints who follow so glorious a leader to this great battle, follow him on *white horses*, *cloathed in fine linen, white and clean*, in garments of strength, joy, glory and triumph; in the same kind of raiment, that the

saints appear in, when' they are represented as triumphing with Christ, with palms in their hands, chap. vii. 9. And the issue of the latter of these conflicts, is quite the reverse of the former. In the battle, chap. xi. 7. *The beast makes war with the witnesses, and OVERCOMES THEM, AND KILLS THEM*; the same is foretold, Dan. vii. 21. *I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them.*—And Rev. xii. 7. *And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them.* But in the issue of that last and great battle, which the church shall have with her anti-christian enemies, the church shall *OVERCOME THEM, AND KILL THEM*, Rev. xvii. 14. *These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them; for he is Lord of Lords, and King of Kings; and they that are with him, are called, and chosen, and faithful,* compared with chapter xix. 16, and following verses, and chapter xvi. 16, 17. In the conflict that the beast shall have with the witnesses, *the beast kills them, and their dead bodies lie unburied*; as though they were to be meat for the beasts of the earth, and fowls of heaven; but in that last battle, it is represented that Christ and his church *shall slay their e-*

nemies, and give their dead bodies to be meat for the fowls of heaven, chap. xix. 17. to the end. There is no manner of appearance, in the descriptions which are given of that last great battle, of any advantages gained in it, by the enemies of the church, before they themselves are overcome, but all appearance of the contrary. Be sure the descriptions in the xvi. and xix. chapters of the Revelation will, by no means, allow of such an advantage, as the overcoming God's people, and slaying them, and their lying dead for some time, and unburied, that their dead bodies may be for their enemies to abuse, and trample on, and make sport with. In chap. xvi. we read of their being gathered together against the church, a mighty host, into the place called Armageddon, and then the first thing we hear of, is the pouring out the seventh vial of God's wrath, and a voice saying—*It is done.* And so in the xix. chap. we have an account of the *beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, being gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army.* And then the next thing we hear of is, that *the beast is taken, and with him the false prophet; and that these are both cast alive into the lake of fire; and*

that *the remnant of their vast army are slain, and all the fowls filled with their flesh.* The issue of the conflict of the beast with the witnesses, is the triumph of the church's enemies over God's people, looking on them as entirely vanquished, and their interest utterly ruined, past all possibility of recovery: *They that dwell on the earth shall see the dead bodies of the saints lying in the streets of the great city, and shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and send gifts one to another.—* But the issue of that great and last battle is quite the reverse; it is the church's triumph over her enemies, as being utterly and for ever destroyed.

Here, if any one shall say, that the ascension of the witnesses into heaven in the sight of their enemies, may, as has more generally been supposed, signify the church's last victory and triumph over her anti-christian enemies, and final deliverance from them, and yet the battle between Antichrist and the witnesses, spoken of, Rev. xi. 7. wherein the witnesses are slain, may not be the same with that last and greatest battle between Antichrist and the church, chap. xvi. and xix. which immediately precedes and issues in the church's final victory and deli-

verance; there may be two great battles, soon following one another, though both are not mentioned in the same place; one a conflict, wherein Antichrist prevails against the witnesses, and overcomes them, and kills them, and another that great battle described, chap. xvi. and xix. after the witnesses resurrection, before their ascension into heaven, wherein they shall prevail and overcome their enemies, and kill them: I say, if any one shall say thus, they will say that which the prophecies give no reason, nor allow any room to suppose. That last battle between the Church and Antichrist, wherein Christ and his people obtain a complete victory, is evidently one of the greatest and remarkable events foretold in all the Apocalypse; and there is no one thing, unless it be the consummation of all things, in the two last chapters, that is described in so solemn and august a manner. And the description shews that it is an event which, with its circumstances, must take up much time. There is vast preparation made for it by the church's enemies; the devils, in order to stir men up, and gather them together, to this *battle of that great day of God Almighty, go forth unto the kings of the earth,*

and of the whole world, to propagate various kinds of delusions, far and wide, all over the world; which, undoubtedly, must take up many years time, chap. xvi. 13, 14. And then great preparation is made in the church of God, to make opposition, chap. xix. 11—17. Now can any reasonably suppose, that in what is represented, chap. xi. of a great conflict between Antichrist and God's people, wherein the latter are overcome and slain, and lie dead three days (or three years) and a half, and their enemies triumphing over them, but God's people rising again from the dead in the midst of this triumph of their enemies, and ascending into heaven, while the enemies stand astonished and amazed spectators—that the manner of the description leaves fair room for us to suppose, that after this resurrection of God's people, they continue long before they ascend, to encounter with Antichrist in a new conflict, wherein their enemies, after long time to prepare, should engage with them with vastly greater preparations, strength and violence than before, and should wage war with the mightiest army that ever was gathered against the church, and in the greatest battle that ever was fought!

And besides, the witnesses ascending into heaven in the sight of their enemies, spoken of chap. xi. cannot be the same with the church's gaining a glorious ascendant over her enemies, in her final victory over Antichrist, spoken of chap. xvi. and xix. because the descriptions of the events that attend the one and the other do by no means answer each other. For, observe, it is said, that when the witnesses *arose, and stood on their feet, and ascended into heaven, the same hour there was a great earthquake*; but this does not seem to answer to what is described, chap. xvi. 18. *And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings, and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great.*—It is said, that at the same time of the first earthquake, chap. xi. 13. *The tenth part of the city fell*; but how far does this fall short of what is described, as attending the great earthquake? chap. xv. 19, 20. *And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell; and great Babylon came into remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath; and every island fled away, and the*

mountains were not found. It is said of the earthquake, chap. xi. *And in the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand;* but how far is this from answering the slaughter described, chap. xix. 17, &c. Which is represented as a general slaughter of the kings, captains, mighty men, horses, and armies of the earth, and of the whole world; so that all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, as far as the sun shines, are filled with the flesh of the dead carcases, it being the *flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great;* (compare chap. xvi. 14.) who can think, that this great slaughter, that is thus represented, should, in chap. xi. be only called a *slaying of seven thousand men?*

If we read this very eleventh chapter thro', we shall see that the falling of the tenth part of the city, and the witnesses rising and ascending into heaven, are entirely distinct from the final destruction of Antichrist, and that advancement of the church to her latter-day glory, that is consequent upon it.—The judgments here spoken of, as executed on God's enemies, are under another woe; and the benefits bestowed on the church, are under another trumpet. For immediately after the account of the rising and ascend-

ing of the witnesses, and the tenth part of the city's falling, and the slaying of the seven thousand men, and the affrighting of the rest, and their giving glory to the God of heaven, follow these words in the 14th and 15th verses, *The second woe is past, and behold the third woe cometh quickly. And the seventh angel sounded, and there were great voices in heaven, saying—The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever.* And in the following verses, we have an account of the praises sung to God on this occasion. And then in that last verse, we have a brief hint of that same earthquake, and the great hail, and those thunders, and lightnings, and voices, that we have an account of in the latter part of chap. xvi. So that the earthquake mentioned in the last verse of chap. xi. is that great earthquake that attends the last great conflict of the church and her enemies, and not that mentioned ver. 13.

The three woes are the woes of God on Antichrist and his subjects; and the third and last of them evidently signifies the terrible judgments of God on Antichrist, by which God's wrath upon him shall be ful-

filled in his utter destruction; but the calamities on Antichrist; spoken of as attending the rising and ascending of the witnesses, such as the falling of the tenth part of the city, and slaying seven thousand men, do not belong to this last woe, and therefore do not signify the final destruction of Antichrist; for the words of verse 14. will by no means allow of such a supposition; for there, immediately after giving an account of these calamities, it is added—*The second woe is past; and, behold, the third woe cometh quickly;* making a most plain and express distinction between these calamities that had already been mentioned, and especially these that were just then mentioned in the very last words, and the calamities that belong to the third woe, that yet remain to be mentioned; for by being passed, the prophet is to be understood no otherwise than passed in the declaration and representation—it was not past in any other respect; it is as much as to say, Thus an account has been given of the calamities upon Antichrist that belong to the second woe; now I proceed to give an account of those dispensations of Providence that belong to the third and last woe, which shall prove Antichrist's final destruction, end

in the kingdoms of this world becoming the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ.

What was fulfilled in the Reformation, well answers the representation made concerning the witnesses, Rev. xi. 11. 12. *Of the spirit of life from God entering into them, and their standing on their feet, and ascending up to heaven, in the sight of their enemies.* A little before the Reformation, the state of the church of God, and of true religion was lowest of all, and nearest to utter extinction.—Antichrist had, after great and long struggles, prevailed against the Waldenses, Albigenses, and Bohemians. The war with the Albigenses seems especially to be intended by the war of the beast with the witnesses, spoken of verse 7. These were witnesses to the truth that were the most numerous and considerable, and those that most tormented the church of Rome. And the war that was maintained against them, was, by far, the greatest that ever Antichrist had against any of the professors of the truth, before the Reformation, and was properly the war of the beast; it was the Pope that proclaimed the war, and that raised the soldiers by his emissaries and priests, preaching the cross, gathering innumerable multitudes of pilgrims

from all parts of Christendom, and raising one croifade after another, which were conducted and managed by the Pope's legates; and it was the Pope that paid the soldiers with pardons, indulgences, promises of Paradise, and such like trumpery. When Antichrist had gradually prevailed against these witnesses, with much difficulty, and long continued violent struggling, and after innumerable vexatious disasters and disappointments, the church of God, in the time of Luther, and other reformers, on a sudden, in a wonderful manner, revives, when such an event was least expected, (to the surprize and amazement of their anti-christian enemies) and appears in such strength, that the reformed are able to stand on their own legs, and to withstand all the power and rage of the church of Rome. Presently after this revival, the people of God are set on high, having the civil magistrate in many countries on their side, and henceforward have the power of many potent princes engaged for their protection. And this, in sight of their enemies, and greatly to their grief and vexation; who, though they, from time to time, exert their utmost, never are able to prevail against them, to bring them

under any more, as they had done in former wars. Oftentimes, in scripture, God's church's dwelling in safety, out of the reach of their enemies, is represented by their dwelling on high, or being set on high; as Psal. lix. 1. lxix. 29. xci. 14. cvii. 41. Prov. xxix. 25. Isai. xxxiii. 16. The children of Israel, in their deliverance out of Egypt, from their cruel task-masters, who would fain have brought them into bondage again, were said *to be carried on eagle's wings*; which is lofty in its flight, flies away towards heaven, so that the Egyptians could not come at them; and they were protected by the cloud that went with them, as the witnesses are said to be caught up to heaven in a cloud. Compare this with Isai. iv. 5. *And the Lord will create upon every dwelling-place of Mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night; for upon all the glory shall be a defence.*

I shall not pretend to explain the mystery of the three days and a half of the witnesses lying dead, or to determine the precise duration signified by that mystical representation. Possibly no particular measure of time may be intended by it, and yet it may not

be without significancy.* As no particular number of persons is intended by the two witnesses, but, in general, it intends a small number, and yet a sufficient number; and as small as might be, and yet be sufficient; as less than two witnesses was not sufficient, so, perhaps, no particular duration of that low state that the church was in before the Reformation, may be intended by three days and an half, but, in general, it may be hereby signified, that this time of the triumphing of the wicked, and extremity of God's church, should be but short. Possibly three days and an half may be mentioned, because that is the utmost space of time that a dead body can be ordinarily supposed to lie without putrefaction, signifying that at this time the church should be brought to the very brink of utter ruin, and yet should be preserved, and revive again. And half a day may be mentioned to

N O T E.

* Mr. Lowman, in the preface to his Paraphrase on the Revelation, page 3, observes as follows: *Prophetic numbers do not always express a determinate duration, or space of time, any more than they always express a certain number. Prophecy, I acknowledge, uses numbers sometimes as other expressions, in a figurate meaning, as symbols and hieroglyphics. Thus the number SEVEN sometimes does not denote the precise number seven; but figuratively denotes perfection, or a full and complete number; and the number ten sometimes does not mean precisely ten in number, but many in general, or a considerable number.*

signify the particular care of Providence in exactly determining this time of his church's extremity. And probably there may be some reference to the three times (or three years) and an half of the witnesses prophesying in sackcloth: the more apparently to shew the disproportion between the time of the church's welfare, and the time of her enemies victory and triumph; the time of the church's affliction and conflict may be long, and in the issue she may be overcome; but the time of this victory shall be but short, in comparison with the other, but as a day to a year; she may, as it were, be killed, and lie dead, until she comes to the very brink of utter and hopeless ruin, but yet God will not suffer her to see corruption; but at that very time, when her enemies expected that she should putrify, she shall rise, and be set on high, out of their reach, greatly to their astonishment.

The grand objection against all this is, that it is said, that *the witnesses should prophesy twelve hundred and sixty days clothed in sackcloth; and when they have finished their testimony, the beast should make war against them, and kill them, &c.* and that it seems manifest, that after this, they are no longer in

sackcloth, for henceforward they are in an exalted state in heaven; and that, therefore, seeing the time of their wearing sackcloth is twelve hundred and fifty days, which is the time of the continuance of Antichrist; hence their being slain and rising again, must be at the conclusion of this period, and so at the end of Antichrist's reign.

In answer to which I would say, that we can justly infer no more from this prophecy than this, viz. That the twelve hundred and sixty days is the proper time of the church's trouble and bondage, or being cloathed in sackcloth, because it is the appointed time of the reign of Antichrist. But this does not hinder but that God, out of his great compassion to his church, should, in some respect, shorten the days, and grant that she should, in some measure, anticipate the appointed great deliverance that should be at the end of those days; as he has, in fact, done in the Reformation, whereby the church has had a great degree of restoration granted, from the darkness and power of Antichrist, before her proper time of restoration, which is at the end of the twelve hundred and sixty days. Thus the church of Christ, through the tender mercies of her Father and Redeemer, in

some respects, anticipates her deliverance from her sorrows and sackcloth; as many parts of the church are hereby brought from under the dominion of the anti-christian powers, into a state of power and liberty, though, in other respects, the church may be said to continue in sackcloth, and in the wilderness, until the end of the days; many parts of it still remaining under grievous persecution.

What we render, *When they shall have finished their testimony*, Mr. Lowman, from Mr. Daubuz, renders, *While they shall perform their testimony*; and observes, that the original may mean the time of their testimony, as well as the end of it.

I might here observe, that we have other instances of God's shortening the days of his church's captivity and bondage, either at the beginning or end, very parallel with what has been now supposed in the case of the witnesses. Thus the proper time of the bondage of the posterity of Abraham in Egypt, was four hundred years, Gen. xv. 13. But yet God in mercy deferred the beginning of their bondage, whereby the time was much shortened at the beginning. So the time wherein it was foretold, that the *whole land of Is-*

rael should be a desolation and an astonishment, and the land should enjoy her sabbaths, by the Babylonish captivity, was seventy years, Jer. xxv. 11, 12. and these seventy years are dated in 2d Chro. xxxvi. 20, 21. from Zedekiah's captivity; and yet, from that captivity to Cyrus's decree, was but fifty-two years; though it was indeed seventy years before the more full restoration of the Jewish church and state by Darius's decree, Ezra vi. So the proper time of the oppression and bondage of the Jewish church under Antiochus Epiphanes, wherein *both the sanctuary and host should be trodden under foot by him, was two thousand three hundred days*, Dan. viii. 13, 14. The time from Antiochus's taking Jerusalem, and polluting the sanctuary, to Antiochus's death, seems to have been about so long; but God shortened the days, by granting remarkable help to his people by means of the Maccabees, before that time; yea, the temple and sanctuary were restored, and the altar rebuilt and dedicated before that time.

Upon the whole, I think there appears to be no reason from the prophecy concerning the two witnesses, Rev. xi. to expect any such general and terrible destruction of the church of Christ, before the utter downfall of

Antichrist, as some have supposed, but good reason to determine the contrary. It is true, there is abundant evidence in scripture, that there is yet remaining a mighty conflict between the church and her enemies, the most violent struggle of Satan and his adherents, in opposition to true religion, and the most general commotion that ever was in the world, since the foundation of it to that time; and many particular Christians, and some parts of the church of Christ, may suffer hard things in this conflict; but, in the general, Satan and Antichrist shall not get the victory, nor greatly prevail, but, on the contrary, be entirely conquered, and utterly overthrown, in this great battle. So that I hope this prophecy of the slaying of the witnesses will not stand in the way of a compliance with the proposal made to us in the memorial, as a prevalent objection and discouragement.

Object. 5. A late very learned and ingenious Expositor of the Revelation, viz. Mr. Lowman, sets the fall of Antichrist, and consequently the coming of Christ's kingdom, at a great distance, supposing that the twelve hundred and sixty years of Antichrist's reign did not begin till the year seven hundred

and fifty-six; and consequently, that it will not end until after the year two thousand, more than two hundred and fifty years hence, and this opinion he confirms by a great variety of arguments.

Ans. 1. If this objection be allowed to be valid, and that which ought to determine persons in an affair of this nature, and those things concerning God's people praying for this glorious event, be also allowed to be true, which before were shewn to be the will of God abundantly revealed in his word, then the following things must be supposed, viz. That it is the will of God that his people be much in prayer for this event, and particularly that it is God's revealed will and purpose, that, a little before the accomplishment of it, his people be earnestly seeking and waiting, and importunately and incessantly crying to God for it; but yet that it was God's design, that before this time comes of extraordinary prayer and importunity of his church, for the bringing on this glorious event, his church should have it given them to understand precisely when the appointed time should be, and that accordingly he has now actually brought the fixed time to light by means of Mr. Lowman.—

But is it reasonable to suppose, that this should be God's manner of dealing with his church, first to make known to them the precise time which he has unalterably fixed for the shewing this mercy to Zion, and then make it the duty of his church, in an extraordinary manner, to be, by prayer, enquiring of him concerning it, and saying—*How long, Lord!* and waiting for it, day and night, crying to him, with exceeding importunity, that he would bring it on, that he would come quickly, that he would hide himself no longer, but would arise and have mercy upon Zion, and awake as one out of sleep, openly manifest himself, and make bare his holy arm for the salvation of his people? That *they that make mention of the Lord should not keep silence, nor give him any rest, until he establish and make Jerusalem a praise on the earth?* And that the church should then say to Christ, *Make haste, my beloved, and be thou like a roe or a young hart on the mountain of spices?*

It may be many ways for the comfort and benefit of God's church in her afflicted state, to know that the reign of Antichrist is to be no more than one thousand two hundred and sixty years; and some things in general

may be argued concerning the approach of it, when it is near: as the Jews could argue the approach of Christ's first coming, from Daniel's prophecy of the seventy weeks, though they knew not precisely when that seventy weeks would end. But it is not reasonable to expect that God should make known to us beforehand, the precise time of Christ's coming in his kingdom. The disciples desired to know this, and manifested their desire to their Lord, but he told them plainly, that *it was not for them to know the times and seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power*, Acts i. 6, 7. and there is no reason to think that it is any more for us than for them, or for Christ's disciples in these days, any more than for his apostles in those days. God makes it the duty of his church to be importunately praying for it, and praying that it may come speedily; and not only to be praying for it, but to be seeking for it, in the use of proper means, endeavouring that religion may now revive every where, and Satan's kingdom be overthrown; and always to be waiting for it, being in a constant preparation for it, as servants that wait for the coming of their lord, or virgins for the coming of the bridegroom,

not knowing at what hour he will come.— But God's making known beforehand the precise time of his coming, does not well consist with these things.

It is the revealed will of God, that he should be enquired of by his people, by extraordinary prayer, concerning this great mercy, to do it for them, before it be fulfilled. And if any suppose, that it is now found out precisely when the time is to be, and (the time being at a considerable distance) that now is not a proper season to begin this extraordinary prayer, I would, on this supposition, ask—When we shall begin? How long before the fixed and known time of the bestowment of this mercy comes, shall we begin to cry earnestly to God that this mercy may come, and that Christ would make haste and be like a roe, &c. For us to delay, supposing that we know the time to be far off, is not agreeable to the language of God's people in my text—*Come, let us go SPEEDILY, and pray before the Lord, and seek the Lord of Hosts.*

Ans. 2. I acknowledge that Mr. Lowman's Exposition of the Revelation is, on many accounts, excellently written, giving great light

into some parts of that prophecy, and an instance of the fulfillment of that prediction, Dan. xii. 4. *Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased;* and especially in his Interpretation of the Five First Vials, (which he supposeth already poured out) exceedingly satisfying. But yet the opinion of Mr. Lowman, with regard to the particular time of the beginning and end of the time, times, and an half of Antichrist's reign, and of all others that pretend to fix the time, is the least to be regarded, because it is clearly revealed, and expressly declared by God, that that matter shall be sealed up and hid, and not known until the time of the end of this time, times, and an half. Daniel, in the last chapter of his prophecy, gives us an account, how the angel told him of a future time of great trouble and affliction to the church of God, and then said to him, ver. 4. *But thou, O Daniel, SHUT UP THE WORDS, AND SEAL THE BOOK, EVEN TO THE TIME OF THE END.* And then the prophet proceeds to give an account of a vision that he had of one earnestly enquiring of the angel of the Lord *how long it would be to the end* of this remarkable and wonderful time of the church's trouble, saying, *How long shall*

it be to the end of these wonders? ver. 5, 6. The answer was, that *it should be for a time, times, and an half*, and that when so long a time was past, then this wonderful affliction and scattering of the holy people should be finished, ver. 7. But then Daniel tells us, in the next verse, that *he heard, but he understood not*, and said, *O, my Lord, what shall be the end of these things?* He did not understand that general and mystical answer, that those things should have an end at the end of a time, times, and an half; he did not know by it, when this period would have an end; and therefore he enquires more particularly what the time of the end was. But the angel replies, ver. 9. *Go thy way, Daniel, the words are closed and sealed up, until the time of the end.* I do not know what could have been more express. The angel gently rebukes this over inquisitiveness of Daniel, very much as Christ did a like inquisitiveness of the disciples concerning the same matter, when he said to them—*It is not for you to know the times and seasons, that the Father hath put in his own power.*—I think there can be no doubt but that this space, of a time, times, and an half of the church's great trouble, about the end of which Daniel enquires,

is the same with that time, times, and half, that is spoken of, chap. vii. 25. and Rev. xii. 14. as the time of Antichrist's reign, and the church's being in the wilderness, and not merely the time of the church's troubles by Antiochus Epiphanes. But we see, when Daniel has a mind to know particularly when this time would come to an end, he is bid to go away, and rest contented in ignorance of this matter; for, says the man clothed in linen, THE WORDS ARE CLOSED UP, AND SEALED, UNTIL THE TIME OF THE END. That is, very plainly, the matter that you enquire about, when the end of this time, and times, and half shall come, shall not be known, but be kept a great secret, until the time of the end actually comes, and all attempts to find it out before that shall be in vain. And therefore when a particular divine appears, that thinks he has found it out, and has unsealed this matter, and made it manifest with very manifold and abundant evidence, we may well think he is mistaken, and doubt whether those supposed evidences are truly solid ones, and such as are indeed sufficient to make that matter manifest, which God has declared should be kept hid, and not made manifest before it is accom-

plished. Mr. Lowman's own words in his preface, p. 24, 25. are here worthy to be repeated: "It will (says he) ever be a point
 " of wisdom, not to be over busy, or over
 " confident in any thing, especially in fix-
 " ing periods of time, or determining sea-
 " sons, which it may be are not to be deter-
 " mined, it may be are not fit to be known.
 " It is a maxim, of greater wisdom than is
 " usually thought, *Seek not to know what*
 " *should not be revealed.* Such are many
 " future events. The precise time of our Sa-
 " viour's coming to judgment, was not re-
 " vealed, because not fit to be revealed.—
 " The uncertainty of his appearance was of
 " greater service to preserve a care of reli-
 " gion, than the revelation of it would have
 " been; for the uncertainty itself gives many
 " useful exhortations—*Watch, for ye know not*
 " *what hour the Son of Man cometh.* Sup-
 " pose then some of the events described in
 " this prophecy should be of doubtful ap-
 " plication; suppose the precise time of the
 " downfall of the beast, the slaying and re-
 " surrection of the witnesses, and the begin-
 " ning of the thousand years happy state of
 " the church, should not be so determined,
 " but it would admit of different calcula-

“ tions; may it not be wise, and therefore
 “ fit, it should be so? The certainty of those
 “ events in a proper time, though that time
 “ should not be precisely determined, will
 “ answer the greater ends of useful instruc-
 “ tion. And if the revelation should go no
 “ farther than this, it would yet be a revela-
 “ tion, of great benefit and advantage, as the
 “ certainty of the day of judgment in its pro-
 “ per time surely is, though of that day and
 “ hour knoweth no man.”

