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COMMENTARY

COMMENTARY ON
MATTHEW

by Adam Clarke.

*“Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without
which no man shall see the Lord” Heb 12:14*

Spreading Scriptural Holiness to the World

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A COMMENTARY AND CRITICAL NOTES

ON THE

HOLY BIBLE

OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS

DESIGNED AS A HELP TO A BETTER UNDERSTANDING
OF THE SACRED WRITINGS

BY ADAM CLARKE, LL.D., F.S.A., &c.

A NEW EDITION, WITH THE
AUTHOR'S FINAL CORRECTIONS

For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.—Rom. 15:4.

Adam Clarke's Commentary on the Old and New Testaments
A derivative of Adam Clarke's Commentary for the Online Bible

produced by

Sulu D. Kelley
1690 Old Harmony Dr.
Concord, NC 28027-8031
(704) 782-4377

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PREFACE TO THE GOSPEL OF ST. MATTHEW

THE general title of this latter collection of sacred books, which, as well as the former, all Christians acknowledge to have been given by immediate inspiration from God, is in the Greek **η καινη διαθηκη**, which we translate THE NEW TESTAMENT: but which should rather be translated THE NEW COVENANT; or, if it were lawful to use a periphrasis, the *New Covenant*, including a *Testamentary Declaration and Bequest*: for this is precisely the meaning of this system of justice, holiness, goodness, and truth. St. Paul, ^{<4034>}**2 Corinthians 3:14**, calls the sacred books before the time of Christ, **η παλαια διαθηκη**, THE OLD COVENANT; which is a very proper and descriptive title of the grand subject of those books. This apostle evidently considers the Old Testaments and the New, as *two* covenants, ^{<8024>}**Galatians 4:24**; and, if comparing these two together, he calls one **παλαιαν διαθηκην**, the *old* covenant, the other **καινην**, the *new*; one **πρωτην**, the *first*, the other **νεαν**, that which is *recent*; in opposition to the old covenant, which was to terminate in the new, he calls this **κρειττανα**, *better*, more *excellent*, ^{<8072>}**Hebrews 7:22; 8:6**; and **αιωνιον**, *everlasting*, ^{<8130>}**Hebrews 13:20**, because it is never to be changed, nor terminate in any other; and to endure endlessly itself. The word covenant, from *con* together, and *venio*, I come, signifies a *contract* or *agreement* made between two parties; to fulfil the conditions of which, they are mutually bound. The old covenant, in its essential parts, was very simple. I WILL BE YOUR GOD. YE SHALL BE MY PEOPLE-the spirit of which was never changed. The people were to take Jehovah as the sole object of their religious worship; put their whole trust and confidence in him; serve him in his own way, according to the prescribed forms which he should lay before them. This was *their part*. On his side, God was to accept them as his people, give them his *Spirit* to guide them, his *mercy* to pardon them, his *providence* to support them, and his *grace* to preserve them unto eternal life. But all this was connected with the strict observance of a great variety of rites and ceremonies, at once expressive of the holiness of God, the purity of the Divine justice, and the exceeding sinfulness and utter helpless state of man. A great part of the four latter books of Moses is employed in prescribing and illustrating these rites and ceremonies; and what is called the *new covenant* is the complement and perfection of the whole.

The word **διαθηκη**, from **δια** and **τιθημι**, *I lay down*, signifies not only a covenant agreement, but also that disposal which a man makes of his secular matters during his life, which is to take place after his death. It answers to the Hebrew **tyrb berith**, from **rb bar**, to *purify*, because, in making covenants, a sacrifice was usually offered to God, for the purification of the contracting parties; and hence the word **tyrb berith** is frequently used to express not only the covenant itself, but also the sacrifice offered on the occasion. See below under GOSPEL; and see the notes on ^{<010618>}**Genesis 6:18; 15:18;** ^{<0296>}**Exodus 29:45;** ^{<03615>}**Leviticus 26:15;** and ^{<062912>}**Deuteronomy 29:12**, where every thing relative to this subject is minutely considered.

The term new covenant, as used here, seems to mean that grand plan of agreement or reconciliation which God made between himself and mankind, by the death of Jesus Christ; in consequence of which, all those who truly repent, and unfeignedly believe in the great atoning sacrifice, are purified from their sins, and *united* to God. Christ is called **της διαθηκης καινης μεσιτης**, the Mediator of the new covenant, ^{<80915>}**Hebrews 9:15**. And referring to the ratification of this new covenant or agreement, by means of his own death, in the celebration of his last supper, Christ calls the cup, **το ποτεριον η καινη διαθηκη εν τω αιματι μου**, *this cup is the new covenant in my blood*: i.e. an emblem or representation of the new covenant ratified by his blood. See ^{<0221>}**Luke 22:20**. And from these expressions, and their obvious meaning, the whole Christian Scriptures have obtained this title, THE NEW TESTAMENT, OR COVENANT, OF OUR LORD AND SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST.