Ans. 3. Though it is not for us to know the precise time of the fall of Antichrist, yet I humbly conceive that we have no reason to suppose the event principally intended, in the prophecies, of Antichrist's destruction, to be at so great a distance, as Mr. Lowman places it, but have reason to think it to be much nearer. Not that I would set up myself as a person of equal judgment with Mr. Lowman in matters of this nature. As he differs from most others of the most approved expositors of the Apocalypse, in this matter, so I hope it will not appear vanity and presumption in me, to differ from this particular expositor, and to agree with the greater number. And since his opinion stands so much in the way of that great and import-

ant affair, to promote which is the very end of this whole discourse, I hope it will not look as though I affected to appear considerably among the interpreters of prophecy, and as a person of skill in these mysterious matters, that I offer some reasons against Mr. Lowman's opinions. It is surely a great pity, that it should be received as a thing clear and abundantly confirmed, that the glorious day of Antichrist's fall is at so great a distance, (so directly tending to damp and discourage all earnest prayers for, or endeavours after its speedy accomplishment) unless there be good and plain ground for it. I would therefore offer some things to consideration, which, I think, may justly make us look upon the opinion of this learned interpreter, of this happy event's being at so great a distance, not so certain and indubitable, as to hinder our praying and hoping for its being fulfilled much sooner.

The period of Antichrist's reign, as this author has fixed it, seems to be the main point insisted on in his Exposition of the Revelation, which he supposes a great many things in the scheme of prophecies delivered in that book do concur to establish. And, indeed, it is so, with respect to the scheme

of interpretation of these prophecies, which he goes into, and finds it requisite to maintain, in order to confirm this point. But there are several things in that scheme, that appear to me justly liable to exception.

Whereas it is represented, Rev. xvii. 10, 11. that there are seven different successive heads of the beast; that five were past, and another was to come, and to continue a short space, that might, on some accounts, be reckoned a seventh; and that Antichrist was to follow next after this, as the eighth; but yet the foregoing not being properly one of the heads of the beast, he was properly the seventh. Mr. Lowman does not think with others, that by the seventh that was to continue a short space, which would not be properly one of the heads of the beast, is meant Constantine, and the other Christian emperors; (for he thinks they are reckoned as properly belonging to the sixth head of the beast) but that hereby is intended the government that Rome was subject to under the Gothic princes, and the exarchate of Ravenna, after the imperial form of government in Rome ceased in Augustulus, until the Pope was invested with his temporal dominion, called St. Peter's Patrimony,

by Pipin, king of France, in the year seven hundred and fifty-six. And he supposes, that that wounding of one of the heads of the beast with a sword of death, that we read of, chap. xiii. 3 and 14. was not fulfilled in the destruction of the heathen empire, and the giving the imperial power unto Christians, but in the destruction of the imperial form of government, by the sword of the Goths, in the time of Augustulus. But it seems to me to be very unlikely, that the Spirit of God should reckon Constantine and the Christian emperors as proper members, and belonging to one of the heads, of that monstrous wild and cruel beast, that is compared to a leopard and a bear, and a devouring lion, and that had a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies, and that rules by the power and authority of the dragon, or the devil;* which beast is represented in this 17th chapter, as full of names of blasphemy, and of a bloody colour, denoting his exceeding cruelty in persecuting the Christian church. For Constantine, instead of

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* The word *Therion* signifies a wild savage beast, as Mr. Lowman himself observes, page 127.

this was a member of the Christian church, and set by God in the most eminent station in his church, and was honoured above all other princes that ever had been in the world, as the great protector of his church, and her deliverer from the persecuting power of that cruel scarlet-coloured beast. Mr. Lowman himself styles him *a Christian Prince, and Protector of the Christian Religion*. God is very careful not to reckon his own people among the Gentiles, the visible subjects of Satan, Num. xxiii. 9. *The people shall not be reckoned among the nations*. God will not enroll them with them; if they happen to be among them, he will be careful to set a mark upon them, as a note of distinction, Rev. vii. 3, &c. when God is reckoning up his own people, he leaves out those that have been noted for idolatry. As among the tribes that were sealed, Rev. viii. those idolatrous tribes of Ephraim and Dan are left out, and in the genealogy of Christ, Matth. i. those princes that were chiefly noted for idolatry, are left out. Much more would God be careful not to reckon his own people, especially such Christian princes as have been the most eminent instruments of overthrowing idolatry, amongst idolaters, and as members and

heads of that kingdom that is noted in scripture as the most notorious and infamous of all, for abominable idolatry, and opposition and cruelty to the true worshippers of God. And especially not to reckon them as properly belonging to one of those seven heads of this monarchy, of which very heads it is particularly noted that they had on them the names of **BLASPHEMY**, which Mr. Lowman himself supposes to signify idolatry. It was therefore worthy of God, agreeable to his manner, and what might well be expected, that when he was reckoning up the several successive heads of this beast, and Constantine and his successors came in the way, and there was occasion to mention them, to set a mark, or note of distinction on them, signifying that they did not properly belong to the beast, nor were to be reckoned as belonging to the heads, and therefore are to be skipped over in the reckoning, and Antichrist, though the eighth head of the Roman empire, is to be reckoned the seventh head of the beast. This appears to me abundantly the most just and natural interpretation of Rev. xvii. 10, 11. It is reasonable to suppose, that God would take care to make such a note in this prophetic description

of this dreadful beast, and not, by any means to reckon Constantine as belonging properly to him.—If we reckon Constantine as a member of this beast having seven heads and ten horns, described chap. xvii. and as properly one of his heads, then he was also properly a member of the great red dragon with seven heads and ten horns that warred with the woman, chap. xii. For the seven heads and ten horns of that dragon, are plainly the same with the seven heads and ten horns of the beast. So that this makes Constantine a visible member of the devil; for we are told expressly of that dragon, ver 9. that he was *that old serpent, called the Devil and Satan*. And to suppose that Constantine is reckoned as belonging to one of the heads of that dragon, is to make these prophecies inconsistent with themselves. For here in this 12th chapter, we have represented a war between the dragon and the woman cloathed with the sun; which woman, as all agree, is the church; but Constantine, as all do also agree, belonged to the woman, was a member of the Christian church, and was on that side in the war against the dragon; yea, was the main instrument of that great victory that was obtained over the dragon there spo-

ken of, ver. 9—12. What an inconsistency therefore is it, to suppose that he was at the same time a member and head of that very dragon, which fought with the woman, and yet which Constantine himself fought with, overcame, and gloriously triumphed over! It is not therefore to be wondered at, that God was careful to distinguish Constantine from the proper heads of the beast; it would have been a wonder if he had not. God seems to have been careful to distinguish him, not only in his word, but in his providence, by so ordering it that this Christian emperor should be removed from Rome, the city that God had given up to be the seat of the power of the beast, and of its heads, and that he should have the seat of his empire elsewhere.

Constantine was made the instrument of giving a mortal wound to the heathen Roman empire, and giving it a mortal wound in its head, viz. the heathen emperors that were then reigning, Maxentius and Licinius.— But more eminently was this glorious change in the empire owing to the power of God's word, the prevalence of the glorious gospel, by which Constantine himself was converted, and so became the instrument of the o-

verthrow of the heathen empire in the east and west. The change that was then bro't to pass, is represented as the destruction of the heathen empire, or the old heathen world, and therefore seems to be compared to that dissolution of heaven and earth that shall be at the day of judgment, Rev. vi. 12. to the end. And therefore well might the heathen empire, under the head which was then reigning, be represented as wounded to death, chap. xiii. 3. It is much more likely, that the wound the beast had by a sword, in his head, spoken of ver. 14. was the wound that the heathen empire had in its head, by that sword which we read of, chap. i. 16. and xix. 15. that proceeds out of the mouth of Christ, than the wound that was given to the Christian empire and emperor by the sword of the heathen Goths. It is most likely that this deadly wound was by that sword with which Michael made war with him, and overcame him, and cast him to the earth, chap. xii. 9. and that the deadly wound which was given him, was given him at that very time. It is most likely, that the sword that gave him this deadly wound, after which he strangely revived, as though he rose from the dead, was the same sword with that which is spoken of,

as what shall at last utterly destroy him, so that he shall never rise more, chap. xix. 15, 19, 20, 21. This wounding of the head of the beast by the destruction of the heathen empire, and conversion of the emperor to the Christian truth, was a glorious event indeed of Divine Providence, worthy to be so much spoken of in prophecy. It is natural to suppose, that the mortal wounding of the head of that savage cruel beast, that is represented as constantly at war with the woman, and persecuting the church of Christ, should be some relief to the Christian church; but, on the contrary, that wounding to death, that Mr. Lowman speaks of, was the victory of the enemies of the Christian church over her, and the wound received from them.

It is said of that head of the empire that shall be next after the sixth head, and next before Antichrist, and that is not reckoned as properly one of the number of the heads of the beast, that *when it comes, it shall continue a short space*, chap. xvii. 10. By which we may understand, at least, that it shall be one of the shortest, in its continuance, of the successive heads. But the government seated at Ravenna, in the hands of the Goths, or of the deputies of the Greek emperors,

(which Mr. Lowman supposes to be meant by the head) continued, as Mr. Lowman himself takes notice, very near three hundred years. And if so, its continuance was one of the longest of the heads mentioned.

And besides, if the government that Rome was under, from the time that Augustulus abdicated, to the time when the Pope was confirmed in his temporal dominion, was meant by the seventh head that was to be between the imperial head and the papal, there would doubtless have been two different heads mentioned, instead of one, between the Emperor and the Pope, viz. First, the Gothic princes, which reigned near an hundred years. Secondly, the Exarchs of Ravenna, which governed for about one hundred and eighty-five years. The Gothic kingdom was much more properly a distinct government from the Imperial, than the Exarchate of Ravenna; for during the Exarchate, Rome was under the government of the emperor, as much as it was in Constantine's time.

In Rev. xvii. 12. it is said, the *ten horns are ten kings, which are to receive power as kings one hour with the beast*, or (as Mr. Lowman says, it ought to have been translated)

the same hour, or point of time with the beast. This will not allow the time when Antichrist first receives power as king, to be so late as Mr. Lowman supposes. This division of the empire into many kingdoms, denoted by the number ten, was about the year four hundred and fifty-six, after Genfericus had taken the city of Rome; but Mr. Lowman places the beginning of the reign of Antichrist in the year seven hundred and fifty-six, which is three hundred years later. I know, such an expression as *in one hour, or the same hour,* may allow some latitude, but surely not such a latitude as this. This is a much longer time, than it was from the time of the vision to Constantine: much longer than the space of all the first six seals, longer than it was from Christ's ascension to Constantine, and near as long as the time of all the reigns of the heathen emperors put together, from Augustus Cæsar to Constantine. An hour is every where, in the other places in this book of Revelation, used to signify a very short time, as may be seen in places cited in the margin.* And the expression, *the same*

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NOTE.

* Rev. xviii. 10, 17, 19. Chap. iii. 3, 12.—viii. 1.—ix. 15.—xiv. 7.

hour, every where else in the Bible, intends near the same point of time.† The phrase *one hour* is used several times in the next chapter, speaking of the downfall of Antichrist;‡ and each time, evidently signifies a very short space of time. And there is no reason why we should not understand the same phrase in the same sense, when it is used here concerning the rise of Antichrist.

Mr. Lowman greatly insists upon it, that what is spoken as continuing one thousand two hundred and sixty days, is not so much any spiritual authority or ecclesiastical power of the Pope, over the nations of Christendom, as his temporal government and dominion in that individual city of Rome, and therefore to determine when these one thousand two hundred and sixty days or years began, and when they will end, we must consider when the Pope first received this his temporal power over the city of Rome, and the neighbouring regions, called St. Peter's Patrimony. But I can see no good reason for this. Indeed it is strange, if it be so.—God has been pleased in these revelations

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† Dan. iii. 6.—iv. 33.—v. 5. Matth. viii. 13.—x. 19.—Luke vii. 21.—xii. 12.—xx. 19.—xxiv. 33. John iv. 53. Acts xvi. 18, 33.—xxii. 13. Rev. xi. 13. ‡ Ver. 10, 17, 19.

and prophecies, which he has given for the benefit of his church in general, to speak much concerning an anti-christian power that should arise, that should *persecute the saints, and scatter the power of the holy people*, and be an occasion of great affliction to the church of Christ; and in these revelations, in both Old Testament and New, has declared, and often repeated it, that his dominion shall continue so long, and no longer; and for the comfort of his church in general, Christ hath sworn with great solemnity, that the continuance of this persecuting power shall be limited, Dan. xii. 7. Now it would be strange if, in all this, the thing principally intended is not that dominion of this anti-christian power which chiefly concerns the church of Christ in general, but merely his temporal dominion over one province in Italy, called St. Peter's Patrimony. Doubtless, that dominion of Antichrist, which the prophecies insist upon and describe, is the dominion whose duration and limits those prophecies declare. But the dominion of Antichrist which the prophecies insist upon and describe, is not any dominion over a particular province in Italy, but the dominion by which he succeeds the four great

monarchies of the world, Dan. vii. The dominion by which he succeeds the dragon in his power, throne and great authority, Rev. xiii. 2. The dominion in which he has power given him over all kindreds, tongues and nations, ver. 7. The dominion by which the great whore sits on many waters, chap. xvii. 1. which the angel explains to be peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues, ver. 15. and the dominion in which he reigns over the ten kings, into which the Roman empire is divided, Rev. xiii. 1. and xvii. 3, 12, 13. The beast that had ten horns, is not the city of Rome, and the neighbouring region, but the Roman empire; they are the horns or the kings, not of the city, but of the empire. If we consider what is expressed in the passages themselves, which speak of the three years and an half of Antichrist, they will lead us to understand something very diverse from the duration of his temporal dominion over St. Peter's Patrimony. In Dan. vii. 25. the time, times, and half of the little horn. is expressly the continuance of time, wherein it shall be given to him to change times and laws, and wear out the saints of the Most High; and in chap. xii. 7. it is spoken of as the time of his scattering the

power of the holy people; in Rev. xi. 2. the forty and two months is spoken of as the time of Antichrist's *treading under foot the court of the temple and the holy city*; i. e. the external and visible Christian church abroad in the world, or the nations of Christendom. In ver. 3. the one thousand two hundred and sixty days of Antichrist are spoken of as the time of the *witnesſes prophesying in ſackcloth*; and in chap. xii. 6. and 14. the time of the *woman's being in the wilderneſs*, which was through the great power that Antichrist had over the Christian world, and not his small temporal dominion in Italy.

It is true, ſome regard is had in the prophecies to the city of Rome, the city built on ſeven hills; which being the fountain of all rule and authority in the Roman monarchy, and the capital city in the empire, from whence the whole empire was denominated, and the place where the head of the empire uſually reſided, was properly made uſe of by the angel, Rev. xvii. 9, 18. to ſhew what empire Antichriſt ſhould rule over, and what city he ſhould uſually reſide in. And this is all that can be meant by the words of the angel; and not that thoſe ſtreets and walls, and the very ground, were ſuch main and

essential things in what the prophecy intended by the beast; that when Antichrist's dominion ceases in that place, then the beast ceases. For, if so, then it will follow, that the beast had his head wounded to death a second time, and ceased to be, when the Popes resided at Avignon in France, for the best part of a century; when not only the Popes did not reside in Rome, nor in any part of St. Peter's Patrimony, nor any part of Italy, but some of them were neither Romans nor Italians. Though the angel says of the great whore, Rev. xvii. 18. *The woman which thou sawest, is the great city which reigns over the kings of the earth;* yet by the city, in this case, is not meant so much what was contained within those Roman walls, as the Roman empire, as is evident by chap. xi. 8. *And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which is spiritually called Sodom and Egypt.* Here, by that great city, neither Mr. Lowman himself, nor, I suppose, any other Protestant interpreter, understands the city of Rome, strictly speaking, but the Roman monarchy.

And though it be true, as Mr. Lowman observes, the Pope's ecclesiastical monarchy, and power and influence through Christen-

dom, was greatly established and advanced by Pepin's making him a temporal prince over the Exarchate of Ravenna; yet, I would ask, whether the Pope's power and influence in the world, and his ability to disturb the quiet of the nations of Christendom, and (as it is expressed in Daniel) *to change times and laws*, and to carry his own designs, in the various countries and kingdoms of Europe, was not greater before Pepin, than it is now, and has been for a long time? And yet Mr. Lowman supposes that now is properly the time of Antichrist's reign, that the one thousand two hundred and sixty years of his reign continues, and will continue for about two hundred and seventy years longer; tho' his power be now so small, and has been declining ever since the reformation, and still declines continually.

One thing that Mr. Lowman supposes confirms his opinion of so late a beginning of the one thousand two hundred and sixty years of the reign of the beast, is the order of the several periods of this prophecy, and the manner of their succeeding one another.

As to his particular scheme of the seven periods, so divided and limited, and so obviously ranked in such order, and following

one another in such direct and continual succession, and each ending in a state of peace, safety and happiness to the church of God, it seems to me to be more ingenious than solid, and that many things might be said to demonstrate it not to be founded in the truth of things, and the real design of the divine author of this prophecy. But now to enter into a particular and full examination of it, would be to lengthen out this discourse far beyond its proper limits. I would only observe, (which directly concerns my present purpose) that to make out this scheme, Mr. Lowman supposes that the fifth and sixth trumpets, that bring on the two first woes, and the whole ninth chapter of the Revelation, altogether respects the Saracens. But it appears to me not very credible, that the Saracens should have so much said of them in this prophecy, as to have a whole chapter taken up about them, and not a word in the prophecy be said about the Turks, who immediately succeeded them* in the same

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* For though it be true, that the reign of Othman, or Ottoman, who began what they call the Ottoman empire, was a long time after this; yet the Turks themselves, under other princes, in the government they set up in territories that had formerly been possessed by Christians, and in their over-running and ravaging Chris-

religion, and proceeding on the same principles, and were so much more considerable, and brought vastly greater calamities on the Christian world, and have set up and long maintained one of the greatest, strongest and most extraordinary empires that ever the world saw, and have been the most terrible scourge to Christendom, that ever Divine Providence made use of, and one of the greatest of all God's plagues on the world of mankind.

Mr. Lowman, in pursuance of his scheme, also supposes, (which is yet more incredible) this period of the trumpets ends in *a state of safety, peace and happiness to the church of God*; so that, on that occasion, *there are great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ*. And yet he supposes, that it issues in setting up the kingdom of Antichrist; and that about that very time, when these heavenly voices so joyfully proclaimed this, the beast was enthroned, and the time, times and half, or one thousand two

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tian countries, immediately succeeding the Saracens; and from thenceforward have been a terrible, and almost continual scourge to the church.

hundred and sixty days of his reign began, which is spoken of every where, as the time of the church's greatest darkness and trouble, the time wherein *the little horn should wear out the saints of the Most High. The time appointed for his scattering the power of the holy people. The time of the woman's being in the wilderness. The time of treading under foot the court of the temple. And the time of the witnesses prophesying in sackcloth.*

However, I do not deny that the time when Mr. Lowman supposes the reign of the beast began, even the time when Pepin confirmed to the Pope his temporal dominions in Italy, was a time of the great increase and advancement of the power of Antichrist in the world, and a notable epoch. And if I may be allowed humbly to offer what appears to me to be the truth with relation to the rise and fall of Antichrist, it is this—As the power of Antichrist, and the corruption of the apostate church, rose not at once, but by several notable steps and degrees, so it will in the like manner fall; and that divers steps and seasons of destruction to the spiritual Babylon, and revival and advancement of the true church, are prophesied of under one. Though it be true, that there is some

particular event, that prevails above all others in the intention of the prophecy, some remarkable season of the destruction of the church of Rome, and the papal power and corruption, and advancement of true religion, that the prophecies have a principal respect to.

It was certainly thus with regard to the prophecies of the destruction of old Babylon, and the church's deliverance from captivity and oppression by that city and kingdom, which is abundantly alluded to in these prophecies of the Revelation, as a noted type of the oppression of the church of Christ by the church of Rome, calling the latter so often by the name of Babylon, and the church of Christ Jerufalem. The captivity of the Jews by the Babylonians was not perfected at once, but was brought on by several notable steps. So neither was the restoration of the Jewish church, after the captivity, perfected at once. It was several times foretold, that the duration of the captivity should be seventy years; and also, that after seventy years were accomplished, God would destroy Babylon. But this period had manifestly several different beginnings, and several endings. Thus from Jehoiakim's capti-

vity to Cyrus's decree, for the return of the Jews, and the rebuilding of Jerusalem, was seventy years. And from Zedekiah's captivity to Darius's decree seventy years. And from the last carrying away of all, to the finishing and dedication of the temple, was also seventy years. So also the prophecies of Babylon's destruction were fulfilled by several steps. These prophecies seem to have a principal respect to that destruction that was accomplished by Cyrus, at the end of the first seventy years fore-mentioned; but there were other things in the very same prophecies, that were not fulfilled until the fourth year of Darius, when what remained of Babylon was subjected to another dreadful destruction, which, in a great measure, completed its desolation, which was at the end of the second seventy years, and at the same time that the restoration of the Jews was perfected by the decree of Darius.*— But yet, there were many other things contained in the same prophecies of Babylon's destruction, rendering it thenceforward perfectly and perpetually desolate, and the haunt

NOTE.

* Prideaux's Connection, part I. p. 183, 184, and 267, 268, 269. Edit. 9, and p. 271 and 272.

of serpents and wild beasts, that were not fulfilled until more than two hundred years after, in the time of Seleucus king of Syria.* So also it was with respect to the prophecies of the destruction of Tyre, in the xxvith, xxviith and xxviiiith chapters of Ezek. from which many of the expressions used in the Revelation, concerning the destruction of the kingdom of Antichrist, are taken, and which is evidently made use of in scripture as a type of the latter. These prophecies of the destruction of Tyre were fulfilled by various steps. Many things were fulfilled in the destruction of the old city by Nebuchadnezzar,† and yet other parts of the same prophecies were fulfilled by Alexander,‡ which was about two hundred and forty years afterwards. And yet both these desolations are prophesied of under one.

And thus it seems to me very probable, that it will prove, with respect to the prophecies of the destruction of mystical Babylon. It is, I think, pretty manifest by the prophecies, that this anti-christian hierarchy and apostate church will at last be so destroyed, that there shall be no remainders of

NOTES.

* Prid. Connect. Part I. p. 808—812. † Ibid. 128, 129, 130.

‡ Ibid. p. 693.

it left, and shall have as perfect a desolation, before God has done with her, as old Babylon had; there shall be no such thing as Pope or church of Rome in the world.* It seems also pretty manifest, that after that event that is chiefly intended in the prophecies of Antichrist's destruction, there will be some remains of the Romish church. This appears by that most particular and large description of that destruction, Rev. xviii. There it seems to be implied, not only that many shall yet remain of the church of Rome, that shall bewail her overthrow, of her people and clergy, but that there should be some princes among them, *Kings of the earth, that have committed fornication, and lived deliciously with her.* And it is exceeding improbable in itself, that every Papist, in each quarter of the world, should be destroyed, or cease from the world, at one blow. And as long as so considerable a number remains, as may be gathered from the prophecy, they will doubtless have an hierarchy, and there will be one among them that will bear the name of a Pope, although the church of Rome shall be mainly destroyed, and the interest of Popery shall be sunk very low in the world,

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* See Rev. xviii. 21—23. and xix. 20, 21. Dan. vii. 26, 27.

so that there will yet remain such a thing as a papal church and hierarchy in the world, to be wholly extirpated at another period,* sometime after that great overthrow principally insisted on in the prophecies. And this second destruction of Antichrist, or rather extirpation of his remains, together with the complete extirpation of all remains of mahometanism, heathenism and heresy thro' the world, and the finishing stroke towards the overthrow of Satan's visible kingdom on earth, and so the beginning of the Millennium, or spiritual rest of the world, may, for ought I know, be about the time Mr. Lowman speaks of; agreeable to the opinion of the ancient Jews, and many Christian divines that have followed them, that the world would stand six thousand years, and then, the seventh thousand years should be the world's rest or sabbath. The ruin of the Popish interest is but a small part of what is requisite, in order to introduce and settle such a state of things, as the world is represented as being in, in that Millennium that is described, Rev. xx. wherein Satan's visible kingdom is every where totally extir-

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* At the pouring out of the seventh vial upon the air, the principalities and powers of Satan.

pated, and a perfect end put to all heresies, delusions, and false religions whatsoever, through the whole earth, and Satan henceforward *deceives the nations no more*, and has no place any where but in hell. This is the sabbatism of the world, when all shall be in a holy rest; when the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and there shall be nothing to hurt or offend, and there shall be abundance of peace, and the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the seas, and God's people shall dwell in quiet resting-places. There is not the least reason to think, that all this will be brought to pass as it were at one stroke, or that from the present lamentable state of things, there should be brought about and completed the destruction of the church of Rome, the entire extirpation of all infidelity, heresies superstitions and schisms, through all Christendom, and the conversion of all the Jews, and the full enlightening and conversion of all Mahometan and heathen nations, thro' the whole earth, on every side of the globe, and from the north to the south pole, and the full settlement of all in the pure Christian faith and order, all as it were in the issue of one battle, and by means of the vic-

tory of the church in one great conflict with her enemies. This would contradict many things in scripture, which represent this great event to be brought to pass by a gradual progress of religion; as leaven that gradually spreads, until it has diffused itself, through the whole lump, and a plant of mustard, which from a very small seed, gradually becomes a great tree. *And like seed which a man casts upon the ground, that springs and grows up, night and day; and first brings forth the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear.* And especially would this contradict the prophetic representation in Ezek. xlvii. where the progress of religion is represented by the gradual increase of the waters of the sanctuary; being first a small spring issuing out from under the threshold of the temple, and then after they had run a thousand cubits, being up to the ankles; and at the end of another thousand cubits, up to the knees; and at the end of another thousand, up to the loins; and afterwards a great river, that could not be passed over; and being finally brought into the sea, and healing the waters even of the vast ocean. If the Spirit of God should be immediately poured out,

and that work of God's power and grace should now begin, which, in its progress and issue, should complete this glorious effect; there must be an amazing and unparalleled progress of the work and manifestation of divine power to bring so much to pass, by the year two thousand. Would it not be a great thing, to be accomplished in one half century, that religion, in the power and purity of it, should so prevail, as to gain the conquest over all those many things that stand in opposition to it among Protestants, and gain the upper hand through the Protestant world? And if in another, it should go on so to prevail, as to get the victory over all the opposition and strength of the kingdom of Antichrist, so as to gain the ascendancy in that which is now the Popish world? And if in a third half century, it should prevail and subdue the greater part of the Mahometan world, and bring in the Jewish nation, in all their dispersions? And when in the next whole century, the whole heathen world should be enlightened and converted to the Christian faith, throughout all parts of Africa, Asia, America and Terra Australis, and be thoroughly settled in Christian faith and order, without any remainders

of their old delusions and superstitions, and this attended with an utter extirpation of the remnant of the church of Rome, and all the relicts of mahometanism, heresy, schism and enthusiasm, and a suppression of all remains of open vice and immorality, and every sort of visible enemy to true religion, through the whole earth, and bring to an end all the unhappy commotions, tumults, and calamities occasioned by such great changes, and all things be so adjusted and settled through the world, that the world henceforward should enjoy an holy rest or sabbatism.

I have thus distinguished what belongs to a bringing of the world from its present state, to the happy state of the Millennium, the better to give a view of the greatness of the work; and not, that I pretend so much as to conjecture, that things will be accomplished just in this order. The whole work is not the less great and wonderful, to be accomplished in such a space of time, in whatever order the different parts of it succeed each other. They that think that what has been mentioned would not be swift progress, yea, amazingly swift, do not consider how great the work is, and the vast and innumerable obstacles that are in the way. It was

a wonderful thing, when the Christian religion, after Christ's ascension, so prevailed, as to get the ascendancy in the Roman empire in about three hundred years, but that was nothing to this.

Ans. 4. There are, as I apprehend, good reasons to hope, that that work of God's Spirit will begin in a little time, which in the progress of it will overthrow the kingdom of Antichrist, and, in its issue, destroy Satan's visible kingdom on earth.

The prophecy of the sixth Vial, Rev. xvi. 12—16. if we take it in its connection with the other Vials, and consider those providential events, by which the preceding Vials have manifestly been fulfilled, I humbly conceive, affords just ground for such a hope.

It is very plain, from this whole chapter, as also the preceding and following, that all these seven Vials are Vials of God's wrath on Antichrist; one is not poured out on the Jews, another on the Turks, another on Pagans, another on the church of Rome; but they all signify God's successive judgments or plagues on the beast and his kingdom, which is in this chapter and almost every where in this book, called GREAT BABYLON. And therefore undoubtedly, when it is said, *The*

sixth angel poured out his Vial on the river Euphrates, and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared. By the river Euphrates is meant something some way appertaining to this mystical Babylon, as that river that ran thro' Chaldea, called Euphrates, was something appertaining to the literal Babylon. And it is very manifest, that here is in the prophecy of this Vial an allusion to that by which the way was prepared for the destruction of Babylon by Cyrus, which was by turning the channel of the river Euphrates, which ran through the midst of the city, whereby the way of the kings of the east, the princes of Media and Persia, was prepared to come in under the walls of the city, at each end, where the waters used to run, and destroy it; as they did that night wherein Daniel interpreted the hand-writing on the wall, against Belshazzar, Dan. v. 30. The prophecies of Babylon's destruction do, from time to time, take notice of this way of destroying her, by drying up the waters of the river Euphrates, to prepare the way for her enemies, Isai. xliv. 27, 28. *That saith to the deep—Be dry—and I will dry up thy rivers; that saith of Cyrus—He is my servant, and*

shall perform all my pleasure. Jer. li. 31, 32. *One post shall run to meet another, to shew the king of Babylon that his city is taken at one end, and that the passages are stopped, and the reeds they have burnt with fire, and the men of war are affrighted.* And ver. 36. *I will dry up her sea, and make her springs dry.—*The Medes and Persians, the people that destroyed Babylon, dwelt to the eastward of Babylon, and are spoken of as coming from the east to her destruction, Isai. xlvi. 11. *Calling a ravenous bird from the EAST, the man that executeth my counsel, from a far country.* And the princes that joined with this ravenous bird from the east, in this affair of destroying Babylon, are called kings, Jer. li. 11. *The Lord hath raised up the spirit of the KINGS of the Medes; for his device is against Babylon to destroy it.* Ver. 28. *Prepare against her the nations, with the KINGS of the Medes, the captains thereof, and the rulers thereof.—*The drying the channel of the river Euphrates, to prepare the way for these kings and captains of the east, to enter into that city, under its high walls, was the last thing done by the besiegers of Babylon, before her actual destruction; as this sixth Vial is the last Vial of God's wrath but one,

on the mystical Babylon, and the effect of it, the drying up the channel of the river Euphrates, is the last thing done against it, before its actual destruction by the seventh Vial, and opens the way for those that fight in a spiritual war against it, speedily to bring on its ruin.

Hence I think it may, without dispute, be determined, that by the river Euphrates in the prophecy of this Vial, is meant something appertaining or relating to the mystical Babylon, or the anti-christian church and kingdom, that serves that, or is a benefit to it, in a way answerable to that in which the river Euphrates served old Babylon, and the removal of which will in like manner prepare the way for her enemies to destroy her. And therefore what we have to do in the first place, in order to find out what is intended by the river Euphrates, in this prophecy, is to consider how the literal Euphrates served old Babylon. And it may be noted, that Euphrates was of remarkable benefit to that great city in two respects; it served the city as a supply—it was let thro' the midst of the city by an artificial canal, and ran through the midst of the palace of the king of Babylon; that part of his pa-

lace called the Old Palace, standing on one side, and the other part called the New Palace, on the other; with communications from one part to another, above the waters, by a bridge, and under the waters, by a vaulted or arched passage, that the city, and especially the palace, might have the convenience of its waters, and be plentifully supplied with water. And another way that the waters of Euphrates served Babylon, was as an impediment and obstacle in the way of its enemies, to hinder their access to it to destroy it; for there was a vast moat round the city, without the walls, of prodigious width and depth, filled with the water of the river, to hinder the access of her besiegers; and at each end of the city, the river served instead of walls. And therefore when Cyrus had dried up the river, the moat was emptied, and the channel of the river under the walls left dry, and so his way was prepared.

And therefore it is natural to suppose, that by drying up the waters of the river Euphrates, in the prophecy of the destruction of the new Babylon, to prepare the way of her enemies, is meant the drying up her incomes and supplies, and the removal of

those things that hitherto have been the chief obstacles in the way of those that, in this book, are represented as at war with her, and seeking her destruction, (spoken of Rev. xix. 11. to the end, and chap. xii. 7.) that have hindered their progress and success, or that have been the chief impediments in the way of the Protestant religion. The first thing is the drying the streams of the wealth of the new Babylon, the temporal supplies, revenues, and vast incomes of the Romish church, and the riches of the Popish dominions. Waters in scripture language very often signify provision and supplies, both temporal and spiritual, as in Prov. ix. 17. Isai. xxxiii. 16.—xliv. 20.—lv. 1. and lviii. 11. Jer. ii. 13 and 18.—xvii. 8 and 13. and in other places innumerable. The temporal supplies of a people are very often in scripture called waters, as Isai. v. 13. *Therefore my people is gone into captivity, and their honourable men are famished, and their multitude dried up with thirst*, i. e. deprived of the supports and supplies of life. And the drying up the waters of a city or kingdom, is often used in scripture prophecy, for the depriving them of their wealth, as the scrip-

ture explains itself, Hof. xiii. 15. *His springs shall become dry, and his fountain shall be dried up: He shall spoil the treasure of all pleasant vessels.* Ifai. xv. 6, 7. *The waters of Nimrim shall be desolate, for the hay is withered, the grasss faileth, there is no green thing.— Therefore the abundance they have gotten, and that which they have laid up, shall they carry away to the brook of the willows.* By the brook of the willows there seems to be a reference to the waters of Assyria or Chaldea, whose streams abounded with willows. So that the carrying away the treasures of Moab, and adding of them to the treasures of Assyria, is here represented by the figure of turning away the waters of Nimrim from the country of Moab, and adding them to the waters of Assyria, as the prophecy explains itself. Yea, even in the prophecies of the destruction of Babylon itself, the depriving her of her treasures, seems to be one thing intended by the drying up of her waters.— This seems manifest by the words of the prophecy in Jer. l. 37, 38. *A sword is upon her treasures, and they shall be robbed; a drought is upon her waters, and they shall be dried up.* Compared with chap. li. 15. *O thou that dwellest upon many waters, abundant in trea-*

tures; with ver. 36. I will dry up her sea, and make her springs dry. The wealth, revenues, and vast incomes of the church of Rome, are the waters by which that Babylon has been nourished and supported; these are the waters which the Popish clergy and members of the Romish hierarchy thirst after, and are continually drinking down, with insatiable appetite; and they are waters that have been flowing into that spiritual city like a great river; ecclesiastical persons possessing a very great part of the Popish dominions; as this Babylon is represented as vastly rich, in the prophecy of the Apocalypse, especially in the 17th and 18th chapters. These are especially the waters that supply the palace of the king of this new Babylon, viz. the Pope, as the river Euphrates ran through the midst of the palace of the king of old Babylon. The revenues of the Pope have been like waters of a great river, coming into his palace, from innumerable fountains, and by innumerable branches and lesser streams, coming from many various and distant countries.

This prophecy represents to us two cities very contrary the one to the other—viz. New Babylon and the New Jerusalem, and

a river running through the midst of each. —The New Jerusalem, which signifies the church of Christ, especially in her best estate, is described as having a river running thro' the midst of it, Rev. xxii. 1, 2. This river, as might easily be made most evident, by comparing this with abundance of other scriptures, undoubtedly signifies the divine supplies, and rich and abundant spiritual incomes and provision of that holy city. Mr. Lowman, in his late Exposition, says, “ It represents a constant provision for the comfortable and happy life of all the inhabitants of this city of God.” And in his notes on the same place, observes as follows: “ Water, (says he), as necessary to the support of life, and as it contributes in great cities, especially in hot eastern countries, to the ornament of the place, and delight of the inhabitants, is a very proper representation of the enjoyment of all things, both for the support and pleasure of life.” As the river that runs through the new Jerusalem, the church of Christ, that refreshes that holy spiritual society, signifies their spiritual supplies, to satisfy their spiritual thirst, so the river that runs through the new Babylon, the anti-christian church, that wick-

ed carnal society, signifies, according to the opposite character of the city, her worldly, carnal supplies, to satisfy their carnal desires and thirstings.

This new Jerusalem is called in this book the Paradise of God, and therefore is represented as having the tree of life growing in it. And it being described, as though a river ran through the midst of it, there seems to be some allusion to the ancient paradise in Eden, of which we are told that there ran a river through the midst of it to water it; *i. e.* to supply the plants of it with nourishment. And this river was this very same river Euphrates, that afterwards ran through Babylon. And in one and the other, it represented the divers supplies of two opposite cities; in Eden, it represented the spiritual supplies and wealth of the true Christian church, in her spiritual advancement and glory, and seems to be so made use of, Rev. xxii. 1, 2. In the other it represented the outward carnal supplies of the false anti-christian church, in her worldly pomp and vain glory, chap. xvi. 12.

When the waters, that supply this mystical Babylon, come to be dried up in this sense, it will prepare the way for the ene-

mies of anti-christian corruption, that seek her overthrow. The wealth of the church of Rome, and of the powers that support it, is very much its defence. After the streams of her revenues and riches are dried up, or very greatly diminished, her walls will be as it were broken down, and she will become weak and defenceless, and exposed to easy ruin.

When Joab had taken that part of the city of Rabbah, that was called the City of Waters, whence the city had its supply of water, the fountains of the brook Jabbok being probably there, and which was also called the royal city, probably because there the king had his palace and gardens, on the account of its peculiar pleasantness; I say, when he had taken this, the conquest of the rest of the city was easy; his message to David implies, that the city now might be taken at pleasure, 2 Sam. xii. 27, 28. It is possible that by the pouring out of the sixth Vial to dry up the river of the mystical Babylon, there might be something like the taking the City of Waters in Rabbah; some one of the chief of the Popish powers, that has been the main strength and support of the Popish cause, or from whence that church

has its chief supplies, may be destroyed, or converted, or greatly reduced. But this events must determine.

In the prophecies of Egypt's destruction, it is signified, that when their rivers and waters should be dried up, in that sense, that the streams of their temporal supplies should be averted from them, their defence would be gone, Isai. xix. 4, &c. *The Egyptians will I give over into the hand of a cruel lord, and the waters shall fail from the sea, and the river shall be wasted and dried up, and the brooks of DEFENCE shall be emptied and dried up, and the reeds and flags shall wither— Every thing sown by the brooks shall wither: The fishers also shall mourn—*

Those whose way was prepared to come in and destroy Babylon, by the drying up the river of Euphrates, were the army that was at war with Babylon, Cyrus the king, and his host, that fought her overthrow; so there seems to be all reason to suppose, that those whose way will be prepared to come in and destroy mystical Babylon, by drying up the mystical Euphrates, are that king and army that are, in this book of Revelation, represented as at war with Antichrist. And what king and army that is, we may see in

chap. xii. 7. and xix. 11. to the end—Michael the king of angels, and his angels; he whose name is called the Word of God, and that has on his vesture, and on his thigh, a name written, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords; and the heavenly armies that follow him, cloathed in fine linen, white and clean. Cyrus, the chief of the kings of the east, that destroyed Babylon, and redeemed God's church from thence, and restored Jerufalem, seems, in that particular affair, very manifestly to be spoken of as a type of Christ: God calls him his shepherd, to perform his pleasure, to say to Jerufalem—Thou shalt be built, and to the temple—Thy foundation shall be laid. God calls him his Messiah. Thus saith the Lord to his anointed, (in the original to his Messiah) to Cyrus. He is spoken of as one that God had raised up in righteousness, that he might build his city, and freely redeem his captives, or let them go without price or reward. He is said to be one whom God had loved; in like manner as the Messiah is said to be God's elect, in whom his soul delighteth. As by Babylon, in the Revelation, is meant that anti-christian society that is typified by old Babylon; so by the kings of the east, that should destroy this anti-

christian church, must be meant those enemies of it that were typified by Cyrus, and other chieftians of the east, that destroyed old Babylon; viz. Christ, who was born, lived, died, and rose in the east, together with those spiritual princes that follow him, the principalities and powers in heavenly places, and those ministers and saints that are kings and priests, and shall reign on earth; especially those leaders and heads of God's people—those Christian ministers and magistrates, that shall be distinguished as public blessings to his church, and chief instruments of the overthrow of Antichrist.

As the river Euphrates served the city of Babylon as a supply, so it also was before observed, it served as an impediment or obstacle to hinder the access of its enemies; as there was a vast moat round the city, filled with the water of the river, which was left empty when Euphrates was dried up. And therefore we may suppose, that another thing meant by the effect of the sixth Vial, is the removal of those things which hitherto have been the chief obstacles in the way of the progress of the true religion, and the victory of the church of Christ over her enemies;

which have been the corrupt doctrines and practices that have prevailed in Protestant countries, and the doubts and difficulties that attend many doctrines of the true religion, and the many divisions and contentions that subsist among Protestants. The removal of those would wonderfully prepare the way for Christ and his armies, to go forward and prevail against their enemies, in a glorious propagation of true religion. So that this Vial, which is to prepare the way for Christ and his people, seems to have respect to that remarkable preparing the way for Christ, by *levelling mountains, exalting valleys, drying up rivers, and removing stumbling-blocks*, which is often spoken of in the prophecies, as what shall next precede the church's latter-day glory, as Isai. xlii. 13, &c. *The Lord shall go forth as a mighty man; he shall stir up jealousy as a man of war; he shall prevail against his enemies.—I will make waste mountains and hills, and dry up all their herbs; and I will make the rivers islands, and I will dry up the pools; and I will bring the blind by a way that they know not, and I will lead them in paths that they have not known; I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight: these things will I do*

unto them, and not forsake them. Chap. xl. 3, 4, 5. Prepare ye the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert an high-way for our God: every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low, and the crooked shall be made straight, and rough places plain; and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together. Chap. xi. 15, 16. And the Lord shall destroy the tongue of the Egyptian sea, and with his mighty wind shall he shake his hand over the river, and shall smite it in the seven streams thereof, and make men go over dry shod; and there shall be an high-way for the remnant of his people which shall be left, from Assyria, like as it was to Israel, in the day that he came out of the land of Egypt. Chap. lvii. 14. Cast ye up, cast ye up, prepare the way, take up the stumbling-block out of the way of my people. And chap. lxii. 10. Go through, go through the gates; prepare ye the way of the people; cast up, cast up the high-way; gather out the stones; lift up a standard for the people. Zech. x. 10, 11, 12. I will bring them again also out of the land of Egypt, and gather them out of Assyria; and I will bring them into the land of Gilead and Lebanon; and place shall not be found for them. And

he shall pass through the sea with affliction, and shall smite the waves of the sea; and all the deeps of the river shall dry up; and the pride of Assyria shall be brought down, and the sceptre of Egypt shall depart away: And I will strengthen them in the Lord, and they shall walk up and down in his name, saith the Lord. And it is worthy to be remarked, that as Cyrus's destroying Babylon, and letting go God's captives from thence, and restoring Jerusalem, is certainly typical of Christ's destroying mystical Babylon, and delivering his people from her tyranny, and gloriously building up the spiritual Jerusalem in the latter days; so God's preparing Cyrus's way, by drying up the river Euphrates, is spoken of in terms like those that are used in those prophecies that have been mentioned, to signify the preparing Christ's way, when he shall come to accomplish the latter event. Thus God says concerning Cyrus, *Isai. xlv. 2. I will go before thee, and MAKE CROOKED PLACES STRAIGHT.* And ver. 13. *I will direct, or make straight (as it is in the margin) all his ways.* This is like chap. xl. 2, 4. *Prepare ye the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert an high-way for our God.—The crooked things shall be made straight.* Chap.

xlii. 16. *I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight.*

If any should object against understanding the river Euphrates, in Rev. xvi. 12. as signifying what has been supposed, that when mention is made of the river Euphrates, in another place in this prophecy, it is manifestly not so to be understood, viz. in chap. ix. 14. *Saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet—Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates; and that there is no reason to understand the river Euphrates in the vision of the sixth Vial, as signifying something diverse from what is meant by the same river in the vision of the sixth trumpet.*

I answer, That there appears to me to be good reason for a diverse understanding of the river Euphrates in these two different places; the diversity of the scene of the vision, and of the kind of representation, in those two divers parts of this prophecy, naturally leads to it, and requires it. It is in this book as in the Old Testament; when the river Euphrates is spoken of in the Old Testament, both in the histories and prophecies, it is mentioned, with respect to the twofold relation of that river, viz. 1st, with re-

gard to its relation to Babylon. And as it was related to that, it was something belonging to that city, as its defence and supply, as has been represented. Thus the river Euphrates is spoken of in many places that have been already observed, and others that might be mentioned. 2dly. This river is spoken of with regard to its relation to the land of Israel, God's visible people; and as it was related to that, it was its eastern boundary. It is so spoken of, Gen. xv. 18. Exod. xxiii. 31. Deut. i. 7. and xi. 24. Josh. i. 4. 2 Sam. viii. 3. 1 Chron. xviii. 3. 1 Kings iv. 21. Ezra iv. 20. Agreeable to this diverse respect or relation of this river, under which it is mentioned in the Old Testament, so must we understand it differently in different parts of the prophecy of this book of Revelation, according as the nature and subject of the vision requires. In the xvth chapter, where the prophecy is about Babylon, and the vision is of God's plagues on Babylon, preparing the way for her destruction, there, when the river Euphrates is mentioned, we are naturally and necessarily led to consider it as something belonging to Babylon, appertaining to the mystical Babylon, as Euphrates did to old Babylon. But we cannot

understand it so in the ixth chapter, for there the prophecy is not about Babylon. To mention Euphrates there, as something belonging to Babylon, would have been improper; for the nature of the vision, and prophetic representation, did not lead to it, nor allow it. John had had no vision of Babylon; that kind of representation had not been made to him; there is not a word said about Babylon till we come to the second part of this prophecy, after John had the vision of the second book, and Christ had said to him—*Thou must prophecy again before peoples, and nations, and kings*, chap. xi. The scene of the vision, in the former part of the prophecy, had been more especially the land of Israel, and the vision is concerning two sorts of persons there, viz. those of the tribes of Israel that had the seal of God in their foreheads, and those wicked apostate Israelites that had not this mark. Compare chap. vii. 3—8. and chap. ix. 4. The vision in this ixth chapter, is of God's judgments on those of the tribes of Israel, or in the land of Israel, which had not the seal of God in their foreheads; and therefore when mention is made, ver. 14. of a judgment coming on them from the river Euphrates, this river is here spoken

of in the former respect, viz. with regard to its relation to the land of Israel, as its eastern border; and thereby we must understand that God would bring some terrible calamity on Christendom from its eastern border, as he did when the Turks were let loose upon Christendom.