Those writings, and the grand subject of them, which, previously to the New Testament times, were termed simply *THE covenant*; were, after the incarnation, called *the OLD covenant*, as we have already seen, to distinguish them from the Christian Scriptures, and their grand subject, which were called *the NEW covenant*; not so much because it was a new agreement, but rather a *renewal* of the *old*, in which the *spirit, object, and design* of that *primitive* covenant were more clearly and fully manifested.

The particular title to each of the four following books, in most Greek MSS. and printed editions, is **ευαγγελιον κατα μαθαιον μαρκον λουκαν ιοαννην**, which we translate, *the Gospel according to Matthew-Mark-Luke-John*; i.e. the gospel or history of our blessed Lord, as written and transmitted to posterity by each of these

writers. Our word GOSPEL, which should be always written *godspel*, or *godespel*, comes from the Anglo-Saxon, and is compounded of [Anglo-Saxon], *good*, and [Anglo-Saxon] *history, narrative, doctrine, mystery, or secret*; and was applied by our ancestors to signify the *revelation* of that glorious system of truth, which had been, in a great measure, *hidden* or kept *secret* from the foundation of the world.

Among Saxon scholars, the word GOSPEL has been variously explained. Mr. *Somner*, who writes it [Anglo-Saxon], explains it thus, *Sermo Dei mysticus; Dei historia*. “The mystic word of God; the history of God, or God’s history.” But he supposes that it may be compounded of [Anglo-Saxon] *good*, and [Anglo-Saxon], a *message*; and very properly observes, that [Anglo-Saxon] signifies, not only to *preach*, or *proclaim the Gospel*; but also to *foretell*, or *predict*; to *prophecy*, to *divine*: and in this latter sense the word [Anglo-Saxon] *spell* was anciently used among us, and still signifies an *incantation*, or a *charm*; which implies a peculiar collocation and repetition of certain words, which were supposed to produce *supernatural effects* by means of *spiritual influence* or *agency*; which agency was always *attracted* and *excited* by such words, through some supposed *correspondency* between the words, and the spiritual agency to be employed. The word, in this sense, occurs in King Alfred’s Saxon translation of Boethius, *Deuteronomy Consolatione Philosophiæ*, chap. 38. [Anglo-Saxon], *Then deceitful men began to practise incantations*. It is possible that our ancestors gave this title to the preaching of Christ crucified, from observing the astonishing effects produced by it, in changing the hearts and lives of sinners. And very innocently might they denominate the pure powerful preaching of the death and resurrection of Christ, God’s *charm*: that wonderful word, which, accompanied with the demonstration and power of the *Holy Ghost*, produced such miraculous effects among men.

As the word [Anglo-Saxon] *spellian* signifies to *teach* or *instruct*, hence our word to *spell*, i.e. to teach a person, by uniting vowels and consonants, to enunciate words; and thus learn to *read*. And hence the book out of which the first rudiments of language are learned is termed a *spelling book*, exactly answering to the [Anglo-Saxon] *spell-book* of our ancestors, which signified a *book of homilies*, or *plain discourses*, for the *instruction* of the *common people*. We may See Clarke’s note on “^{ORIGOS}Genesis 1:1”) that [Anglo-Saxon] among our ancestors, not only signified GOD, the supreme Being; but also *good* or *goodness*, which is his nature: [Anglo-Saxon]

godspell, therefore, is not only God's *history*, *doctrine*, or *plan of teaching*; but also the good history, the *good doctrine*; and hence [Anglo-Saxon] to *preach* or *proclaim* this doctrine; [Anglo-Saxon] the *sermons* that contained the rudiments of it, for the instruction of men; and [Anglo-Saxon] *spel-boda*, the *orator*, *messenger*, or *ambassador*, that announced it.

The Greek word **ευαγγελιον**, from **ευ** *good*, and **αγγελια** *a message*, signifies *good news*, or *glad tidings* in general; and is evidently intended to point out, in this place, the good message or the glad tidings of great joy which God has sent to all mankind, preaching peace and reconciliation by Christ Jesus, who is Lord of all: proclaiming that he, as the promised Messiah, has, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man-for he has died for their offences, and risen again for their justification; and that, through his grace, every sinner under the whole heaven, may turn to God, and find mercy. This is *good news*, *glad tidings*, a *joyful message*; and it is such to all mankind, as in it every human spirit is interested.

It is used in this sense by *Achilles Tattius*, lib. v. c. 12, **ταυτα ακουσας ο σατυρος, προστρεχει προς την μελιττην ευαγγελια φερων**: Having heard these things, Satyrus ran to Melitta, bringing the *good news*.

But, besides this general meaning, the word **ευαγγελιον**, has other acceptations in the New Testament, and in the Greek writers, which may be consulted here with great propriety and effect.

1. It signifies the *reward* given to those who brought good news. Thus Homer represents the disguised Ulysses claiming a reward **ευαγγελιον**, a *vest* and *mantle*, should he verify to Eumeus the glad tidings of his master's safety. **ευαγγελιον δε μοι εστω**. *Let me have a reward for my good news*. *Odyss.* xiv. v. 152.

To which Eumeus, who despaired of his master's return, replied:-

**ω γερον, ουτ̄ αῖ εἰπων ευαγγελιος τοδε τισω,
ουτ̄ οδυσσευς ετι οικον ελευσεται.** *Ib.* v. 266.

*Old friend! nor cloake nor vest thy gladsome news
Will ever earn: Ulysses comes no more! COWPER.*

And on the word, as thus used, *Eustathius* gives the following comment: **ευαγγελιον δωρον υπερ αγαθης ευαγγελιας**. “Euangelion signifies the *reward* given for bringing *good news*.”

St. Chrysostom, in his sixth Homily on the Acts, gives this as a common meaning of the word. “The Gospel is this: Thou shalt receive good things: as men are accustomed in their common conversation to say to each other, **τι μοι των ευαγγελιων**; What *reward* wilt thou give me for my *good news*? &c.” It is used in the same sense by the Septuagint. ^{<100410>}**2 Samuel 4:10**. *When one told me, saying, Behold, Saul is dead, thinking to have brought good tidings, I took him and slew him in Zilag, who thought* **ω εδει με δουναι ευαγγελια**, *that I would have given him A REWARD for his tidings*. CICERO uses it in the same sense; see his epistles to Atticus, lib. 2. ep. 3. *O suaves epistolas tuas uno tempore mihi datas duas: quibus ευαγγελια quæ reddam nescio, deberi quidem, plane fateor*. “O, how delightful are your epistles! two of which I have received at one time, for which I know not what *recompense* to make: but, that I am your debtor, I candidly confess.”

2. It is used also to signify the *prayers, thanksgivings, and sacrifices* offered on the arrival of good news. So Aristophanes, **μοι δοκει ευαγγελια θυειν, εκατον βους, τη θεω**, *I think I should SACRIFICE A HECATOMB to the goddess for this intelligence*, ARISTOPH. in *Equit.* v. 653.

ISOCRATES (Areopag. initio) is supposed to use the word in the sense of *supplication*, **επι τοςανταις πραξεσιν ευαγγελια μεν δις ηδη τεθυκαμεν**—“relative to these transactions, we have purposed to make *supplication* twice.” Xenophon uses it to denote a *eucharistic offering* made on account of receiving good news. **εθυε τα ευαγγελια**. See Hist. Gr. i. 6, 27. It seems to be used in a similar sense by the Septuagint in ^{<101820>}**2 Samuel 18:20, 27**.

Other examples might be produced in which the word is used in all the above senses; but these may be deemed sufficient. I would not have been so copious, had not a certain great man denied that the word had the above meanings.

3. However illustrative the above acceptations of **ευαγγελιον**, among the Greek writers, may be of the word in relation to the great doctrine of the new covenant; yet, among the sacred writers, it is restricted to express the

glad tidings of the coming of the Messiah, for the reasons mentioned above. See ^{<41210>}**Luke 2:10**.

4. The whole doctrine of Jesus Christ, comprised in the history of his incarnation, preaching, miracles, sufferings, death, resurrection, ascension, and the mission of the Holy Spirit, by which salvation was procured for a lost world, is expressed by the word **ευαγγελιον**, as well as by the general title; **καινη διαθηκη**. ^{<6010>}**Romans 1:1, 3, 9**; ^{<40423>}**Matthew 4:23; 9:35; 24:14**; ^{<40114>}**Mark 1:14**. But the sacred writers use it with a variety of epithets which it may be necessary to mention.