If these things that have been spoken of, are intended in the prophecy of the sixth Vial, it affords, as I conceive, great reason to hope that the beginning of that glorious work of God's Spirit, which, in the progress and issue of it, will overthrow Antichrist, and introduce the glory of the latter days, is not very far off.

Mr. Lowman has, I think, put it beyond all reasonable doubt, that the fifth Vial was poured out in the time of the Reformation. It also appears satisfiably, by his late Exposition, that take one Vial with another, it has not been two hundred years from the beginning of one Vial to the beginning of another, but about one hundred and eighty years. But it is now two hundred and twenty years since the fifth Vial began to be poured, and it is a long time since the main effects of it have been finished. And therefore if the sixth Vial has not already began

to be poured out, it may well be speedily expected.

But with regard to the first thing that I have supposed to be signified by the effect of this Vial, viz. The drying up the fountains and streams of the wealth and temporal incomes and supplies of the antichristian church and territories; I would propose it to consideration, whether or no many things that have come to pass within these twenty years past, may not be looked upon as probable beginnings of a fulfilment of this prophecy; particularly what the kings of Spain and Portugal did some years since, when displeas'd with the Pope, forbidding any thenceforward going to Rome for investitures, &c. thereby cutting off two great streams of the Pope's wealth; from so great and rich a part of the Popish world; and its becoming so frequent a thing of late for Popish princes, in their wars, to make bold with the treasure of the church, and to tax the clergy within their dominions, as well as laity; or which is equivalent, to oblige them to contribute great sums, under the name of a free gift; and also the late peeling and impoverishing the Pope's temporal dominions in

Italy, by the armies of the Austrians, Neapolitans and Spaniards, passing and repassing through them, and living so much at discretion in them, of which the Pope has so loudly complained, and in vain; receiving nothing but menaces, when he has objected against giving liberty for the like passage for the future. These things make it hopeful that the time is coming when the princes of Europe, *the ten horns, shall hate the whore, and make her desolate and naked, and eat her flesh*, as Rev. xvii. 16. which will prepare the way for what next follows, *her being burnt with fire*; even as the sixth Vial poured out, to consume the supplies of Antichrist, and strip him naked of his wealth, and, as it were, to pick his flesh off from his bones, will make way for what next follows, the seventh Vial, that will consume Antichrist, by the fierceness of God's wrath.

These things duly considered, I imagine, afford us ground to suppose, not only that the effect of this sixth Vial is already begun, but that some progress is already made in it, and that this Vial is now running apace. And when it shall be finished, there is all reason to suppose that the destruction of Antichrist will very speedily follow, and that the

two last Vials will succeed one another more closely than the other Vials. When once the river Euphrates was dried up, and Cyrus's way was prepared, he delayed not, but immediately entered into the city to destroy it. Nor is it God's manner, when once his way is prepared, to delay to deliver his church, and shew mercy to Zion. When once impediments are removed, Christ will no longer remain at a distance, but will be like a roe or a young hart, coming swiftly to the help of his people. When that cry is made, *Cast ye up, cast ye up, prepare the way, &c.* The high and lofty One that inhabits eternity, is represented as very near to revive the spirit of the contrite, and deliver his people with whom he had been wroth. When that cry is made, *Isai. xl. Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert an high-way for our God; every valley shall be exalted, &c.* God tells his church, that her warfare is accomplished, and the time to comfort her is come, and that the glory of the Lord now shall be revealed, and all flesh see it together. And agreeably to these things, Christ, on the pouring out the sixth Vial, says, *Behold I come.* The sixth Vial is the forerunner of the seventh or last, to prepare

its way. The angel that pours out this Vial is the harbinger of Christ, and when the harbinger is come, the king is at hand. John the Baptist, that was Christ's harbinger, who came to level mountains and fill up vallies, proclaimed, *The kingdom of heaven is at hand*; and when he had prepared Christ's way, then *the Lord suddenly came into his temple, even the messenger of the covenant.* Mal. iii. 1.

It is true, that we do not know how long this Vial may continue running, and so Christ's way preparing, before it is fully prepared; but yet if there be reason to think the effect of this Vial is begun, or is near, then there is reason also to think that the beginning of that great work of God's Spirit, in reviving of religion, which, before it is finished, will issue in Antichrist's ruin, is not far off. For it is pretty manifest, that the beginning of this work will accompany the sixth Vial; for the gathering together of the armies on both sides, on the side of Christ and Antichrist, to that great battle that shall issue in the overthrow of the latter, will be under this Vial; (compare Rev. xvi. 12, 13, 14. with chap. xix. 11. to the end.) And it is plain, that Christ's manifesting himself, and wonderfully appearing after long hiding him-

self, to plead his own and his people's cause, and riding forth against his enemies in a glorious manner, and his people's following him in pure linen, or the practice of righteousness and pure religion, will be the thing that will give the alarm to Antichrist, and cause him to gather that vast host to make the utmost opposition. But this alarm and gathering together is represented as being under the sixth Vial; so that it will be a great revival, and mighty progress of true religion under the sixth Vial, eminently threatening the speedy and utter overthrow of Satan's kingdom on earth, that will so mightily rouse the old serpent, to exert himself with such exceeding violence, in that greatest conflict and struggle that ever he had with Christ and the church, since the world stood.*

All the seven Vials bring terrible judgments upon Antichrist; but there seems to be something distinguishing of the three last, the fifth, sixth and seventh, viz. That they

NOTE.

* If there be any mistake here, it is an anticipation of the destruction of Antichrist, through the prevalence of vital religion, instead of the present rod of the divine indignation; but, it may be, there is a warfare between truth and error yet to come, towards which our author's views might be directed, and for which it becomes us all to be prepared.

EDITOR.

more directly tend to the overthrow of his kingdom, and accordingly each of them is attended with a great reviving of religion. The fifth Vial was attended with such a revival and reformation, that greatly weakened and diminished the throne or kingdom of the beast, and went far towards its ruin. It seems as though the sixth Vial should be much more so, for it is the distinguishing note of this Vial, that it is the preparatory Vial, which more than any other Vial prepares the way for Christ's coming to destroy the kingdom of Antichrist, and to set up his own kingdom in the world. A great outpouring of the Spirit accompanied that dispensation which was preparatory to Christ's coming in his public ministry, in the days of his flesh; so, much more, will a great outpouring of the Spirit accompany the dispensation that will be preparatory to Christ's coming in his kingdom.

And besides those things which belong to the preparation of Christ's way, which are so often represented by levelling mountains, drying up rivers, &c. viz. The unravelling intricacies, and removing difficulties attending Christian doctrines, the distinguishing between true religion and its false appear-

ances, the detecting and exploding errors and corrupt principles, and the reforming the wicked lives of professors, which have been the chief stumbling-blocks and obstacles that have hitherto hindered the progress of true religion; I say, these things, which seem to belong to this preparatory Vial, are the proper work of the Spirit of God, promoting and advancing divine light and true piety, and can be the effect of nothing else.

Agreeably to what has been supposed, that an extraordinary out-pouring of the Spirit of God is to accompany this sixth Vial; so the beginning of a work of extraordinary awakening has already attended the probable beginning of this Vial; and has been continued in one place or other, for many years past; although it has been, in some places, mingled with much enthusiasm, after the manner of things in their first beginnings, unripe, and mixed with much crudity. But it is to be hoped, a far more pure, extensive and glorious revival of religion is not far off, which will more properly be the beginning of that work, which, in its issue, shall overthrow the kingdom of Antichrist, and of Satan through the world. But God *will be enquired of for this, by the house of Israel to do it for them.*

Ans. 5. If, notwithstanding all that I have said, it be still judged that there is sufficient reason to determine that the ruin of Antichrist is at a very great distance, and if all that I have said, as arguing that there is reason to hope the beginning of that glorious revival of religion, which, in its continuance and progress, will destroy the kingdom of Antichrist, is not very far off, be judged to be of no force; yet it will not follow, that our complying with what is proposed to us in the late memorial from Scotland, will be in vain, or not followed with such spiritual blessings, as will richly recompence the pains of such extraordinary prayer for the Holy Spirit, and the revival of religion. If God does not grant that greatest of all effusions of his Spirit, so soon as we desire, yet we shall have the satisfaction of a consciousness of our having employed ourselves in a manner that is certainly agreeable to Christ's will and frequent commands, in being much in prayer for this mercy, and much more in it than has heretofore been common with Christians; and there will be all reason to hope, that we shall receive some blessed token of his acceptance. If the fall of mystical Babylon, and the work of God's Spirit

that shall bring it to pass, be at several hundred years distance, yet it follows not that there will be no happy revivals of religion before that time, which shall be richly worth the most diligent, earnest and constant praying for.

I would say something to one objection more, and then hasten to a conclusion of this discourse.

Object. 6. Some may be ready to object, that what is proposed in this memorial is a new thing, such as never was put in practice in the church of God before.

Ans. 1. If there be something circumstantially new in it, this cannot be a sufficient objection. The duty of prayer is no new duty; for many of God's people expressly to agree, as touching something they shall ask in prayer, is no new thing; for God's people to agree on circumstances of time and place for united prayer, according to their own discretion, is no new thing; for many, in different places, to agree to offer up extraordinary prayers to God, at the same time, as a token of their union, is no new thing, but has been commonly practised in the appointment of days of fasting and prayer for

ſpecial mercies. And if the people of God ſhould engage in the duty of prayer, for the coming of Chriſt's kingdom, in a new manner, in that reſpect, that they reſolve they will not be ſo negligent of this duty, as has been common with profeſſors of religion heretofore, but will be more frequent and fervent in it; this would be ſuch a new thing as ought to be, and would be only to reform a former negligence. And for the people of God, in various parts of the world, viſibly, and by expreſs agreement, to unite for this extraordinary prayer, is no more than their duty, and no more than what it is foretold the people of God ſhould actually do, before the time comes of the church's promiſed glory on earth. And if this be a duty, then it is a duty to come into ſome method to render this practicable; but it is not practicable (as was ſhewn before) but by this method, or ſome other equivalent.

Anſ. 2. As to this particular method, propoſed to promote union in extraordinary prayer, viz. God's people, in various parts, ſetting apart fixed ſeaſons, to return at certain periods, wherein they agree to offer up their prayers at the ſame time, it is not ſo new as ſome may poſſibly imagine. This

may appear by what follows, which is part of a paper, dispersed abroad in Great Britain and Ireland, from London, in the year 1712, being the latter end of queen Anne's reign, and very extensively complied with, entitled, "A serious Call from the City to the Country, to join with them in setting apart some time, viz. from seven to eight, every Tuesday morning, for solemn seeking of God, each one in his closet, now in this so critical a juncture."

Jonah i. 6. *Call upon God, if so be that God will think upon us, that we perish not.*—What follows is an extract from it.

"You have formerly been called upon to the like duty, and have complied with it, and that not without success. It is now thought highly seasonable to renew the call. It is hoped that you will not be more backward, when it is so apparent that there is even greater need. It is scarce imaginable how a professing people should stand in greater need of prayer, than we do at this day. You were formerly bespoke from that very pertinent text, Zech. viii. 21. *The inhabitants of one city shall go to another, saying, Let us go speedily to pray before the Lord, or, (as the marginal reading,*

“ more expressive of the original reading,
“ is,) *continually, from day to day, to entreat*
“ *the face of the Lord.* According to this ex-
“ cellent pattern, we of this city, the metro-
“ polis of our land, think ourselves obliged
“ to call upon our brethren in Great Britain
“ and Ireland, at a time when our hearts can-
“ not but meditate terror, and our flesh trem-
“ ble for fear of God, and are afraid of his
“ righteous judgments; those past being for
“ the most part forgotten, and the signs of
“ the times foreboding evil to come, being
“ by the generality little, if at all, regarded;
“ we cannot therefore but renew our earnest
“ request, that all who make conscience of
“ praying for the peace of Jerusalem, who
“ wish well to Zion, who would have us and
“ our posterity a nation of British Protec-
“ tants, and not of Popish bigots and French
“ slaves, would give us (as far as real and
“ not pretended necessity will give leave) a
“ meeting at the throne of grace, at the hour
“ mentioned, there to wrestle with God for
“ the turning away his anger from us, for
“ our deliverance from the hands of his and
“ our enemies, for the turning the councils
“ of all Ahitophels, at home and abroad, in-
“ to foolishness, for mercy to the queen and

“ kingdom, for a happy peace or successful
“ war, so long as the matter shall continue
“ undetermined; for securing the Protestant
“ succession in the illustrious house of Ha-
“ nover, (by good and evil wishes to which,
“ the friends and enemies of our religion and
“ civil rights, are so essentially distinguish-
“ ed,) and especially for the influences of di-
“ vine grace upon the rising generation, par-
“ ticularly the seed of the righteous, that the
“ offspring of our Christian heroes may ne-
“ ver be the plague of our church and coun-
“ try. And we desire that this solemn pray-
“ er be begun the first Tuesday after eight,
“ and continued at least the summer of this
“ present year 1712. And we think, every
“ modest, reasonable and just request, such
“ as this, should not on any account be de-
“ nied us, since we are not laying a burden
“ on others, to which we will not most wil-
“ lingly put our own shoulders; nay, indeed,
“ count it much more a blessing than a bur-
“ den. We hope this will not be esteemed,
“ by serious Protestants, of any denomina-
“ tion, a needless step; much less do we fear
“ being censured by any such, as fanciful
“ and melancholy, on account of such a pro-
“ posal. We, with them, believe a provi-

“ dence, know and acknowledge that our
 “ God is a God hearing prayer. Scripture
 “ recordeth, and our age is not barren of in-
 “ stances of God’s working marvellous deli-
 “ verances for his people in answer to hum-
 “ ble, believing and importunate prayer, ef-
 “ pecially when prayer and reformation go
 “ together, which is what we desire. Let
 “ this counsel be acceptable to us, in this
 “ day of the church’s calamity, and our com-
 “ mon fears. Let us seek the Lord while he
 “ may be found, and call upon him while he
 “ is near. Let us humble ourselves under
 “ the mighty hand of God. Let us go and
 “ pray unto our God, and he will hearken
 “ unto us. We shall seek him and find him,
 “ when we search for him with all our hearts.
 “ Pray for the peace of Jerusalem; they shall
 “ prosper that love her. And may Zion’s
 “ friends and enemies both cry out with won-
 “ der, when they see the work of God—Be-
 “ hold they pray!—What hath God wrought!
 “ Verily there is a God that judgeth in the
 “ earth.

“ *Postscript.* It is desired and hoped, that
 “ if any are hindered from attending this
 “ work at the above-mentioned hour, they
 “ will nevertheless set apart an hour week-
 “ ly for it.”.

God speedily and wonderfully heard and answered those who were united in that extraordinary prayer, proposed in the above-mentioned paper, in suddenly scattering those black clouds which threatened the nation and the Protestant interest with ruin, at that time; in bringing about, in so remarkable a manner, that happy change in the state of affairs in the nation, which was after the queen's death, by the bringing in king George the First. just at the time when the enemies of the religion and liberties of the nation had ripened their designs to be put in speedy execution. And we see in the beginning of this extract, this which is proposed, is mentioned as being no new thing, but that God's people in Great Britain had formerly been called upon to the like duty, and had complied, and that not without success. Such like concerts or agreements have several times been proposed in Scotland, before this which is now proposed to us, particularly there was a proposal published for this very practice, in the year 1732, and another in 1735; so that it appears that this objection of novelty is built on a mistake.

THE CONCLUSION.

And now, upon the whole, I desire every

serious Christian, that may read this discourse, calmly and deliberately to consider whether he can excuse himself from complying with what has been proposed to us and requested of us, by those ministers of Christ in Scotland, who are the authors of the late memorial. God has stirred up a part of his church, in a distant part of the world, to be in an extraordinary manner seeking and crying to him, that he would appear to favour Zion, as he has promised. And they are applying themselves to us, to join with them, and make that very proposal to us which is spoken of in my text, and in like manner and circumstances. The members of one church, in one country, are coming to others, in other distant countries, saying, *Let us go speedily and constantly to pray before the Lord, and to seek the Lord of Hosts.* Will it not become us readily to say, *I will go also?* What these servants of Christ ask of us, is not silver or gold, or any of our outward substance, or that we would put ourselves to any cost, or do any thing that will be likely to expose us to any remarkable trouble, difficulty or suffering in our outward interest, but only that we would, help together with them, by our prayers to God, for the greatest mercy

in the world, and that a mercy which as much concerns us as them, for the glory of their Lord and ours, for the great advancement of our common interest and happiness, and the happiness of our fellow-creatures through all nations; a mercy, which, at this day especially, there is great need of; a mercy, which we, in this land, do stand in particular need of; a mercy, which the word of God requires us to make the subject-matter of our prayers, above all other mercies, and gives us more encouragement to pray earnestly and unitedly to him for, than any other mercy; and a mercy, which the providence of God towards the world of mankind, at this day, does loudly call the people of God to pray for. I think we cannot reasonably doubt but that these ministers have acted a part becoming disciples of the great Messiah, and ministers of his kingdom, and have done the will of God, and according to his word, in setting forward such an affair at this day, and in proposing it to us; and therefore I desire it may be considered, whether we shall not really sin against God, in refusing to comply with their proposal and request, or in neglecting it, and turning it by, with but lit-

tle notice and attention, therein disregarding that which is truly a call of God to us.

The ministers that make this proposal to us, are no separatists or schismatics, promoters of no public disorders, nor of any wildness or extravagance in matters of religion, but are quiet and peaceable members and ministers of the church of Scotland, that have lamented the late divisions and breaches of that church. If any shall say, that they are under no advantage to judge of their character, but must take it on trust from others, because they conceal their names; in answer to this, I would say, That I presume no sober person will say that he has any reason to suspect them, to be any other than gentlemen of honest intention. Besure there is no appearance of any thing else, but an upright design in their proposal, and that they have not mentioned their names, is an argument of it. It may well be presumed, from the manner of their expressing themselves, in the memorial itself, they concealed their names from that, which, perhaps, may be called an excess of modesty, chusing to be at the greatest distance from appearing to set forth themselves to the view of the world, as the heads of a great affair, and the

first projectors and movers of something extraordinary, that they desire should become general, and that God's people, in various distant parts of the world, should agree in. And therefore, they are moreover careful to tell us, that they do not propose the affair, as now setting it on foot, but as a thing already set on foot, and do not tell us who first projected and moved it. The proposal is made to us in a very proper and prudent manner, with all appearance of Christian modesty and sincerity, and with a very prudent guard against any thing that looks like superstition, or whatsoever might entangle a tender conscience, and far from any appearance of a design to promote any particular party or denomination of Christians, in opposition to others, but with all appearance to the contrary, in their charitable request, that none would, by any means, conceive of any such thing to be in their view, and that all, of every denomination and opinion concerning the late religious commotions, would join with them, in seeking the common interest of the kingdom of Christ; and, therefore, I think, none can be in the way of their duty, in neglecting a proposal in itself excellent, and that which they have reason to

think is made with upright intentions, merely because the proposers modestly conceal their names. I do not see how any serious person, that has an ill opinion of late religious stirs, can have any colour of reason to refuse a compliance with this proposal, on that account; the more disorders, extravagancies and delusions of the devil have lately prevailed, the more need have we to pray earnestly to God, for his Holy Spirit, to promote true religion, in opposition to the grand deceiver, and all his works; and the more such prayer, as is proposed, is answered, the more effectually will all that is contrary to sober and pure religion be extirpated and exploded.

One would think that every one who favours the dust of Zion, when he hears that God is stirring up a considerable number of his ministers and people, to unite in extraordinary prayer, for the revival of religion and advancement of his kingdom, should greatly rejoice on this occasion. If we lay to heart the present calamities of the church of Christ, and long for that blessed alteration which God has promised, one would think it should be natural to rejoice at the appearance of something in so dark a day,

which is so promising a token. Would not our friends that were lately in captivity in Canada, who earnestly longed for deliverance, have rejoiced to have heard of any thing that seemed to forebode the approach of their redemption? And particularly may we not suppose such of them as were religious persons, would greatly have rejoiced to have understood that there was stirred up in God's people an extraordinary spirit of prayer for their redemption? And I do not know why it would not be as natural for us to rejoice at the like hopeful token of the redemption of Zion, if we made her interest our own, and preferred Jerusalem above our chief joy.

If we are indeed called of God to comply with the proposal now made to us, then let me beseech all that do sincerely love the interest of real Christianity, notwithstanding any diversity of opinion, and former disputes, now to unite in this affair, with one heart and voice—and *let us go speedily to pray before the Lord*. There is no need that one should wait for another. If we can get others, that are our neighbours, to join with us, and so can conveniently spend the quarterly seasons with praying societies, this is desirable; but if not, why should we wholly

neglect the duty proposed? Why should not we perform it by ourselves, uniting in heart and practice, as far as we are able, with those who, in distant places, are engaged in that duty at that time?

If it be agreeable to the mind and will of God, that we should comply with the memorial, by praying for the coming of Christ's kingdom, in the manner therein proposed, then doubtless it is the duty of all to comply with the memorial, in that respect also, viz. in endeavouring, as far as in us lies, to promote others joining in such prayer, and to render this union and agreement as extensive as may be. Private Christians may have many advantages and opportunities for this; but especially ministers, inasmuch as they not only are by office overseers of whole congregations of God's people, and their guides in matters of religion, but ordinarily have a far more extensive acquaintance and influence abroad, than private Christians in common have.

And I hope that such as are convinced it is their duty to comply with and encourage this design, will remember we ought not only to go speedily to pray before the Lord, and to seek his mercy, but also to go con-

stantly. We should unite in our practice these two things, which our Saviour unites in his precept, praying and not fainting. If we should continue some years, and nothing remarkable in Providence should appear, as though God heard and answered, we should act very unbecoming believers, if we should therefore begin to be disheartened, and grow dull and slack, in our seeking of God so great a mercy. It is very apparent from the word of God, that God is wont often to try the faith and patience of his people, when crying to him for some great and important mercy, by with-holding the mercy sought, for a season, and not only so, but at first to cause an increase of dark appearances, and yet, without fail, at last, to succeed those who continue instant in prayer with all perseverance, and will not let God go except he blesses. It is now proposed that this extraordinary united prayer should continue for seven years, from November, 1746. Perhaps some that appear forward to engage, may begin to think the time long, before the seven years are out, and may account it a dull story, to go on, for so long a time, praying in this extraordinary method, while all yet continues dark and dead, without any dawn-

ings of the wished-for light, or new promising appearance in Providence of the near approach of the desired mercy. But let it be considered, whether it will not be a poor business, if our faith and patience is so short-winded, that we cannot be willing to wait upon God one seven years, in a way of taking this little pains, in seeking a mercy so infinitely vast. For my part, I sincerely wish and hope, that there may not be an end of extraordinary united prayer, among God's people, for the effusions of the blessed Spirit, when the seven years are ended, but that it will be continued, either in this method, or some other, by a new agreement, that will be entered into, with greater engagedness, and more abundant alacrity, than this is; and that extraordinary united prayer for such a mercy will be further propagated and extended, than it can be expected to be in one seven years. But yet, at the same time, I hope, God's people, that unite in this agreement, will see some tokens for good, before these seven years are out, that shall give them to see, that God has not said to the seed of Jacob—Seek ye me in vain; and shall serve greatly to animate and encourage them to go on in united prayers for the

advancement of Christ's kingdom, with increasing fervency. But whatever our hopes may be in this respect, we must be content to be ignorant of the times and seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power; and must be willing that God should answer prayer, and fulfil his own glorious promises, in his own time; remembering such instructions, counsels and promises of the word of God as these—*Wait on the Lord, be of Good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart; wait, I say, on the Lord. For the vision is yet for an appointed time; but in the end it will speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it, because it will surely come, it will not tarry. I will look unto the Lord, I will wait for the God of my salvation; my God will hear me. God will wipe away tears from off all faces, and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth; for the Lord hath spoken it. And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God! we have waited for him, and he will save us: This is JEHOVAH! we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation. Amen.*

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T H E
D O W N F A L L

O F

MYSTICAL BABYLON;

O R, A

KEY TO THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD,

I N T H E

POLITICAL OPERATIONS OF 1793-4.