1st, It is sometimes termed, *The Gospel of God concerning his Son*. ^{<6010>}**Romans 1:1, 3**.

2dly, *The Gospel of the Son of God*. ^{<6010>}**Romans 1:9**.

3dly, *The Gospel of the kingdom of God*. ^{<4023>}**Matthew 4:23; 9:35; 24:14**; ^{<40114>}**Mark 1:14**.

4thly, Sometimes it is simply called THE GOSPEL. ^{<41310>}**Mark 13:10**; ^{<41615>}**Mark 16:15**.

5thly, *The word or doctrine (λογος) of the Gospel*. ^{<41507>}**Acts 15:7**.

6thly, *The Gospel of peace*. ^{<40615>}**Ephesians 6:15**.

7thly, *The Gospel of glory*, **το ευαγγελιον της δοξης**. ^{<5011>}**1 Timothy 1:11**.

8thly, *The Gospel of salvation*, **το ευαγγελιον της σωτηριας** ^{<40113>}**Ephesians 1:13**.

5. In ^{<40223>}**1 Corinthians 9:23**, it means the *blessings and privileges* promised in the New Testament.

6. It means the *public profession* of the doctrine taught by Christ, ^{<40835>}**Mark 8:35; 10:29**; ^{<50108>}**2 Timothy 1:8**; ^{<50113>}**Philemon 1:13**.

7. But in ^{<40106>}**Galatians 1:6, 8, 9**, the word **ευαγγελιον** seems to mean any *new doctrine*, whether *true or false*.

Many MSS. have **το κατα ματθαιον αγιον ευαγγελιον**, which is generally rendered, *The Gospel according to SAINT Matthew*. But the word **αγιον**, *saint*, or *holy*, should be here applied to the *Gospel*, with which it properly agrees; and then the title would run, *The holy Gospel according to Matthew*; that is, the account of this holy dispensation according to the narrative composed by Matthew, an eye witness of all the transactions he relates. But anciently the word *holy* was neither applied to

the *narrative* nor to the *narrator*, the title being simply, *The Gospel according to Matthew*, and so of the others.

SOME ACCOUNT OF MATTHEW THE EVANGELIST.

MATTHEW, supposed to be the same who is also called Levi, son of Alphaeus, was by birth a Jew. As to his office, he appears to have been a tax-gatherer, under the Romans. He was a native of Galilee, as the rest of Christ's apostles were; but of what city in that country, or of which tribe of the people of Israel, is not known.

As he sat at the custom house, by the seaside, in or near the city of Capernaum, Jesus called him; and as soon as he could make up his *accounts* with those by whom he had been employed and intrusted, he became a willing, faithful disciple of Christ. After this, St. Mark tells us, he made an entertainment in his own house, where Christ and several of his disciples were present, together with many tax-gatherers, and others, of no very respectable character, in the sight of the Pharisees.

It is probable that Matthew took this occasion of calling together his relatives and acquaintances, that he might take a friendly farewell of them; and give them the opportunity of seeing and hearing that Divine Person, whose words he had already found to be spirit and life to his own soul, and to whose service he had now solemnly dedicated himself.

He was placed by our Lord in the number of his *apostles*, and continued with him during his life. After the ascension of Christ, he was at Jerusalem, and received the Holy Ghost with the rest of the disciples on the day of pentecost.

Matthew, with Andrew, Peter, and the two sons of Zebedee, are the only disciples whose call is *particularly* mentioned. It is uncertain when, where, or how he died. There does not appear to be any clear evidence, in the writings of the primitive fathers, that he suffered martyrdom.

St. Matthew's gospel is generally allowed to be the most ancient part of the writings of the New Covenant. Many modern critics contend that it was written about the year of our Lord 61, or between this and 65. Others, that it was written so early as 41, or about the eighth year after the ascension; and this is supported by the subscriptions at the end of this gospel in many MSS.; but it must be observed, that all these MSS. are posterior to the 10th century. Michaelis has adopted a middle way, which carries much of

the appearance of probability with it, viz.: that Matthew wrote his gospel in *Hebrew* about the 8th year after the ascension of our Lord, or A. D. 41; and that the translation of it into *Greek* was made about A. D. 61, or later.

Whether this gospel were written originally in *Hebrew* or *Greek*, is a question by which the most eminent critics have been greatly puzzled and divided. The balance, however, is clearly in favour of a *Hebrew original*. The present Greek text was doubtless published at a very early period; who the translator was, cannot, at this distance of time, be determined; probably it was the evangelist himself.