BEING THE SUBSTANCE OF A DISCOURSE, PREACHED,
FIRST, AT ELIZABETH TOWN, AND AFTERWARDS
AT NEW-YORK, ON THE EVENING OF THE LORD'S
DAY, APRIL 7, 1793, AND NOW OFFERED, WITH
NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS, IN EVIDENCE OF THE
SENTIMENTS THEN DELIVERED.

By *DAVID AUSTIN*, A. M.
Minister of the First Presbyterian Church at Elizabeth Town.

A P O L O G Y.

AS the following discourse was delivered from short notes, it is hoped that any little difference in arrangement, or any additional proofs or illustrations, now observed, will be readily excused by any who heard the discourse preached; especially, whilst it is remembered, that in a printed discourse much higher authorities are expected, than what is necessary in the common course of parochial preaching.

For any sentiments observed to be omitted, the reader is referred to the tenor of the preceding discourses; and if any should be ready to say, that proofs and illustrations are needlessly multiplied, it may not be improper to answer, that on the subject of prophecy, as well as in respect to every other, the truth gains in proportion to the evidence by which it is attested; and shines much brighter whilst supported by a cloud of approved witnesses, than whilst resting on the opinion of any single interpreter.

T H E
D O W N F A L L
O F
M Y S T I C A L B A B Y L O N.

REVELATION xviii. 20.

Rejoice over her thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets, for God hath avenged you on her.

IN all the calamities which it pleases God to bring upon his enemies, or upon the enemies of his church, all holy beings have cause to rejoice. The ground of their joy, in such events, however awful to the sufferers, is founded in the reason and nature of things as well as in the express appointment and call of God.

The cause of God in heaven, and the cause of Christ and of his church on the earth are one and the same; and so far as either the former or the latter, or both unitedly, may be employed, in their usual methods of exertion, in counteracting, and in overturning

the purposes of the Grand Adversary or of his instruments; in the same degree may the struggle be stiled a common cause, or a general war. The enemies of God are the enemies of his church, and they who seek the overthrow of the latter, would, if possible, dethrone the former. On this account, therefore, it is, that all holy beings, whether in the heaven of heavens, on high, or whether in the heavens of the Christian church, (for so, in prophetic stile, the word sometimes signifies,) are called upon to rejoice at the calamities which God, in judgment for their sins, brings on his enemies, and on the enemies of his Zion.

All holy beings have cause to rejoice in the downfall of the wicked, as such a disaster, under the management of heaven, may tend to the upbuilding of the kingdom of Christ, and of the truth in the world. By such events victory is, renewedly, ascribed to God. The faith and hope of the pious are revived and confirmed.—That such effects, by such disasters upon the wicked, have been produced, the scriptures plainly teach. The drowning of the old world, and the destruction of Pharaoh and his host are instances in point. In view of the latter, *sang Moses*

and the children of Israel this song unto the Lord, and spake, saying—I will sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea. The Lord is my strength and song, and he is become my salvation: he is my God, and I will prepare him an habitation; my father's God, and I will exalt him. The Lord is a man of war: the Lord is his name.

Not only is the confidence of the righteous maintained by such displays of vindictive power, but the same events load, with increasing danger, the interests of Satan and of the wicked in general.

To revive the interests of truth and of grace—to support the cause of God in the bosoms of the righteous, and to accumulate the degrees of danger, apprehension and final destruction, on the part of the wicked, have no doubt been important, if not leading objects to be accomplished, in all the denunciations and executions which, in all ages, have been, in a higher or less degree, emptied forth upon the wicked, from the vials of the divine indignation.

In pursuance of the same important objects, a call is issued, on a mighty and solemn

occasion, to all friends to God, and to his government to rejoice. *Rejoice over her thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets, for God hath avenged you on her.*

Unfolding this passage I propose to shew,

I. Who it is over whose destruction holy beings are called upon to rejoice.

II. The cause of this disaster.

III. Notice the means employed to bring this event to pass. And,

IV. Shew the foundation the event lays for universal joy; concluding with some reflections from the whole.

And will a very gracious God so enlighten the mind, both of the speaker and of the hearers, that truths may be opened, impressions made, and effects wrought answerable to the nature and import of so solemn and momentous a subject.—I am,

I. To shew who it is over whose destruction, or downfall, all holy beings are called upon to rejoice.

For this knowledge we must repair to the first and second verses of the context. *And after these things, saith the inspired apostle, I saw another angel come down from heaven,*

having great power, and the earth was lightened with his glory. And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, BABYLON THE GREAT IS FALLEN, IS FALLEN.

It is very generally, if not unanimously, agreed by Protestant writers, that by Babylon, as used in this place, you are to understand the extensive, once triumphant, and persecuting power of anti-christian Papal Rome, stiled BABYLON, because there are so many appendages to this idolatrous power, which so nearly resemble, and so exactly answer the prophetic description of Babylon, of the Chaldees—the inveterate, the powerful, and, for a season, the successful enemy of the people of God, in ancient time.

Figures of speech, especially in the prophetic parts, are very frequent in the scriptures. Indeed, almost the whole of this book of *the Revelation of Jesus Christ which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass*, is made up of figures. Sometimes, lest the figure should be unintelligible, the angel sent to communicate the very interesting intelligence of this invaluable book, explains the figure.—And sometimes the prophetic herald gives a different view of the same object in differ-

ent figures. Of this method we have an example in the subject before us.

Papal Rome, here stiled **BABYLON THE GREAT**, in the chapter preceding is called, because of her idolatrous practices, and because of her forsaking her original faithful Lord and Husband—the **GREAT WHORE**: And that it might be known to be the same power, as is here described, the word Babylon is annexed or interwoven with the other characters of this mystical harlot. This fact will be yet more clear if you listen to the testimony itself. *So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet-coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet-colour, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand, full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication. And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.*

In supporting the allusion, or in running the parallel between ancient heathenish and modern anti-christian Papal Babylon, you

will permit, that I but touch upon the different branches of similitude, leaving the more full illustration to be supplied by your own recollection and study.

As in the prophetic writings the words Jerufalem, Zion, the Temple of the living God, &c. are used to exprefs the ftate of the church under the Jewish, fo the fame words are fometimes applied to exprefs the ftate and character of the church under the Chriftian difpenfation. On the other hand, as Sodom, Egypt and Babylon were names given to the enemies of God, and of his church, in ancient time, fo, under the fame names, their fucceffors are fet forth and defcribed as to exift in later times.

All thefe dark fhades of national character, and many more, did time allow, might be proved to be, with juftice, applicable to this anti-chriftian power of Papal Rome.— To Sodom this power may be likened for her fin, and to Egypt for her darknefs, idolatry and oppreffion. And, without doubt, by the angel of God, in his addrefs to St. John on the fubject of the flaughter of the witneffes, thefe dark fhades are applied to this tyrannical dominion. *And their dead bodies fhall lie in the ftreet of the great city,*

which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where, also, our Lord was crucified. On these words, saith an approved commentator*—
 “ The place where this was done is stiled
 “ Sodom and Egypt, and the *great city*
 “ *where our Lord was crucified*; which, if
 “ literally understood, signifies Jerusalem,
 “ but if mystically understood, ROME, or the
 “ Roman empire.”—And no one, I may add, will suppose it is perverting the prophetic emblem, if it be applied, solely, to Rome; especially, if it be recollected, that as Jerusalem was the head of the Jewish, so Rome professes to be the head of the Christian empire; and also, that the once crucifying of our Lord at Jerusalem, is but a faint emblem of the thousand crucifixions he has since undergone in the multiplied persecutions and tortures of the members of his mystical body; and, I may add, which he still undergoes in the daily offerings, the mystical services, the superstitious masses of the church of Rome.

Hear, also, to this point, the testimony of a late very respectable writer on the subject of prophecy.† “ As to the great city, men-

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* Burkit in loco. † Langdon in loco.

tioned under the figurative names of Sodom and Egypt, and compared also to Jerusalem, where our Lord was crucified, we shall find by following visions that Rome, with its empire, is meant. It is called Sodom, on account of the abominable crimes committed in it; Egypt, on account of abounding superstition and idolatry, and the cruel bondage in which it holds the people of God: And it is compared to Jerusalem, being said to be the city where our Lord was crucified; because while it pretended to be an holy city, it had killed the prophets and saints, and crucified Christ afresh in his members. Here it may be more especially observed, that as in the beginning of the chapter the temple is the emblem of the Christian church, that city, with its empire, in which the church is comprehended, may very properly be compared to Jerusalem, the city in which the Jewish temple stood: And as our Lord was crucified within the jurisdiction of the Roman empire, and by the Roman authority, and the Papal empire has succeeded to the other, and claims an equal extent, there is a propriety in saying that our Lord was crucified in the great city Rome, confi-

“dered in connexion with the empire of
“which it is the capital.”

Having laid this foundation as to the use and application of prophetic figures, to which much might be added, were it necessary, the way is plain to proceed with my subject, in an attempt to shew, that by BABYLON THE GREAT, whose fall is predicted in the text, is meant the present anti-christian power of Papal Rome.

This fact will, at once, appear most palpably evident, if, with attention, you are pleased to follow me in a consideration of the several articles of analogy, between ancient and modern Babylon, designed to justify the prophetic allusion.

1. Did Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, *set up an image*, and call upon the subjects of his empire to fall down and worship it, so hath the Nebuchadnezzar of the church of Rome, supported by the magi of his kingdom, set up, and continued to set up images innumerable, to which the homage of bowing and kneeling is continually paid in churches, in many public places, and even on the common country roads, by the subjects of this mystical empire, as is well known to those who have passed through this idolatrous country.

2. Did the decree of the king of Babylon enjoin homage to this image on pain of being cast *into the midst of a burning fiery furnace*; so doth the church of Rome enjoin homage to her idols on pain of exclusion from her communion, with the tortures of the inquisition in this world, and the pains of purgatory and damnation in the next.*

3. Did Nebuchadnezzar actually inflict, or attempt to inflict, the pains of the fiery furnace on some who refused to bow down to his image; so hath the church of Rome actually inflicted, on thousands of innocent Protestants, refusing to partake in her idolatries, all the tortures which imagination could invent.

Let the history of her persecutions, massacres, slaughters and burnings testify to this fact.†

T t

NOTES.

* The Author once had his own hat knocked off by the bayonet of a soldier, belonging to a party who escorted and protected a Bishop and his confederates, during a very thronged procession, at Nantes, because he would not do customary homage at the presence of the Host, which was carried along the streets, claiming religious homage, during the farcical exhibitions on the celebration of the Fête de Dieu.

† "Satan has opposed the Reformation with cruel *persecutions*. The persecutions with which the Protestants, in one kingdom and another, have been tormented, by the church of Rome,

4. Was ancient Babylon the seat and source of idolatry in the Pagan; so is Rome in the Christian world.

NOTE.

have been, in many respects, beyond any that were before. So that Antichrist has proved the greatest and most cruel enemy the church of Christ ever had; agreeable to the description given of the church of Rome. *And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus.— And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all them that were slain upon the earth.*

The heathen persecutions had been very dreadful; but now persecution, by the church of Rome, was improved, and studied, and cultivated as an art or science. Such methods of tormenting were found out, that were beyond the invention of former ages. And, that persecution might be managed more effectually, there were certain societies established in various parts of the Popish dominions, whose business it should be to study, improve, and practise persecution in its highest perfection, which are called the courts of inquisition.* A perusal of the histories of the Romish persecution, and their courts of inquisition, will give that idea, which a few words cannot express.

* These infernal tribunals were first erected in the twelfth century by the infamous Father Dominic, under the patronage of Pope Innocent III. in order more completely to extirpate the Waldenses, and other pretended heretics. It is difficult to conceive, that if God had delivered the world entirely into the Devil's hands, (as Satan once pretended) that his ingenuity and malice could have invented any thing more detestable and shocking. In fact, there is scarcely a method that could delay or pervert justice, but they have adopted it in their forms; nor does there seem a possible method of torture but they have invented and repeatedly exercised. The reader, whose nerves can bear such reiterated scenes of cruelty, may read Baker's History of the Inquisition—the History of the Inquisition at Goa, written by a Papiist, and similar works. But to shew how far it is possible for human nature to go, let him read the following extract from a sermon preached at Evora, on occasion of one of the most horrid scenes the sun ever beheld, an *auto de fe*, when they burn or rather roast heretics (as

Did her kings rule over many kingdoms and provinces; so this anti-christian idola-

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they call them) alive, from a principle of religion. "Beloved Portuguese," said the inhuman wretch, "let us return thanks to Heaven, for his great goodness in giving us this holy tribunal (the Inquisition.) Had it not been for this tribunal our kingdom would have become a tree without flowers or fruits, fit only to be committed to the flames. What progress has heresy made, for want of an Inquisition, in England, France, Germany, and the Netherlands! It is evident, had it not been for so great a blessing, our country would have been like to those above-mentioned."

When the Reformation began, the beast with seven heads and ten horns began to rage in a dreadful manner. After the Reformation, the church of Rome renewed its persecution of the poor Waldenses, and great multitudes of them were cruelly tortured and put to death. Soon after the Reformation, there were also terrible persecutions in various parts of Germany, and especially in Bohemia, which lasted for thirty years together, in which so much blood was shed for the sake of religion, that a certain writer compares it to the plenty of waters of the great rivers of Germany. The countries of Poland, Lithuania, and Hungary were, in like manner, deluged with Protestant blood.*

* "If Rome *Pagan* hath slain her thousands of innocent Christians, Rome *Christian* hath slain her ten thousands. For, not to mention other outrageous slaughters and barbarities, the croisades against the Waldenses and Albigenses, the murders committed by the Duke of Alva in the Netherlands, the massacres in France and Ireland, will probably amount to above ten times the number of all the Christians slain in all the ten persecutions of the Roman emperors put together."

"By means of these and other cruel persecutions, the Protestant religion was in a great measure suppressed in Bohemia, and the Palatinate, and Hungary, which before were Protestant countries. Thus was fulfilled what was foretold of the little horn." *And of the ten horns that were in his head, and of the other which came up, and before whom three fell, even of that horn that had eyes, and a mouth that spake great things, whose look was more stout than his fellows: I beheld and the same horn made war with the*

trous harlot is said to *fit upon many waters; with whom the kings of the earth have commit-*

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saints, and prevailed against them. And what was foretold of the beast having seven heads and ten horns. *And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them; and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.*

Also Holland, and the other low countries, were, for many years, a scene of nothing but the most affecting and amazing cruelties, being deluged with the blood of Protestants, under the merciless hands of the Spaniards, to whom they were then in subjection.— But in this persecution the Devil in a great measure failed of his purpose, as it issued in a great part of the Netherlands casting off the Spanish yoke, and setting up a wealthy and powerful Protestant state, to the great defence of the Protestant cause ever since.

France also is another country which, since the Reformation, in some respects, perhaps, more than any other, has been a scene of dreadful cruelties suffered by the Protestants there. After many cruelties had been exercised towards the Protestants in that kingdom, there was begun a persecution of them in the year 1571, in the reign of Charles the IX. king of France.

It began with a cruel massacre, wherein seventy thousand Protestants were slain in a few days time, as the king boasted; and in all this persecution, he slew, as is supposed, three hundred thousand martyrs. And it is reckoned, that about this time, within thirty years, there were martyred in this kingdom, for the Protestant religion, thirty-nine princes, one hundred and forty-eight counts, two hundred and thirty-four barons, one hundred and forty-seven thousand five hundred and eighteen gentlemen, and seven hundred and sixty thousand of the common people.

The Parisian massacre was aggravated with several circumstances of wantonness and treachery; but we hope that the above numbers are exaggerated. Thuanus, their own historian, reckons thirty thousand lives destroyed in this slaughter; but Protestant authors seem to have reason for supposing them not less than one hundred thousand in the whole. But the most horrid circumstance in the history is, that when the news of this event reached Rome, Pope Gregory XIII. instituted the most solemn rejoicings, giving

ted fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication.

NOTE.

thanks to Almighty God for this glorious victory!!!—An instance that has no parallel, even in hell.

But all these persecutions were, for exquisite cruelty, far exceeded by those which followed in the reign of Lewis XIV. which, indeed, are supposed to exceed all others that ever have been; and being long continued by reason of the long reign of that king, almost wholly extirpated the Protestant religion out of that kingdom, where had been before a multitude of famous Protestant churches all over the country.* Thus it was given to the beast to make war with the saints, and to overcome them.

* *The Persecution under Lewis XIV.*—This followed the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, A. D. 1685. The following extract is taken from a French work of reputation.

“The troopers, soldiers and dragoons went into the Protestants’ houses, where they marred and defaced their household stuff, broke their looking-glasses, and other utensils and ornaments, let their wine run about their cellars, and threw about their corn, and spoiled it. And as to those things which they could not destroy in this manner, such as furniture of beds, linen, wearing apparel, plate, &c. they carried them to the market place, and sold them to the Jesuits and other Roman Catholics. By these means the Protestants in Montaubon alone were, in four or five days, stripped of above a million of money. But this was not the worst.

“They turned the dining-rooms of gentlemen into stables for their horses, and treated the owners of the houses where they quartered with the highest indignity and cruelty, lashing them about from one to another, day and night, without intermission, not suffering them to eat or drink; and when they began to sink under the fatigue and pains they had undergone, they laid them on a bed, and when they thought them somewhat recovered, made them rise, and repeated the same tortures. When they saw the blood and sweat run down their faces and other parts of their bodies, they sluiced them with water; and putting over their heads

5. Was ancient Babylon a scourge to the people of God, and did she bring them into

N O T E.

kettle-drums, turned upside down, they made a continual din upon them till those unhappy creatures lost their senses. When one party of these tormentors were weary they were relieved by another, who practised the same cruelties with fresh vigor.

At Negreplisse, a town near Montaubon, they hung up Isaac Favin, a Protestant citizen of that place, by his arm-pits, and tormented him a whole night by pinching and tearing off his flesh with pincers. They made a great fire round a boy about twelve years old, who, with hands and eyes lifted up to heaven, cried out—"My God, help me!"—And when they found the youth resolved to die rather than renounce his religion, they snatched him from the fire just as he was on the point of being burnt.

"In several places the soldiers applied red hot irons to the hands and feet of men, and the breasts of women. At Nantes they hung up several women and maids by their feet, and others by their arm-pits, and thus exposed them to public view stark-naked. They bound mothers that gave suck to posts, and let their sucking infants lie languishing in their sight for several days and nights, crying, mourning and gasping for life. Some they bound before a great fire, and, being half roasted, let them go—a punishment worse than death. Amidst a thousand hideous cries, and a thousand blasphemies, they hung up men and women by the hair, and some by their feet, on hooks in chimneys, and smoaked them with wisps of wet hay till they were suffocated. They tied some under the arms with ropes, and plunged them again and again into wells. They bound others like criminals, put them to the torture, and with a funnel filled them with wine, till the fumes of it took away their reason, when they made them say they consented to be Catholics. They stripped them naked, and, after a thousand indignities, stuck them with pins and needles from head to foot. They cut and slashed them with knives, and sometimes with red-hot pincers took hold of them by the nose and other parts of the body, and dragged them about the rooms till they made them promise to be Catholics, or till the cries of these miserable wretches, calling upon God for help, forced them to let them go. They beat them with flaves, and thus bruised, and with broken bones,

a seventy years captivity? so this anti-christian power hath been a scourge to the true worshippers of God in modern times, and hath had a great part of the Christian church

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dragged them to church, where their forced presence was taken for an abjuration. In some places they tied fathers and husbands to their bed-posts, and, before their eyes, ravaged their wives and daughters with impunity. They blew up men and women with bellows till they burst them. If any, to escape these barbarities, endeavoured to save themselves by flight, they pursued them into the fields and woods, where they shot them like wild beasts, and prohibited them from departing the kingdom, (a cruelty never practised by Nero or Dioclesian) upon pain of confiscation of effects, the galleys, the lash, and perpetual imprisonment; insomuch that the prisons of the sea-port towns were crammed with men, women and children, who endeavoured to save themselves by flight from this dreadful persecution. With these scenes of desolation and horror, the popish clergy feasted their eyes, and made only a matter of laughter and sport of them."

Other cruelties.—Beside the Protestant blood shed in these persecutions, Popery has to answer for the lives of millions of Jews, Mahometans, and barbarians. When the Moors conquered Spain in the eighth century, they allowed the Christians the free exercise of their religion. But in the fifteenth century, when the tables were turned, and Ferdinand subdued the Moriscoes, (the descendants of the above Moors) many hundred thousands of them were forced to be baptized, or burnt, massacred, or banished, and their children sold for slaves; besides an innumerable multitude of Jews, who shared the same cruelties, chiefly by means of the infernal Inquisition. A worse slaughter, if possible, was made among the natives of Spanish America, where fifteen millions are said to have been sacrificed to the genius of Popery in the course of about forty years. Well, therefore, might the inspired apostle say, that at mystic Babylon's destruction—*In her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth!* Rev. xviii. 24.—[See Edwards's History of Redemption, with notes, page 452, 459, of the London, or new American edition.]

in more than Egyptian bondage for twelve hundred years.

During this bondage it is that the TWO WITNESSES—the *few* faithful, who, in every age, have testified to the truth; (as some have supposed) but if so, there may be also an allusion, and perhaps a primary one, to the TWO OLIVE TREES of the prophet's vision, *the anointed ones that stand by the Lord of the whole earth.*

The olive tree afforded light from its fatness, and nourishment from its fruit. Understanding, therefore, the purport of the TWO WITNESSES, as explained by the angel, to be the TWO OLIVE TREES, and the TWO CANDLESTICKS, *standing before the God of the earth*, I am rather inclined to think, that they have a more extensive, mystical, and important meaning than what they have been generally understood to imply. If the olive trees and candlesticks were an emblem of spiritual and divine communications during their standing in the Jewish, what should hinder the same application whilst they stand in the Christian church?

As the gifts and graces shed down upon the ministers of our blessed Lord, and upon his churches, after his ascension, were sup-

posed to have been typified or prefigured by the anointing and common oil of the sanctuary; so the olive tree as giving light and heat, and, I may add, nourishment too, was found in the usage and appointment of heaven, no unbecoming representation or emblem of those spiritual communications which were then shed upon the true worshippers, and which will ever be continued as long as Christ is the vine, or true olive, and his people the needy branches.

May we not then suppose, that by these TWO OLIVE TREES and the TWO CANDLESTICKS, *standing before the God of the earth*, is meant the *sources* of divine and spiritual supplies to his church, the *medium* of communication, or methods of *outward* and *open exhibition*; or shall we say, that the emblem may partake a little of each, and stand a lively figure of them all?

If you ask how this interpretation can consist with the epithet, with their being called *witnesses*, it may be answered, they are justly and literally so to be stiled. Are not the word of God preached, and his ordinances administered, by his faithful ministers, properly to be stiled WITNESSES for God?—

And if you choose to retain the number *two*, may we not say the *spirit* and the *word*, with their usual and outward methods of administration, are signified; or say the word, and the ordinances of God in general, or the whole exhibition of the testimony of God, whether in things inward and spiritual, or in things outward and visible?

With this interpretation agrees well the idea of their prophesying *in sackcloth*; for no one can pretend, but the administration of the word and worship of God, in the Romish church, is so beclouded by ignorance, stiled darkness; by superstition and error, and by the ministry of a corrupt priesthood, as to lay just foundation to say, that the witnesses, with this interpretation, are emphatically prophesying in sackcloth.

With the same idea consists, very exactly, the *term* of time in which these witnesses are appointed to prophesy:—It is during the whole reign of Antichrist, the forty-two months, or twelve hundred and sixty years. *And I will give, or appoint, unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth.*

With the same interpretation agrees the

declaration or exposition of the angel in the next verse. *These are the TWO OLIVE TREES and the TWO CANDLESTICKS standing before the God of the earth.* And, in fact, there seems nothing in the chapter but what may, with as great apparent truth, be reconciled to this interpretation, as to any other; and there are some things in it which cannot, with ease, be interpreted as applicable to the witnesses, in any other sense, understood or explained.

And if any should be disposed to believe, that the present reigning persecuting infidel power, now waging war against all revealed religion, in France, is likely to be the *death* of these same witnesses, who, for a long time, have already been made to prophesy in sack-cloth, perhaps the opinion may find support from the declaration of the angel: *And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit, shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them.* If this interpretation be true, the mourning witnesses are now suffering death in those parts of mystical Babylon, where the existing exterminating power has prevailed.

Did time allow, and was the present a

proper place in the order of my discourse, I might expound upon the whole chapter, and easily reconcile any expressions which, at first view, might appear intricate, or doubtful, to the spirit of this interpretation. Suffice it, for the present, to say, that with this interpretation agrees well the declaration made respecting the injury these witnesses are able to do their enemies. *And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies.* And of nothing short of the administration of Heaven can it be said: *These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy.* And of nothing short of this can it be said—*They have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues as often as they will.* And very correspondent to the death of the witnesses, and to the lying of their dead bodies in the *street of the great city*, is the death, the broken and demolished state of external religion in those parts of Papal Rome, in which the present exterminating power hath prevailed. And equally correspondent is the declaration, that *they of the people, and tongues, and nations*; probably those nations and churches out of the communion of the church of Rome,

shall see their dead bodies three days and an half, and, by a more lively administration of the word and ordinances of God, shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves.

And over the death of these witnesses it is, that the men of this world *shall rejoice, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth.*

To the resurrection and final exaltation of these witnesses well applies the verses succeeding. *And after three days and an half, the spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet, and great fear fell upon them that saw them. And they heard a great voice from heaven, saying unto them—Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud, and their enemies beheld them. During these events it is said—And the same hour was there an earthquake. May it not mean the earthquake now begun—the present convulsions amongst the nations, (for so in prophetic stile the word signifies) which are to be succeeded by the opening of the temple of God in heaven. And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen, in his temple, the ark of his testament; and there were lightnings, and voi-*

this was a member of the Christian church, and set by God in the most eminent station in his church, and was honoured above all other princes that ever had been in the world, as the great protector of his church, and her deliverer from the persecuting power of that cruel scarlet-coloured beast. Mr. Lowman himself styles him *a Christian Prince, and Protector of the Christian Religion*. God is very careful not to reckon his own people among the Gentiles, the visible subjects of Satan, Num. xxiii. 9. *The people shall not be reckoned among the nations*. God will not enroll them with them; if they happen to be among them, he will be careful to set a mark upon them, as a note of distinction, Rev. vii. 3, &c. when God is reckoning up his own people, he leaves out those that have been noted for idolatry. As among the tribes that were sealed, Rev. viii. those idolatrous tribes of Ephraim and Dan are left out, and in the genealogy of Christ, Matth. i. those princes that were chiefly noted for idolatry, are left out. Much more would God be careful not to reckon his own people, especially such Christian princes as have been the most eminent instruments of overthrowing idolatry, amongst idolaters, and as members and

heads of that kingdom that is noted in scripture as the most notorious and infamous of all, for abominable idolatry, and opposition and cruelty to the true worshippers of God. And especially not to reckon them as properly belonging to one of those seven heads of this monarchy, of which very heads it is particularly noted that they had on them the names of **BLASPHEMY**, which Mr. Lowman himself supposes to signify idolatry. It was therefore worthy of God, agreeable to his manner, and what might well be expected, that when he was reckoning up the several successive heads of this beast, and Constantine and his successors came in the way, and there was occasion to mention them, to set a mark, or note of distinction on them, signifying that they did not properly belong to the beast, nor were to be reckoned as belonging to the heads, and therefore are to be skipped over in the reckoning, and Antichrist, though the eighth head of the Roman empire, is to be reckoned the seventh head of the beast. This appears to me abundantly the most just and natural interpretation of Rev. xvii. 10, 11. It is reasonable to suppose, that God would take care to make such a note in this prophetic description

of this dreadful beast, and not, by any means to reckon Constantine as belonging properly to him.—If we reckon Constantine as a member of this beast having seven heads and ten horns, described chap. xvii. and as properly one of his heads, then he was also properly a member of the great red dragon with seven heads and ten horns that warred with the woman, chap. xii. For the seven heads and ten horns of that dragon, are plainly the same with the seven heads and ten horns of the beast. So that this makes Constantine a visible member of the devil; for we are told expressly of that dragon, ver 9. that he was *that old serpent, called the Devil and Satan*. And to suppose that Constantine is reckoned as belonging to one of the heads of that dragon, is to make these prophecies inconsistent with themselves. For here in this 12th chapter, we have represented a war between the dragon and the woman cloathed with the sun; which woman, as all agree, is the church; but Constantine, as all do also agree, belonged to the woman, was a member of the Christian church, and was on that side in the war against the dragon; yea, was the main instrument of that great victory that was obtained over the dragon there spo-

ken of, ver. 9—12. What an inconsistency therefore is it, to suppose that he was at the same time a member and head of that very dragon, which fought with the woman, and yet which Constantine himself fought with, overcame, and gloriously triumphed over! It is not therefore to be wondered at, that God was careful to distinguish Constantine from the proper heads of the beast; it would have been a wonder if he had not. God seems to have been careful to distinguish him, not only in his word, but in his providence, by so ordering it that this Christian emperor should be removed from Rome, the city that God had given up to be the seat of the power of the beast, and of its heads, and that he should have the seat of his empire elsewhere.

Constantine was made the instrument of giving a mortal wound to the heathen Roman empire, and giving it a mortal wound in its head, viz. the heathen emperors that were then reigning, Maxentius and Licinius.— But more eminently was this glorious change in the empire owing to the power of God's word, the prevalence of the glorious gospel, by which Constantine himself was converted, and so became the instrument of the o-

verthrow of the heathen empire in the east and west. The change that was then bro't to pass, is represented as the destruction of the heathen empire, or the old heathen world, and therefore seems to be compared to that dissolution of heaven and earth that shall be at the day of judgment, Rev. vi. 12. to the end. And therefore well might the heathen empire, under the head which was then reigning, be represented as wounded to death, chap. xiii. 3. It is much more likely, that the wound the beast had by a sword, in his head, spoken of ver. 14. was the wound that the heathen empire had in its head, by that sword which we read of, chap. i. 16. and xix. 15. that proceeds out of the mouth of Christ, than the wound that was given to the Christian empire and emperor by the sword of the heathen Goths. It is most likely that this deadly wound was by that sword with which Michael made war with him, and overcame him, and cast him to the earth, chap. xii. 9. and that the deadly wound which was given him, was given him at that very time. It is most likely, that the sword that gave him this deadly wound, after which he strangely revived, as though he rose from the dead, was the same sword with that which is spoken of,

as what shall at last utterly destroy him, so that he shall never rise more, chap. xix. 15, 19, 20, 21. This wounding of the head of the beast by the destruction of the heathen empire, and conversion of the emperor to the Christian truth, was a glorious event indeed of Divine Providence, worthy to be so much spoken of in prophecy. It is natural to suppose, that the mortal wounding of the head of that savage cruel beast, that is represented as constantly at war with the woman, and persecuting the church of Christ, should be some relief to the Christian church; but, on the contrary, that wounding to death, that Mr. Lowman speaks of, was the victory of the enemies of the Christian church over her, and the wound received from them.

It is said of that head of the empire that shall be next after the sixth head, and next before Antichrist, and that is not reckoned as properly one of the number of the heads of the beast, that *when it comes, it shall continue a short space*, chap. xvii. 10. By which we may understand, at least, that it shall be one of the shortest, in its continuance, of the successive heads. But the government seated at Ravenna, in the hands of the Goths, or of the deputies of the Greek emperors,

that thou shalt take up this proverb against the king of Babylon, and say—How hath the oppressor ceased! The golden city ceased!—The whole earth is at rest, and is quiet; they break forth into singing: Yea, the fir-trees rejoice at thee, and the cedars of Lebanon, saying—Since thou art laid down, no feller has come up against us. Hell from beneath is moved for thee, to meet thee at thy coming: it stirreth up the dead for thee,

Thy pomp is brought down to the grave, and the noise of thy viols; the worm is spread under thee, and the worms cover thee.

How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer! Son of the Morning, how art thou cut down to the ground, which did weaken the nations!

They that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee and consider thee, saying—Is this the man that made the earth to tremble? that did shake kingdoms? that made the world as a wilderness? and destroyed the cities thereof? that opened not the house of the prisoners?

For I will arise up against them saith the Lord of Hosts, and cut off from Babylon the name and remnant, the son and nephew saith the Lord. I will also make it a possession for the bittern, and pools of water; and I will

sweep it with the besom of destruction saith the Lord of Hosts.

Having thus taken but a very brief survey of the joyful, though awful expressions of exultation at the destruction of ancient Babylon, let us, for a moment, examine what there is, upon sacred record, to answer this emblem in respect to the downfall of mystical Babylon.—*And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory. And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich thro' the abundance of her delicacies. And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues: For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities. Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double, according to her works: in the*

cup which she hath filled, fill to her double. How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her: for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow. Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burnt with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her. And the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her, shall bewail her, and lament for her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning. Standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, Alas, alas! that great city Babylon, that mighty city! for in one hour is thy judgment come. And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her: for no man buyeth their merchandise any more: The merchandise of gold, and silver, and precious stones, and of pearls, and fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet, and all thyme wood, and all manner vessels of ivory, and all manner vessels of most precious wood, and of brass, and iron, and marble, and cinnamon, and odours, and ointments, and frankincense, and wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and beasts, and sheep, and horses, and chariots, and slaves, and souls of men.—

And the fruits that thy soul lusteth after are departed from thee, and all things which were dainty and goodly are departed from thee, and thou shalt find them no more at all. The merchants of these things, which were made rich by her, shall stand afar off, for the fear of her torment, weeping and wailing. And saying, Alas, alas! that great city, that was clothed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls! For in one hour so great riches is come to nought. And every ship-master, and all the company in ships, and sailors, and as many as trade by sea, stood afar off, and cried, when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying—What city is like unto this great city! And they cast dust on their heads, and cried, weeping and wailing, saying, Alas, alas! that great city, wherein were made rich all that had ships in the sea by reason of her costliness! for in one hour she is made desolate. Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her. And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great milstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all. And the voice of harpers, and musicians,

and of pipers, and trumpeters, shall be heard no more at all in thee; and no craftsman, of whatsoever craft he be, shall be found any more in thee; and the sound of a milstone shall be heard no more at all in thee; and the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee: for thy merchants were the great men of the earth; for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived, And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth.

“ And after these things I heard a great
“ voice of much people in heaven, saying,
“ Alleluia! Salvation, and glory, and honor,
“ and power, unto the Lord our God: For
“ true and righteous are his judgments; for
“ he hath judged the great whore, which did
“ corrupt the earth with her fornication,
“ and hath avenged the blood of his servants
“ at her hand. And again they said, Alle-
“ luia! And her smoke rose up for ever and
“ ever. And the four and twenty elders, and
“ the four beasts, fell down and worshipped
“ God that sat on the throne saying, Amen;
“ Alleluia!—And a voice came out of the
“ throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his

“ servants, and ye that fear him, both small
 “ and great. And I heard as it were the voice
 “ of a great multitude, and as the voice of
 “ many waters, and as the voice of mighty
 “ thunderings, saying, Alleluia! for the Lord
 “ God omnipotent reigneth.

Did time allow, I might follow several other prophecies in their application to this same anti-christian church, and shew the evidence they all carry of a threatened overthrow; but I shall wave this for the present, expressing all necessary to be expressed in this place, in the words of an eminent English writer on this subject.*

“ The prophecies of Daniel, St. Paul, and St. John, though *singly* of great weight, receive additional force if brought near and illustrated by each other. Having already examined them separately, and apart, let us now consider them together, and collect the evidence that arises when they are taken in one view, and form an entire and perfect whole.

From the most cursory view of the three predictions it is evident, that the same scheme

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* See Hallifax's Sermons, page 328.

and constitution of things, the same events, persons and times, the origin, continuance and destruction of the same tyrannical power, (which power, by Daniel, is noted by the appellation of the *little horn*, by St. Paul is denominated *the man of sin*, and by St. John is branded with the titles of the *beast*, and the *false prophet*;) are *distinctly* foretold in all.

If Daniel describes the kingdom in which the little horn was to arise, by such emblems as can belong to none but the Roman, the same emblems, to pre-figure the kingdom of the beast and the false prophet, are also employed by St. John, from whom we farther learn, that his appropriated place of residence is the city of Rome.

If Daniel restrains the sovereignty of this Roman power to the European or western part of the empire, after it was divided into ten shares, the same restriction is intimated in one of the epistles of St. Paul, and is more explicitly declared by the beloved disciple in the Apocalypse. If Daniel represents the nature of this usurped dominion as different from any other, St. Paul and St. John instruct us, that this diversity consists in its being spiritual, not a civil dominion, which is

therefore to be fought for, *not* in the Heathen, but in *Christian* Rome. If the instances in which this spiritual dominion is exerted, according to Daniel, be chiefly these—aspiring to supreme and uncontrollable authority over the inhabitants of the earth—affecting divine titles and honors—enjoining the worship of dæmons and departed saints—prohibiting marriage—working false miracles—and persecuting and killing those who oppose its claims; the same particulars are related, and with new additions and explanations in the writings of St. Paul and St. John. If the *duration* of this ecclesiastical polity be limited by Daniel to *a time*, and *times*, and *the dividing of time*, the same duration is expressed, and, in a variety of phrases, by St. John, by whom the reign of the beast is fixed to a *time*, and *times*, and *half a time*, or to three years and an half, or forty-two months, or twelve hundred and sixty days.

And lastly, if the demolition of this extraordinary polity be denounced by the prophet of the Old Testament, the same interesting event is promised by the two apostles of the New. Such a number of coincidences, all so strange and unusual in their kinds, to be found in the compositions of

three persons, living in different, and one in a very remote period, cannot fairly be ascribed to any other cause than to the impulse of the *self-same spirit*, who taught them all things, which it was necessary should be communicated for the admonition of the church of Christ, upon whom the ends of the world should come.

Now of the characters recorded in scripture, as the undoubted marks of Antichrist, many, at least, have been shewn to belong, exclusively, to the *tyranny* now existing in Papal Rome. For, *first* of all, this power is certainly a Roman one: *Secondly*, it is confined to the limits of the Latin, or western empire: *Thirdly*, it arose among the ten kingdoms into which that empire was parted by the northern barbarians; *Fourthly*, its throne or seat is in the city of Rome: *Fifthly*, it is a Christian power; and, *sixthly*, it is discriminated from all others, by being of the spiritual or ecclesiastic kind. These are circumstances so plainly realized in that part of Christendom which is subject to the Roman Pontiff, that it is not possible, by any art or subtilty of our adversaries, they can be evaded or denied.”*

NOTE.

* See the eleventh of Bishop Hurd's Sermons on the Prophe-

After such testimony and volumes to the same effect which might be produced, if necessary, you will not deem it harsh, uncharitable, or unfair, if I say, the object pointed at in these prophecies, must infallibly be the present *tyrannical*, though, blessed be God! the *tottering* church of Papal Rome. This is the haughty *Babylon*, and this is *the woman arrayed in purple and scarlet-colour, and decked with gold and precious stones, and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand, full of abominations, and filthiness of her fornication.* And this is the woman, upon whose forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS, and ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. And this is the woman that was seen *drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus.* And this is the woman that is denominated by the *great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth.*

If, in this place, you think proper to ask any thing respecting the *rise, continuance,* and final destruction of this multi-formed

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cies, where the prophetic characters of Antichrist, above described, are shewn, and in a very satisfactory way, to be, fairly, applicable to the church of Rome.

devouring monster, I answer, briefly, that according to the present most approved calculations we are authorized to say, that the *origin* of this anti-christian power was gradual, though its actual continuance is several times plainly expressed by the prophets to be *twelve hundred and sixty years*.

“ Sometime between A. D. 500, and the end of the reign of the Goths, which was A. D. 553, when Narfes took Rome and their dominions in Italy from them, and began the exarchate of Ravenna, the reckoning of twelve hundred and sixty years must begin. But Antichrist cannot be supposed to start up into view at once, in a sudden manner, as he will not fall without *many preparatory circumstances*. He became, by degrees, distinguishable, and doubtless his ruin will be brought on by several steps in Providence.

Therefore, if we begin at the earliest date, when we may suppose he first presented himself to view, the end of the period will bring us to the first steps towards his fall; but if we begin at the latest time, *twelve hundred and sixty years*, will bring us to the complete ruin of his power.

The first open breach between the western and eastern churches was, as we have

said, about the year 500. To reckon twelve hundred and sixty years from that time brings us to A. D. 1760. And it is remarkable that from that very year, when the Jesuits had excited the resentments of the kings of Europe, which finally brought on the dissolution of that order, the power of the church of Rome has been very apparently declining, and several plain steps have been taken by the providence of God toward her utter destruction. Convents have been suppressed, and their revenues seized in kingdoms where superstition had long reigned without controul.

The infernal Courts of Inquisition have received severe checks, by which they are likely to be soon annihilated, in countries most noted for Romish bigotry.

Liberty of conscience has been given to Protestants in nations which had long been devoted to the papacy.

Roman Catholic princes begin to withhold from Rome the customary revenues. Even a late Pope, by his liberal writings, has lent his help to render Romish superstition ridiculous. And *appearances are still proceeding.***

NOTE.

* Langdon on Revelation, page 266—7

If, on the ground of the calculation just now mentioned, we proceed, the conclusion obviously is, that the destruction of Babylon is *very near at hand*. If to 1760, the date of the commencement of her fall, be added fifty years, the term in which she is supposed to be falling, the sum will be the period of her expected overthrow. And from appearances, now before us, we have good ground to conclude, that, if the decree of Heaven goes on for sixteen years to come, until 1810, as it has for four years past, the denunciation for the destruction of Babylon will be fully accomplished.

As to times and seasons, it is not for us exactly to know; and whatever mistakes we make in our calculation of numbers, it does not however, at all alter the decree, or postpone the effect.

Hear the testimony of an eminent divine on this subject.*

“ Whatever mistakes the Jewish Rabbies
 “ might fall into in their interpretation of Da-
 “ niel’s seventy weeks, and in their attempts
 “ to fix the precise time of the Messiah’s com-

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* Doctor Bellamy’s discourse on the Millennium, published in 1758,—page 34 of this work.

ing; and whatever mistaken notions any of them had about the nature of his kingdom, as though it was to be of this world, and he to appear in all earthly grandeur, and although his coming, to some, might seem to be so long delayed, that they began to give up all hopes of it, and to contrive some other meaning to the ancient prophecies, or even to call in question the inspiration of the prophets; yet neither the mistakes of some, nor the infidelity of others, at all, altered the case. Days, and months, and years hastened along, and one revolution, among the kingdoms of the earth, followed upon another, till the *fulness of time* was come, till all things were ripe, and *then*, behold, the Messiah was born! Even so it shall be now.

“ Whatever mistakes Christian Divines may fall into, in their interpretation of six hundred and sixty-six, the number of the beast, or in their endeavors to fix the precise time when the twelve hundred and sixty years of Antichrist’s reign shall begin and end; or whatever wrong notions some may have had, or may have about the nature of the Millennium, as though Christ

“ was to reign, personally, on earth; and if
“ some, mean while, begin to think that all
“ things will go on as they have done, and to
“ conclude, that the *expectation* of these glori-
“ ous days which has prevailed in the Chris-
“ tian church, from the beginning, is merely
“ a groundless fancy; yet none of these things
“ will at all alter the case. Days, and months,
“ and years, will hasten along, and one revo-
“ lution, among the kingdoms of the earth,
“ follow upon another, until the *fulness of*
“ *time* is come; till all things are ripe for
“ the event; and then the ministers of Christ
“ will accomplish, in *reality*, what St. John
“ saw in his visions: *I saw an angel fly in the*
“ *midst of heaven, having the everlasting gos-*
“ *pel to preach unto them that dwell on the*
“ *earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and*
“ *tongue, and people.* And then shall it come
“ to pass, that the veil of ignorance which
“ hath so long spread over all nations *shall*
“ *be destroyed*, and knowledge shall so great-
“ ly increase, that it shall be as though *the*
“ *light of the moon were as the light of the*
“ *sun; and the light of the sun sevenfold, un-*
“ *til the knowledge of the Lord cover the earth*
“ *as the waters do the sea.* And then there
“ *shall be nothing to hurt or offend in all God's*

“ *holy mountain*. For Babylon shall fall, Satan be bound, and Christ will reign, and truth and righteousness universally prevail a thousand years.”

Having, thus, considered who it is over whose destruction all holy beings are called to rejoice, and said something of the *origin, continuance, and expected downfall* of this power, I proceed,

II. To consider the *cause* of this awful disaster.

Rejoice over her thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her.

If we confine our researches after the procuring cause of this disaster to the appendages of Babylon, we shall find it in *her own guilt*.

Permit me to point out her guilt as hinted at in the chapter from which my text is taken.

1. Babylon is charged with the extent of her idolatry.

The kings of the earth have committed fornication with her; that is, have been embraced by her idolatrous communion—united with her in a general apostacy from God.

2. She is charged with a selfish, mercena-

ry spirit in the concerns of her administration. *The merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies.* “By the merchants understand all such as trade in Babylon’s wares; her pleasing and costly wares of pardons, masses and indulgencies, by which so many are enriched; as well as those who trade in images, and in all the costly trappings of their idolatrous worship, and especially in the souls of men.”

3. She is spoken of as *contaminating* and endangering those who tarried within her limits, exposing the people of God to be bewitched by her forceries. *And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.*

My brethren, doth not this solemn decree, for the separation of God’s people from the sins and abominations of Babylon, preach to us in these United States, even to us, who inhabit this asylum of the distressed, to beware of the habits, customs, influence and enchanting prerogatives of those who are fleeing before the vengeance of an incensed God? *Be not partakers of her sins, that ye receive not of her plagues.*

This caution is supported by the annun-

ciation of the angel of God. *And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication. And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation: and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb.*

4. The guilt of Babylon is spoken of as sending forth a cry: *For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities. Either a cry of the persecuted and suffering church, or a cry for vengeance. And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held. And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little*

season, until their fellow-servants also, and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled.

5. A remembrance of the persecuting spirit of this anti-christian power is spoken of as warranting a decree for vengeance from the Court of Heaven. *Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double, according to her work; in the cup which she hath filled, fill to her double.*

It is probable this injunction or command is given to the ministers—to the ministering angels of God's judgments, in behalf of his church; and though it doth not call for the peaceful followers of the Lamb to wage a carnal warfare with this intolerant power, yet it doubtless authorises our prayers that her destruction may be speedy and inevitable.

6. The last *inherent* cause of this awful calamity I shall mention, is found in the pride and haughtiness, luxury and voluptuousness of this self exalted anti-christian power.—*How much she hath glorified herself and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her. For she saith in her heart—I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow. Therefore shall her plagues come in one*

day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her.

I am led to conclude this branch of my discourse, by adding, that the *final* cause of the destruction of Babylon is the *sentence* of God against her. This sentence is pronounced by an angel from the court, from the *tribunal* of heaven. *And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen. And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great milstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all.* If you ask the reason of this judicial sentence from the tribunal of heaven, it is said—*For by thy sorceries were all nations deceived. And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth.*

Having pointed out who it is over whose destruction holy angels and men are called upon to rejoice, and considered the *cause* of this awful catastrophe, my subject leads,

III. To consider the *means* by which this event shall be brought about.

And what *means*, my audience, should you suppose might be adequate to such a task?

to the task of overturning a power which hath subsisted more than twelve hundred years, supported by the kings of the earth, who drink of her cup, and delight in her force-ries—who have long since lent their aid for her support against the voice of reason—the demands of Heaven, and the cries of perishing thousands?—What power is equal to the task of accomplishing even the *decree of Heaven* against such might, such united force as Babylon is able to bring into the field? more especially, when you consider that for the terror of her enemies, and for the comfort of her friends, this intolerant power professes to have in possession the keys of heaven and of hell?

Retreat you will be ready to say from such a task! Let no one be so presumptuous as to provoke her to anger, as to stir up her fury!—Many have been devoured by this leviathan, by this multi-formed, insatiable monster; and God forbid that any more should be swallowed up, whilst they are able to make but a feeble, though honest attempt!

Our fears, my friends, are relieved whilst I read to you, from the inspiration of God, that the angel that pronounces the decree of destruction is commissioned from the Court

of Heaven; has *great power, and that the earth is lightened with his glory.* And to support the executioner of the sentence it is added, *for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her.*

As then the decree hath its origin in heaven, and the promulgation of it is by a messenger from Heaven, we are authorised to look to Heaven for MEANS to accomplish what its decree hath ordained.

Did it please the Lord of Hosts, in ancient time, to promise deliverance to the Hebrews in Egyptian bondage; and did he not graciously provide the means of deliverance?—Was it in after times threatened against this rebellious people that, for their hypocrisy and sins, they should go into captivity; and did not a righteous God provide the means to execute the sentence?—Hear the appointment of heaven to this task. *O Assyrian! the rod of mine anger; and the staff in their hand is mine indignation! I will send him against an hypocritical nation, and against the people of my wrath will I give him a charge to take the spoil, and to take the prey, and to tread them down like the mire in the streets. Howbeit he meaneth not so, neither doth his*

heart think so; but it is in his heart to destroy, and cut off: nations not a few.

Wherefore it shall come to pass, that, when the Lord hath performed his whole work upon Mount Zion, and on Jerusalem, I will punish the fruit of the stout heart of the king of Assyria, and the glory of his high looks; for he saith, by the strength of my hand I have done it, and by my wisdom; for I am prudent: and I have removed the bounds of the people, and have robbed their treasures, and I have put down the inhabitants like a valiant man.

I cite this passage at length, not only that the sentiments under consideration may be supported, as to *means* of execution, appointed by the decree of Heaven; but to teach that means may be appointed, and may even execute the will of Heaven, and yet be themselves wholly ignorant of the God they are serving—be vastly sinful in what they do, and be, finally, sorely punished for the ungodly deed.

Again, did it please God to promise deliverance to the captive Jews from Babylon; and did he not gird his man for the purpose? Thus saith the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of

kings, to open before him the two-leaved gates, and the gates shall not be shut: I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight: I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron. For Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name: I have surnamed thee though thou hast not known me. I am the Lord, and there is none else, there is no God besides me: I girded thee, though thou hast not known me.

These examples of means provided for the accomplishment of mercies promised, or for the execution of judgments denounced, in the wisdom of God, lay good foundation for us to proceed, and afford unerring direction to us in our enquiries after the means or methods which God will provide and use, for the execution of the awful sentence of which our subject treats.

Babylon is fallen, is fallen! But by what means is she to be brought down?

The state of this anti-christian church is spoken of under several figures or emblems, all of which are to have their end in some method suited to the destruction of the original figure.

If we ask after the destruction of this

church under the figure of Babylon, we shall find the means pre-figured under the pouring out of the sixth vial—the vial which all present expositors allow to be now running.

And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared.

I need not detain you here to say that the river Euphrates signifies the wealth, the revenues, the strength and support of whatever kind, by which Papal Babylon hath, in time past, been upheld:—And if you wish to know whether this river hath been, or is now drying up, you may be informed by asking those who can tell to what end the revenues of the church of Rome have lately come. You may ask where are her privileges and prerogatives, her churches, her church-lands, her wonted revenues from princes and from subjects, especially, in respect to those parts of the empire on which the contents of this vial have already been poured?—You may ask, where is that faith, that *implicit* faith which was once put in her?—that domination which she maintained over the consciences of men?—Where are her idols—her masses—her superstitions

—her ministers?—As to her revenues, it will be answered, they have ceased;—as to faith, confidence and trust in this once reputed fountain of truth and infallibility, it will be said, it is departed; her subjects have thrown off the mask, and refuse to be hoodwinked any longer. As to her idols, so far as there was any value in them, they are now passing in coin; and as to her ministers, they are executed and dispersed. Even the college of Sorbonne* is obliged to yield up her magi, and give them, to her foes, a prey.

If you ask why the drying up of the river Euphrates is spoken of, *that the way of the kings of the east may be prepared?* I answer, in a word, that as ancient Euphrates was dried up, that the way of her enemies, who came from the east, might be prepared, in their approach to her destruction; so this mystical river is dried up, that the city itself may become an easy prey.

On this passage hear the language of a judicious divine.†

“ In the drying up of the river Euphrates,

N O T E S.

* A celebrated institution, or college, for the residence of doctors, professors, and students in divinity, at Paris, who suffered in the general calamity.

† Burkit in loco.

manifest allusion is had to the manner of old Babylon's destruction. The river Euphrates *ran through old Babylon*, and was a greater defence to it than its celebrated walls, which, for thickness and height, were the wonder of the world. Cyrus, "the leader of the Kings of the East," when he took Babylon, cut many ditches, and let the river Euphrates run out, and so he and his soldiers entered the city, and took it. As the drying up of Euphrates, *then*, was an immediate forerunner of the destruction of Babylon; in like manner, the drying up of Euphrates, signify it what it will, shall be the immediate forerunner of the destruction of anti-christian Babylon, whenever it shall be. The Romish Euphrates being dried up, the Romish Babylon will hasten, again, towards its final ruin."

Whether the Euphrates of the Romish Babylon is not already so far dried up, as that the Kings of the East have made a breach upon her, let facts and daily intelligence determine.

What though you call the instruments of this successful attack upon Rome a lawless banditti—a race of infidels—men, who profess to "know no God but Liberty, and no

Gospel but their Constitution."—What then! are they not, in the hand of God, as well chosen instruments for the execution of threatened vengeance upon mystical Babylon, as the heathenish kings of the east were, for the same design, upon Babylon of the Chaldees?

Those who look through the great plan, viewing the purposes of Heaven upon a broad scale, believe and know that Kings and Captains, in all ages; nay, that even wicked men and devils, in the fullness of their rage, are yet under the divine controul; that the wrath of the whole, in the end, shall *praise him*, and the *remainder he is able to restrain*.

In running through with the destruction of Babylon, the prophet notices a movement of a very extraordinary nature; an exertion made to oppose the deluge which Almighty God is causing to overspread the anti-christian world. But, alas! a feeble exertion, and, in the end, does but expedite the overthrow denounced.

And I saw three unclean spirits, like frogs, come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. The apostle proceeds to interpret the objects presented. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles,

which go forth unto the kings of the earth, and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.

“ In the foregoing verses,” saith the author just now cited, “ an account was given of the subject upon which the *sixth* vial was poured out, namely, upon the river Euphrates. Here we have an effect that followed thereupon; a warlike expedition, or gathering to battle. Where, note 1. The principal commanders, in this battle, the Dragon, the Beast, and the False Prophet.

“ 2. The instruments employed and made use of by them who are said to be, for their nature, *spirits*; for their quality, *unclean*; for their number, *three*; for their *similitude* and resemblance *like frogs*; namely, with respect to their corrupt origin, and their numbers—they swarm and croak in all places, and live both in the water and upon the earth:—by all which, many interpreters understand emissaries, missionaries, negociators, solicitors and legates, sent forth, and employed by Antichrist for the support and strengthening of him and his kingdom, by soliciting the kings of the earth to join together in battle against his enemies.”

We need no testimony to support the opinion that the nuncios, legates, bishops and monks of the church of Rome have been industriously, and, speaking after the manner of men, but too successfully employed in ranging the present combination of kings against the progress of the divine decree.— But *Babylon is fallen, is fallen* in the councils of heaven, and no popish emissaries shall prevail to parry the fatal blow. True, they have boasted their art and success in parrying the arguments, and the appeals of Protestants in time past, but they cannot parry the judgments of God.

And he gathered them together into a place, called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.

“ He, that is Almighty God, by his per-
 “ missive providence, suffered the kings of
 “ the earth to hearken to Antichrist’s mission-
 “ aries, and to assemble and gather together,
 “ as Jabin and Sisera gathered together a-
 “ gainst Israel to their own destruction: And
 “ whereas the place of their gathering to-
 “ gether and destruction is called ARMAGED-
 “ DON, that is so named from the event of
 “ the battle, signifying such a place where
 “ the enemies of the Lord shall be destroy-
 “ ed.”

If any are disposed to enquire after this place of destruction, let them peruse the accounts of the many bloody battles which have been fought since resistance has been made to the purposes of heaven in the *existing* decree, and anticipate the destruction yet to follow.—One hundred and fifty, if not two hundred thousand, are supposed to have perished in all the conflicts, battles, sieges, assassinations and executions which have taken place since the present vial has begun to run. Witness, especially, the late very serious rencounters between the forces of France and the allied armies, in and about the Austrian Netherlands, as well as upon all their frontiers, and we may add also the massacres of internal commotion.—Must not such torrents of blood be placed to the account of the *battle of the great day of God Almighty?*

If this anti-christian power, for her apostacy from God, and for her idolatry, be figured forth to us under the degrading and abominable idea of a prostitute, her destruction is said to come from the hatred of the ten kings or kingdoms heretofore in her idolatrous communion.

And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet;

but receive power as kings one hour, or at the same time, with the beast. These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast.

But, in the day of God's wrath, whilst the *sixth* vial continues to deliver its mysterious, but avenging contents, *the ten kings shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire.*

If it please God to set forth this anti-christian power under the denomination of a beast, his destruction, with his adherents, is threatened by an angel of God, not only as to this life, but as to the life to come.

And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast, and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation: and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb.

If it please God to speak of this idolatrous and intolerant power under the character of the *man of sin, whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power, and signs, and*

lying wonders; his destruction is denounced as being brought about by the vindictive justice of God:—Whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming.

If this power is represented as interwoven with the civil power of the *fourth* great kingdom of the world; if the civil and ecclesiastical power of Rome forms *the iron and the clay*, well may its destruction be predicted by the rolling of the stone (cut out, not with human hands, but by the providence of God,) against the legs, or rather the feet and toes of this kingdom, which is founded of iron and clay—partly *strong* and partly *weak*—partly *true* and partly *false*: well, I say, may destruction come from the stone prepared of God with this design. *Thou sawest, saith Daniel to Nebuchadnezzar, till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces: And the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth.*

Can I better set before you the interpretation of this portion of prophecy, than in the words of Bishop Newton, supported by

the celebrated Mr. Mede? * “ As the fourth kingdom, or the Roman empire, was represented in a twofold state; first, strong and flourishing, *with legs of iron*, and then weakened and divided, *with feet and toes, part of iron and part of clay*; so this *fifth* kingdom, or the kingdom of Christ, is described likewise in *two* states, which Mr. Mede rightly distinguisheth by the names of *regnum lapidis*, the kingdom of the stone, and *regnum montis*, the kingdom of the mountain; the *first*, when the *stone was cut out of the mountain without hands*; the *second*, when it became itself a mountain, and filled the whole earth.

“ *The stone was cut out of the mountain without hands.* The kingdom of Christ was first set up while the Roman empire was in its full strength, *with legs of iron*. The Roman empire was afterwards divided into ten lesser kingdoms, the remains of which are subsisting at present. The image is still standing upon his *feet and toes of iron and clay*. The kingdom of Christ is yet *a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence*. But the stone will, *one day*, smite the image upon the feet

NOTE.

* Newton on the Prophecies, vol. ii. page 244.

and toes, and destroy it utterly, and will itself become a great mountain, and fill the whole earth: or, in other words, the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever.

“ We have, therefore seen the kingdom of the *stone*, but we have not yet seen the KINGDOM OF THE MOUNTAIN. Some parts of this prophecy still remain to be fulfilled; but the exact completion of the other parts will not suffer us to doubt of the accomplishment of the rest also, in due season.”

And what period of time, my brethren, hath ever looked so likely to be introductory to the regnum montis, to the kingdom of the mountain, as the present? Is not the *stone* now rolling against the feet and toes of the mighty image? And when it shall have split in sunder the heterogeneous and unnatural mixture, of which the empire of Rome is now composed; when the civil and ecclesiastical authority (which hath so long composed what, in the dignity and pride of anti-christian glory, hath been stiled THE HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE,) shall be separated or dissolved, there will be good ground to believe, that the empire of Jesus Christ—the regnum montis, will begin.

The rolling of the stone, then, and the increase of it to the size of a mountain, may justly be placed to the account of *means* ordained of God for the destruction of mystical Babylon—the empire of the church of Rome.

And if it may not be presuming too far, I would venture to assert, that appearances are not only now favoring the introduction of the REGNUM MONTIS, but that it has already begun, and is considerably advanced in its progress. But,

How shall the *little stone* become a mountain, and how shall it destroy this mighty image, this anti-christian colossus, which hath stood so many a storm?

Must it not *acquire a power—gain a momentum* equal to the task?

Must there not be some power applied beside reason and argument; the force of which this power hath found means so long to withstand?—Undoubtedly, you will say, there must be such a power—but where is it to be found, and from what quarter must it come?

Behold, my brethren, behold in the scenes now passing in the drama of Europe—another Assyrian and his host!—another *ax* in the hand of *him that heweth therewith*, and

another saw in the hand of him that *shaketh it!*—

In the same group behold another Cyrus, whose right hand the Lord hath holden to subdue nations before him—before whom the Lord loosened the loins of kings, and opened before him the two-leaved gates. Before whom the Lord went to make crooked places straight; to break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron:—Whom the Lord surnamed, and whom he girded with power, though the Assyrian knew him not.

If this language seem too mysterious to any, let them receive a familiar stile, and behold the regnum montis, the kingdom of the mountain, begun on the Fourth of July, 1776, when the birth of the MAN-CHILD—the hero of civil and religious liberty took place in these United States. Let them read the predictions of heaven respecting the increase of his dominion—that he was to rule all nations with a rod of iron; that is, bring them into complete and absolute subjection; and that the young hero might be equal to this mighty conquest, he is supported by an omnipotent arm; he is caught up unto God, and to his throne. Behold, then, this hero of America wielding the standard of civil

and religious liberty over these United States!—Follow him, in his strides, across the Atlantic!—See him, with his spear already in the heart of the beast!—See tyranny, civil and ecclesiastical, bleeding at every pore!—See the votaries of the tyrants; of the beasts; of the false prophets, and serpents of the earth, ranged in battle array, to withstand the progress and dominion of him, who hath commission to break down the usurpations of tyranny—to let the *prisoner out of the prison-house*; and to set the vassal in bondage free from his chains—to level the mountains—to raise the valleys, and to prepare an high way for the Lord!

Against all opposition to the execution of this decree, the Lord, from the heavens, will laugh. *He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh, the Lord shall have them in derision.—Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel. Be wise now, therefore, O ye kings, be instructed ye judges of the earth.*

It seems no unnatural conclusion from ancient prophecy, and from present appearances, that in order to usher in the dominion of our glorious Immanuel, as predic-

ted to take place, and usually called the *latter-day-glory*, TWO GREAT REVOLUTIONS are to take place; the *first* outward and political; the *second* inward and spiritual.—The *first* is now taking place; its happy effects we, in this country, already enjoy; and O that the Lord would graciously put it into the hearts of his ministers and churches, nay, of all now under the dominion of civil and religious liberty, to begin the *second* revolution, that which is *inward* and *spiritual*, even the *revolution* of the heart. Come forth then, may we not pray, all ye votaries of truth! ye advocates for the spiritual empire of the LATTER DAY, come forth!—

Let the standard of truth and of duty, the standard of allegiance to God, through faith in his beloved Son, be set up! Let us preach, let us pray, let us fight, manfully, the warfare of faith—not doubting, but in God's own time, the glorious things, of which the prophets have spoken, shall be fulfilled!

Behold the *first* revolution, (through the agency of the hero of America) in this country, already begun, nay, already accomplished!—why not then NOW begin the second?

What encouragement is there to proceed, whilst we see some of the last events taking

place, under the sixth vial, which are to precede the glory of the latter day, to be ushered in immediately on the pouring out of the seventh!

I have now gone through with a consideration of the *means* appointed of God for the overthrow of mystical Babylon. These means, I make no doubt, you will believe fully adequate to the execution of the decree. It now only remains that I consider,

Lastly, The foundation which the execution of this decree lays for universal joy.

Rejoice over her thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her.

If there was no other cause of rejoicing on this mighty occasion, but the invitation of heaven to the general concert, sufficient cause might be found for the emotion the event demands.

But we are not called to rejoice without sufficient light afforded, to guide us in this rational and Christian exercise.

1. There is cause of universal joy on this occasion, because by the destruction of mystical Babylon, the great Michael of the church hath gained a very important victory over the principalities and powers of hell. The

placing of one, bearing *horns like a lamb*, and speaking with the mouth of *a dragon*, in highest authority in the church of Christ, is allowed, on all hands, to be a master-piece among all the devices of Satan; the highest, the most crafty and successful effort which the wicked one hath ever played off against the interests of Christ in any age of the world. — Well then may the detection and overthrow of Satan, in this scheme of ruling the church, in the garb of an angel of light, demand the liveliest acclamations of general joy.

2. A participation in this general anthem of praise, at the downfall of Babylon, is demanded, as matter of exultation on the part of the holy prophets, apostles and martyrs, whose blood she had formerly shed. *Rejoice over her thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her.*

And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth.

3. There is cause of joy, at this event, on the part of the church, as in her advancements to her promised perfection and glory, she shall not be obstructed by the persecutions, massacres, inquisitions, tortures, and thunders of this apostate church of Rome.

4. On the part of all who have received, and now maintain the testimony of God, as recorded in his holy word, there is cause of joy, that the fulfilment of the many prophecies respecting *Antichrist*, the *man of sin*, &c. are fulfilled, and thereby an accumulation of evidence is obtained of the authenticity of the scriptures, as being in deed and in truth the **LIVELY ORACLES OF GOD**.

5. There is cause of joy, in this solemn and affecting event, because it is one of the *last* things to take place, before it shall be proclaimed—*The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever.*

And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ; for the accuser of our brethren is cast out, which accused them before God day and night.

This subject being a leading object, in this work, you will permit me to present, in a very brief manner, the several denunciations of wrath against mystical Babylon, and shew the acclamations of joy that immediately follow, on account of the important and interesting events which follow.

Is the anti-christian power of Rome set

forth by the *iron and clay* of the great image? and is it to be dashed in pieces by the stone cut out without hands? immediately it is predicted, that the stone that smote the image became a *great mountain and filled the whole earth.*

Is this intolerant power represented by the *horn which came up among the ten horns*;—by the horn which *had eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking great things.* I beheld, then, saith the prophet, *because of the great words which the horn spake: I beheld even till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame. I saw in the night visions, and behold, one like the Son of Man came in the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, and nations, and languages should serve him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.*

Is this power spoken of as to rise, after the *falling away*, in the character of the *MAN OF SIN*—the *son of perdition, who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or worshipped; so that he as God, sitteth in the*

temple of God, shewing himself that he is God—it is the same whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the BRIGHTNESS OF HIS COMING.

And after the destruction of Babylon, as recorded in this nineteenth chapter, *I heard, saith the apostle, a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia: Salvation, and glory, and honor, and power, unto the Lord our God: for true and righteous are his judgments; for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand.*

In the conclusion of the whole scene of distress, of which the nineteenth chapter of this book is a lively picture, the twentieth chapter begins with the introduction of the Millennial-day.

And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit, and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a THOUSAND YEARS.

After such descriptions of success, and joy to follow, in favor of the church of Christ, after the downfall of Babylon, you will not

wonder that the church should be called, nor that she should be disposed to rejoice at the overthrow.

I have now gone through with the doctrinal part of my discourse: I have considered *who it is*, over whose destruction holy beings are called upon to rejoice—the *cause* of this disaster—the *means* employed to bring it about, and the foundation it lays for universal joy.

If, after such lengthy illustrations, any reflexions might be admitted, may they not, briefly, in view of the objects of this work, be such as follow?

1. If the general scope of our subject is allowed to be consonant to the word of God, and be truly applicable to those objects towards which it has been directed; no one can be at a loss for a key to the providence of God in the national, civil, and ecclesiastical convulsions which are now shaking, to the foundation, some of the most potent powers in Europe.

Is not the day of the divine vengeance come?—Are not the vials of the divine indignation now pouring out?—Is not Babylon, like a millstone, sinking into the sea?—Is not this the time of the falling of the stars

—the dethroning, in church and state, of those who, by their iniquities and tyrannies, have out-run the compassion of their God? *And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig-tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind.*

Is not this the time of the rise of the beast from the bottomless pit, who shall make war against the witnesses, and shall overcome them, and kill them?

Is not the time now introducing, in which it shall be said by the angel—*Thrust in thy sickle, and reap; for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe?*

And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great wine-press of the wrath of God.

And have we not cause to fear, that after the finishing of the present sixth vial, which dries up the mystical Euphrates, the order will be issued to pour out the seventh into the air—as some suppose, upon all the subjects of the Prince of the Power of the Air, throughout the world? *And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven,*

from the throne, saying—It is done. And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great.

And do we not begin to see the characters and proceedings opening to view, which fulfil the prophetic declaration, immediately on the fall of Babylon?—*And is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird?*

Is not the time now come, in which, from the many slaughters which are continually taking place, the scene may be supposed to be begun, in view of which saith St. John, *And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God; that ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great.*

To what height of distress the world may yet, in judgment for their disobedience to God, be allowed to come, God only knows:

But in view of the awful, judicial prospect, well may we cry out, *O Lord rebuke me not in thine anger, neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure!* Cover us, O thou gracious and compassionate Redeemer, by the broad hand of thy protecting providence, until the indignation be over-past!

But from these solemn scenes we are all, but especially as many as have good hope in God, allowed to turn off our eye, whilst, on equally sure ground, we are called to contemplate *the blessedness which shall speedily follow.*—To support your confidence on this subject, I need but refer you to the general annunciation of praise from the choirs of heaven, which our subject hath noted, as immediately to follow the destruction of the enemies of God, and of his people. *We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come, because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned!*—

2. In view of our subject may we not reflect, that, however the doctrine of the Millennium—the doctrine of the thousand years of prosperity, promised to the church of Christ, may have been neglected, decried or misunderstood, yet it is a doctrine plainly contain-

ed, and solidly established in the word of God—and as such is entitled to the credit, the study and embrace of all who believe the scriptures to be the unchanging oracles of God.

3. If this doctrine be true, we justly conclude, that those ministers of Christ, who, in the several ages of the church, have been pursuing and enquiring after the glorious Millennial-day, have not been pursuing a shadow, nor following a phantom.

4. If they are to be justified in their researches, and if, whilst under the clouds of antiquity, they rejoiced in view of the distant, yet assuredly approaching scene, how much more may we be justified in such pursuit, and in increasing joy, whilst the “reddening streaks of the morning betoken to the weary traveller, that the day is at hand?”

5. If the great Michael of the church intends to usher in his glorious dominion by the previous accomplishing of TWO GREAT REVOLUTIONS—the *first* outward and political—the *second* inward and spiritual; and if he hath already advanced so far in the majesty of his power, as to have completed the *first* revolution in this country, through the instrumentality of the sons of men, how

necessary and proper, that the *second* should now be undertaken, and carried on through the instrumentality of the sons of God?

Can we, who are ministers of Christ—can the churches of our Lord, throughout this our delightful land—can we unitedly or severally be willing to suffer, that the civil and military exertions of our country should contribute more to the prosperity of the Zion of God, than the sons of Zion themselves?—Can we be willing that, with the prowess and dignity of men, these should so worthily and valiantly have discharged the duties allotted them, whilst we, loitering upon our posts, refuse to hear the voice of our illustrious Leader, in his word and providence, commanding us to imitate his example, and to press forward to exertion, to victory, and to renown?

For a moment let us cast our eye upon the vision of St. John respecting this matter. *And I saw heaven opened*—that is, the ordinances of heaven, or the scenes displayed in the church of Christ, by the ministers and churches of Christ, which, in the language of prophecy, signify heaven; as a people of a contrary spirit and character are set forth by the *earth*, or nations of the earth:

*And behold a white horse, and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True; and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. And the armies which were in heaven, that is, in the church militant, and, it may be, triumphant, followed him upon white horses— emblems of valor, of victory, and of triumph—cloathed in fine linen, white and clean.— And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the wine-press of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.**

If, my Christian Brethren, we profess to belong to the armies of the living God—to be in the train of the great Michael of the church, why not press on?—Why not keep close to our Leader, that we may be within the hearing of his orders—may imitate his example—may perform exploits before him—may prove ourselves worthy to hold rank in such an heavenly train?

But *how*, in what manner follow on, you

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* For an exposition of this passage, see Lowman, Burkit, or Langdon in loco.

may be ready to say?—Must we take arms?—Must we go to war?—Must we commence hostilities against the empires, the kings, the tyrants, the civil and ecclesiastical establishments of the world?—Yes, my brethren, this is our duty, and here is our employment: But always remember, with our valiant file-leader, that, in the accomplishment of this second revolution, *the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty, through God, to the pulling down of strong holds; casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought into the obedience of Christ.*

Such, my brethren, are our weapons, and such is our warfare. Happy for the true servants of *Christ*, that, as yet, they are not called, in this present conflict, to engage in the bloody contests of ungodly men—not to welter in the scenes of war, where the battle of the warrior is, and garments rolled in blood. It may be in the accomplishment of the *first* great political revolution, something like this may be necessary; but, in this land, at present, we have little to do, but with an armour of truth, of righteousness, and of peace.

But if, in the general conflict, it should

happen that the once vanquished Lion—the political and, I may add too, the Protestant Dragon, should return to persecute the woman which brought forth the MAN-CHILD—the warrior of the world—the pionier of the church; we need not a spirit of prophecy to say, that the jaws of this insatiable leviathan shall again be broken, in a manner answerable to the spirit—to the redoubled fury and reiterated strokes of those who, under God, at first gave the promised hero of civil and religious liberty birth.

If any should ask on what authority we ground an allusion to the Protestant persecuting power under the idea or figure of a dragon—I answer, That the chapter from whence this language is taken is of a very extensive and momentous signification.

It truly is enveloped in some degree of mystery, as it was undoubtedly designed to be, especially, under the characters of the *woman*—the *eagle's wings*—the *wildernefs*—the *man-child*, and the *dragon*, who seeks to devour the struggler as soon as he shall be born.

But as a key to this chapter, I would humbly, and in the fear of God, presume to say, that, under the character of the woman and

her sorrows, we have exhibited the state and strugglings of the true church of Christ, in every age of the world, in which she hath, or may be called to suffer, from the Christian æra until the consummation of all things. That under the general figure of the dragon we have exhibited the most considerable enemies and persecutors of the church of Christ in every age; Satan himself, that old serpent, the Devil, being the prime instrument, and first mover of the whole. That by the wilderness, we are to understand a state of spiritual dearth and barrenness, or those leaves, shades, and darkening boughs of superstition, which have been as the shades of a wilderness to hinder the spiritual growth; or, lastly, a wilderness in the literal and common acceptation of the word. And, by the general figure of a MAN-CHILD, you are to understand the particular and several delinquencies, which the church of Christ, in any, and in every age of the world, hath enjoyed, from its first institution until the present moment. And, by the two wings of the great eagle, may we not understand the special providence and agency of Almighty God in these several very interesting events?

In this sense, denoting the power of God in conquering the enemies of his people, and in securing them under the banner of his own protection—the phrase is used in Exodus xix. 4. *Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on EAGLE'S WINGS, and brought you unto myself.* And after a long course of protection afforded to the people of God, through the wilderness of Sinai, and their settlement in the promised land, it is again said, Deut. xxxii. 9—12. *For the Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance. He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness: he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye. As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings; so the Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him.*

Under the same idea of the divine agency and protection afforded, saith the Psalmist—*Because thou hast been my help, therefore, in the shadow of thy wings, will I rejoice.*

This foundation being laid as a key to the chapter, may we not proceed, and say, that the woman denotes the state of the church

in its first institution? *And there appeared a great wonder in heaven, a woman cloathed with the sun; it may be with the vestments of the sun of righteousness; and the moon under her feet; the earth and other sublunary things in their proper place; and upon her head a crown of twelve stars; guided and governed by the unadulterated doctrines of the twelve apostles.* In this character, the church of Christ at first stood forth; but so soon was the truth beclouded—her privileges restrained, and her members persecuted, that she, struggling for civil and religious liberty, is denominated as *being with child, as travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered.* The character of a woman the church is supposed to take, as denoting her delicacy—her fruitfulness, and her need of protection.

But under the lashes of paganism and heathenish tyranny, she was obliged to groan out the ten persecutions, until, in the person of Constantine the Great, the first Christian emperor, she brought forth her first-born, and lived, for a while, under the happy dominion of civil and religious liberty.

And who would have thought that, in process of time, prosperity would have pro-

duced such pride, dominion and tyranny in spiritual, and in earthly things; even in those who have but just now emerged from a suffering and persecuted state?

But, alas! behold the Pagan Dragon restored to life, in the papal, anti-christian image! And under this papal, persecuting power behold the series of heathenish persecution again renewed!

How did the woman again labor to be delivered, and what were the effects of her labor, under papal tyranny, but the glorious reformation which took place in the sixteenth century, under the preaching of Wickliff, John Hufs, and Jerom; and afterwards carried on by Luther, Calvin, and others?

And shall it, may it now be said, that the spirit of protestantism—the hero of deliverance from the thralldom of Popery, ever become so degenerated as, in the smallest degree, to act over the part of its Papal and Pagan predecessors? Let the persecutions of civil and ecclesiastical power, under Mary, James, Laud, and others, whilst they struggled for uncontrouled dominion in church and state, “in things civil and ecclesiastical,” answer to this point!

The sufferings of the Protestants, under

this new-formed intolerant power, do well answer to the character of the church—of the woman in her suffering and persecuted state.

But, behold! how soon does the persecuted woman receive an answer to her solemn appeals, and reiterated cries? See, on the wings of a bounteous providence, how she is wafted across the Atlantic, and settled in these peaceful American abodes!—Happy, that as the time of general redemption comes, her enemies are held in partial restraint.—Here she is pursued and persecuted only in outward and civil things; though what designs might have been formed against her religious freedom we cannot say.

In a word, behold the hero of civil and religious liberty born in these western climes! And see him already on his way back to demolish the proud and haughty establishments of civil and ecclesiastical tyranny, which have in these several forms, persecuted his mother, whilst she labored to give him birth!

And is it too much to suppose, that, in his progress back, he will demolish all that is contrary to the spirit of the truth—to the intent and design of that power, under whose auspices he now proceeds, conquering and

to conquer; whether such counterfeits of truth be found in Protestant, in Papal, or in Pagan Rome? Especially, whilst you read, that this hero is to *rule all nations with a rod of iron, and is caught up to God and to his throne?*—If you request any further illustrations to authenticate this interpretation, attend to the declaration, that when the Dragon, in his multi-formed character, was cast out, was conquered, disappointed, or disgraced, he persecuted the woman that bro't forth the man-child. And thus, my audience did the Pagan Dragon, in the person and persecutions of Julian the Apostate; and thus did the Papal Dragon, in all the persecutions, thunders, and councils, by which he hath vexed and destroyed the Protestants; and thus has the Protestant Dragon done, not only in heavy persecutions for conscience sake, but, especially, in the flood of troops, armies and fleets—Britons and Irish, Brunswickers and Waldeckers, Hessians and Anspachers, which this red dragon vomited forth for the destruction of the woman in the American wilderness, during the late unprovoked and cruel war; and thus is this Protestant Dragon, even now, but too ready to express of his persecuting temper, in open-

ing upon these defenceless states the Algerine Corsairs—in committing depredations upon our commerce, and in letting loose, or in countenancing their savage allies, in making war upon our western frontiers. But we believe in God, our hope and confidence is in him, and to his protecting power and providence do we, therefore, humbly appeal.

You will not now doubt of the propriety of the allusion, just now hinted at, respecting the persecuting power of the Protestant Dragon—nor at all deny the propriety of our holding ourselves in lively and animated readiness to break the jaws of this leviathan, as God may give us power, should he attempt again to break our peace.

And if any should be disposed to ask what has become of the eagle, on whose wings the persecuted woman was born into the American wilderness, may it not be answered, that she hath taken her station upon the broad seal of the United States; and from thence has perched upon the pediment of the first government-house, dedicated to the dominion of civil and religious liberty, where she is still to be seen, an emblem of the protection of Providence towards our present government, and towards this our happy land.

If any should be disposed, further, to ask whether the dragon of the regions below, even that old serpent called the Devil, and Satan, is to be seen in any other form than as animating the dragons—the combinations of civil and ecclesiastical power, in the many external injuries they have wrought against the church of God on the earth? I answer, yes, in every age of the church, whether her external state has been peaceful or troublesome: The errors in doctrine—the breaches upon the purity of Christian practice—the schisms, divisions and discords in churches—the prejudice, hatred and malice which have, at times, prevailed in the church, have been, for the most part, but the ebullitions of Satan, the great dragon of dragons, who continually goeth about, as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour; and hapless state the church, too frequently, has been in, that even within her own bosom, the Devil himself should find so many willing instruments of his pleasure; agents of his infernal craft. Look abroad upon our churches, and behold the dearth of religion—the want of unity, animation and zeal amongst both ministers and people; and pray, oh fervently pray, that when, as at the present time, the enemy shall

come in like a flood, the spirit of the Lord, in his word, in his ministers and churches, may lift up a standard against him.

But returning to the important subject of the *second* great revolution, after which it is our duty constantly to labor, may we not add, in view of the example of our late political struggle—

If, then, noble exertions for the first revolution have been made by our brethren, guided by heaven in the field, and in the cabinet; are not we now, as Christians, and as ministers, to be guided?—Is it not full time, that we should be led, by the zeal of their noble example, whilst we fight the battles of the Lord of Hosts, in our closets and in our families—in our churches and in our pulpits?

Pursuing this object, let us reason the point, for a moment, with yonder infidel—Let us ask what more evidence he needs of the truth of the scriptures, than to see the events, long since predicted, daily fulfilling before his eyes?—Let us ask him to read a page or two in a late publication, on the subject of prophecy, as the testimony of Jesus.*

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* See Hinsdale's *Disco. A. P.* vol. iv. page 128.

“ Where are now those renounced cities, Nineveh, Babylon and Tyre, whose desolation was so often denounced by the prophets? —What is now the condition of Jerusalem and Judea?—Are they not *trodden down of the Gentiles*, and likely to be still trodden down, until *the times that the Gentiles shall be fulfilled*? How remarkably do the actions and state of the Turks, who have so long trodden them down, agree to what was predicted of them? *He shall come with horsemen, and many ships, and shall overflow and pass over.* He shall enter into the glorious land, and many countries shall be overthrown. Do you not find it even so? And that he hath stretched out his hand over the land of Egypt, with the *Lybian at his steps*, whilst the *Arabians still escape out of his hand.*

Hath not the state of Egypt, for many past ages, been just as was foretold? *a base, and the basest of kingdoms*, without a ruler of her own, and *wasted by strangers*?

Observe the *fourth* kingdom of Daniel's vision broken into ten. Behold that wonderful power, *diverse from the first*, which hath arisen up among them, with a *look more stout than his fellows*, and a *mouth speaking great things*, even great words against the

MOST HIGH: that power which weareth out the saints of the MOST HIGH, and changeth times and laws. Behold him *casting down the truth to the ground; forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats: Yea, behold him sitting in the temple, in the church of God, and shewing himself that he is God, whose coming is with signs and lying wonders.* And remember that the seat of this horrid tyrannical power is *that great city which standeth on seven mountains, and which, in the days of the prophecy, reigned over all the kings of the earth.*—In fine,

“ You see the church of God subsisting, at this day, in the world—the same church which, before Christ, was continued in the seed of Abraham, and which, at and after his coming, took that new form which Daniel saw under the name of the KINGDOM OF HEAVEN; and hath ever since subsisted among the Gentiles. You know the preservation and final prevalence of this society, together with the hostile attempts, and final ruin of all her enemies, have been predicted by all the prophets from Moses to St. John.

“ Now, when ye see this very church present in existence and enlargement, after all the attempts which have been made, in all man-

ner of ways, and through a long succession of ages, for her destruction; and notwithstanding she has all the seeds of desolation in herself, has often been extremely feeble, and in the hand of her enemies, and at the point of death: When you see this, you behold an event, which, though perfectly corresponding to hundreds of scripture-prophecies and promises, is yet UNPARALLELED IN THE HISTORY OF THE WORLD. Suffer me to repeat, IT IS UNPARALLELED IN THE HISTORY OF THE WORLD. The most unlikely event, when it was foretold, ever to have existed, and which indeed never could have existed, but by the marvellous providence of God, defeating the influence of natural causes, that he might fulfil the designs of his mercy—that he might *confirm the words of his servants, and perform the counsel of his messengers*; and, at the same time, that he might *frustrate the tokens of the liars, and make diviners mad*, and close the mouth of infidels in *perpetual silence*.

“ Thus is the spirit of prophecy the testimony of Jehovah to the sacred scriptures as his OWN ORACLES, and to Jesus as the Christ, and of consequence to the Christian Religion as DIVINE.”

And where shall the ministers of Christ next turn their attention, in order successfully to carry on the purposes of this second, this inward and spiritual revolution of the heart?

Unless the great Michael of the church should aid, our hopes of success would be lost; but so long as we have his promise—*Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world*—we are encouraged to go on.

Let us, then, make our addresses to men of understanding—to men of sound judgment, and rectitude of heart, and solicit the force of their interest and example.

Let us even attempt to touch the ambition of the ambitious, by pointing them to the robes of distinction, and inconceivable marks of favor in the regions of glory, which await the man whom the king delights to honor.

Let us assail the castle of the miser, and tell him, that in the regions of glory are rivers of treasure, floods of salvation, a thousand fold more regaling to the appetites of the soul, than earthly substance can be to the body.

Let us guide the wandering views of the man of business, by setting before him the ne-

cessity of seeking *first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, that all these things may be added.*

May we not arouse the attention of the stupid, the obstinate, and sensual, by painting to them, in lively colours, the danger to which they are exposed, as well as the baseness of *earthly and sensual* gratifications, in comparison with those which are intellectual and heavenly?

May we not solicit the aid of the improved, the elevated, and the polite, by assuring them that a field of improvement, prospects of elevation, and the most finished examples of heavenly grace, are all presented to their embrace, in the pursuit of the rewards promised by our exalted king?

And, last of all, may we not, with high prospects of success, humbly suggest, that by the example and influence of the female world, even of the most delicate and refined, much might be done to further the purposes of heaven?—If any of our fair audience should say, “ We have not yet learned the paths of piety ourselves: we are, alas! but too far from hope of setting good example to others, or of aiding the interests of virtue, by the feeble efforts of what, at best,

can be only stiled the improvements of nature, destitute of the refinements of heavenly grace:"—Let us pray them to lend their hand to some guardian angel, who may lead them, perhaps, abroad to view the wondrous traces of wisdom, and of power, in all creation's handy works; and when, from the oracles of truth, they become farther convinced of the being of a God—of his equitable, holy, just and good laws—of their own imperfections of heart and life—of their final accountableness at the bar of an impartial judge; they may be willing to follow their heavenly guide into the retirements of secret devotion, and there unbosom the soul to God, imploring the pardon and ablution of sin, through the blood of the Lamb. What though a tear of contrition find its way, evincing the deep woundings of the heart, pursued by an upbraiding conscience, for time and talents misimproved—for neglect of God, the universal Creator—for neglect of the overtures of proffered mercy—for the grievings of the holy spirit of God, occasioned by the pride of the heart, refusing to bow to the sceptre of sovereign grace? What though, from causes like these, a tear of contrition might fall, and the bosom heave in

fighths of penitence and prayer? If pardon for the foul, and acceptance with God should be the happy fruit, and a life of unexampled piety the permanent effects—how interesting the change—how promising the prospect!

With support of numbers, and example of graces such as these, with what success might the advocates of truth plead the cause of heaven, and how soon might we expect that in the place of unbelief, stupor, insensibility and hardness of heart; we should discover the seeds of the happy wished-for revolution already to be sown, and the effects to appear in full and abundant sheaves of heavenly grace!

But—whither do I run, leading my audience—fathers and brethren, it may be, into paths less promising than those in which they have been accustomed, successfully to tread!—I pause, then; nay, I draw to a conclusion by saying, in the words of a respected father in the church of God, on the subject of Ministerial Character and Duty,*—“ It requires no small attention and labor to seek out fit and acceptable words, as the preacher expresses it, to stir up the attention of the

NOTE.

* Wither Spoon, vol. i. A. P. page 19.

inconsiderate—to awaken, secure, and convince obstinate sinners—to unmask the covered hearts of hypocrites—to set right the erring, and encourage the fearful.”

Notwithstanding this, may we not all, animated by the prospects of promised aid, go forth manfully, to fight the battles of the Lord—to play the man for God, and for the cities of our God; knowing that in our faithful exertions the name of the Lord is honored, though Israel be not gathered.

Finally, my brethren, “Have we seen the scriptures sealed by past events; let it exalt our faith into a full assurance, that all the prophecies which remain, and especially those which speak of JESUS’ FUTURE GLORY, shall receive, in due time, their perfect accomplishment.

“This GRAND ÆRA is approaching with a speed rapid as the flight of time. The night is far spent, the day is at hand. In this prospect, with what ardour should we pray—THY KINGDOM COME;”* and in the fervency of our united devotions, may we

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* Hinsdale, A. P. vol. iv. p. 133, 134.

not add—*thy will be done on earth, as it is done in heaven; for thine, gracious God! is the kingdom, and thine is the power, and thine shall be the glory, world without end. AMEN.*

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME,

C O N T E N T S.

P A R T I.

A Discourse by the Reverend Dr. Bellamy, founded on Revelation xx. 1, 2, 3. *And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit, &c.*

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23. When shall these Things be?
25. From the Faithfulness of God we have no Cause to doubt the Fulfilment of his gracious Promises to his People.
34. Human Mistakes, as to Time, no Bar in the Way of the final Event.
36. Because Christ once stiled his People a little Flock, it is no Sign they will always appear so.
42. Seventeen Thousand may be saved to one Soul finally lost.
44. God knows best when to bring these Things to pass.
45. A Veteran in the Service of God, animating the Followers of the Lamb.
48. Christ loves to have his Ministers and People faithful.
49. As David gathered Materials for the Temple, to be built in Solomon's Day, so we are to do our Endeavor to favor the great Building of God.

P A R T II.

A Treatise by the late learned and highly esteemed President Edwards, entitled, "An Humble Attempt to promote explicit Agreement and visible Union of God's People in extraordinary Prayer, for the Revival of Religion, and the Advancement of Christ's Kingdom on Earth, pursuant to Scripture-promises and Prophecies concerning the last Time"—founded on Zechariah viii. 20, 21, 22. *Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, It shall yet come to pass, that there shall come people, and the inhabitants of many cities:— And the inhabitants of one city shall go to another, saying, Let us go speedily to pray before the Lord, and to seek the Lord of Hosts:*

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I will go also. Yea, many people and strong nations shall come to seek the Lord of Hosts in Jerusalem, and to pray before the Lord.

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 The Duty of agreeing to pray no new Duty.
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P A R T III.

A Discourse by the Reverend Mr. Austin, entitled—The Down-fall of MYSTICAL BABYLON; or, a Key to the Providence of God in the political Operations of 1793-4—founded on Revelation xviii. 20. *Rejoice over her thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her.*

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371. Causes of this Disaster.
375. Means by which it shall be brought about.
388. The little Stone smiting the Image, and becoming itself a great Mountain.
393. Two great Revolutions to usher in the Latter-Day Glory; *outward and political—inward and spiritual.*
395. The foundation of universal Joy in the Prospect.
401. The Time of the Falling of the Stars of Heaven is come.
403. The Doctrine of the Millennium is true.
405. Duty of Ministers and Churches.
408. The Protestant Dragon.
413. The Hero of America on his Way to demolish the Usurpations of Protestant, Papal and Pagan Rome.
415. The Eagle and her Station.
416. The Dragon of Dragons, and his efforts against the Church of God.
417. Address to an Infidel.
421. ——— to Men of understanding.

C O N T E N T S.

421. Address to the Ambitious.

——— to the Miser.

——— to the Man of Business.

422. ——— to the Stupid and Obstinate.

——— to the Elevated and Polite.

Hopes from the Example and Influence of the Fair.

423. The Fair Penitent led by a Guardian Angel to the Throne of
Grace.

ERRATUM.—Page 344, line 5, after the word *supposed*, add,
have prophesied in sackcloth.

THE subscribing EDITOR to the AMERICAN PREACHER presents his most affectionate and Christian regards to all his Fathers and Brethren in the Ministry; and, especially, to those who have aided in contributing Materials for the Execution of the Plan of that Work thus far; and is happy in being able to assure them, that their Labors have been, to such a degree, acceptable to the Public, that scarcely a Copy of the three First Volumes is to be found for Sale; and repeated applications are made to the Printer for further supplies. The Fourth Volume is now circulating, and promises fair to secure, and to increase the Reputation of this, generally, interesting Work.

As the present is a Day full of great Events, and a general attention to the dictates of Prophecy seems to be gone forth, it is proposed, that a Volume of Discourses, on the Subject of Prophecy, with particular application to Predictions now fulfilling, or yet to be fulfilled, shall be prepared, and issued, perhaps, at the close of the present Year.

Any of our Christian Brethren, who would contribute to the Execution of such a Plan, might be instrumental in reviving the Cause of Truth—in animating their Brethren, and of comforting the Church of God; and would receive the most grateful Acknowledgments from the Friends and Promoters of the proposed Volume.

Shortly will be put to Press a Volume of Discourses, preached on occasion of the late Visitation of the City of Philadelphia by the Yellow Fever, entitled, “A Comment on the Providence of God, in the late Visitation of the City of Philadelphia, by the Yellow Fever: or, Instructive Lessons to the People of the United States, on the Subject of that solemn Event, comprised, in a Number of Discourses, preached by several Ministers of Christ, on that Occasion, who are willing to leave this Testimony as a Memorial of the tragical Scene which gave it Birth.”

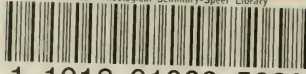
Any of our Christian Ministers, who are willing to aid in the furtherance of either of the foregoing Designs, may be assured that their Contributions will meet a most friendly welcome, and be duly noticed in View of forwarding the Design for which they may be sent.

ELIZABETH TOWN, *May 1, 1794.*

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NOV 12 1962		
DEC 1 1962		
JAN 1 1963		
FEB 1 1963		
OCT 19 1963		
NOV 1 1963		
NOV 1 1963		
NOV 2 1963		
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