As Matthew was one of the twelve disciples, his history is an account of what he *heard* and *saw*, being a constant attendant on our blessed Lord. This consideration, of itself, would prove that, allowing him only to be a man of *integrity*, he would make no mistakes in his narrative. Add to this, the *influence* and *superintendence* of the Holy Spirit, under which he constantly acted, and which our Lord had promised to his disciples, to guide them into all truth, and bring what soever he had spoken to them, into remembrance, ~~<B14B>~~ **John 14:26**. These two considerations stamp the narrative with the utmost degree of *credibility*.

ADVERTISEMENT.

IT may be necessary to say a few words in explanation of the different ERAS introduced at the commencement of the gospels. 1. By the *Usherian* year of the World, the reader is to understand the chronological computation of Archbishop *Usher*; who supposed that 4000 years exactly had elapsed from the creation of the world till the birth of Christ. 2. The *Alexandrian* era is that chronological computation which was used by the people of Alexandria; who began their reckoning 5502 before the vulgar year of Christ 1. 3. The *Antiochian* era is a correction of the preceding, in the 4th century, by *Pandorus*, an Egyptian monk, and used by the people of Antioch; it differs only from the Alexandrian by subtracting *ten* years. 4. The *Constantinopolitan* era is that still in use in the Greek Church, which reckons 5508 before the year 1 of the Incarnation, according to the vulgar era. 5. The *Julian Period* is a factitious era, conceived by *Joseph Scaliger*, to facilitate the reduction of the years of any given epoch to that of another. This Period is the result of the *Lunar* and *Solar Cycles*, and the *Indictions*, multiplied by each other. Thus: multiply 19 the *Lunar* Cycle, by 28 the *Solar* Cycle, and the product will be 532; multiply this sum by 15, the Cycle of the *Indictions*, and you will have 7980 years, which constitute the *Julian Period*. The first year of the *vulgar era* is placed in the 4714th year of the Julian Period: whence it follows, that to find any year of our Lord in this period, 4713 years must be added to that year: *e. g.*, to find the year of this period, answering to the present year of our Lord 1812, add 4713, and you will have 6525, which is the year of the Julian Period sought. 6. The era of the *Seleucidæ*, sometimes improperly called the era of *Alexander*, commenced 12 years after the death of Alexander the Great, 312 before the Incarnation, according to the vulgar reckoning, and was properly the *first* year of the *Syro-Macedonian* empire. 7. By the year before the *vulgar era* of Christ, is meant that *correct chronological reckoning* which showed that the *vulgar* or *common* reckoning of the A. D. or *year of our Lord*, is deficient not less than *four* years: so that the present year, 1812, should be, according to strict chronological precision, 1816. 8. The mode of computing by *Olympiads* derived its origin from the institution of the Olympic Games, which were celebrated every *four* years, for *five* successive days, at the time of the first full moon, after the summer's solstice. They were held on the banks of the river *Alpheus*, near *Olympia*, a city of *Elis*, from which they derived their name. The first

Olympiad commenced 776 before the Incarnation of our Lord. It need scarcely be added, that each Olympiad consists of *four* years; hence the *first, second, third, or fourth* year of any particular *Olympiad*. 9. The year of the *building of Rome* is an important era among the Roman historians: it commenced 753 years before the birth of Christ. 10. The year of *Augustus*, or years after the *battle of Actium*, is the computation of time from the *commencement* of the *Roman EMPIRE*, which took place after the battle of Actium, 27 years before our Lord: from this time Augustus became sole governor. 11. The *Cycles* introduced require little explanation. The *Solar Cycle* is a revolution consisting of 28 years; the *Lunar Cycle* of 19; and the *Paschal Cycle* or *Dionysian Period*, is compounded of both, thus: The Solar Cycle of 28, and the Lunar of 19, multiplied by each other, produce 532, which constitutes a third Cycle, called the *Paschal Cycle*, because in that period the Christian Passover, or *Easter*, a moveable feast, has gone through all possible variations, and the *Solar* and *Lunar Cycles*, *Dominical Letters*, *Paschal term*, *Epacts*, *New Moons*, &c., &c., all recommence exactly 532 years before. 12. The Cæsarean era of Antioch was a monument which the city of Antioch erected to the honour of Julius Cæsar, in commemoration of his victory at Pharsalia. This was obtained 48 years before the commencement of the Christian era. 13. The Spanish era: this was kept in commemoration of the entire subduction of Spain, by Augustus Cæsar, which took place in the year of Rome 715, or 39 years before the vulgar era of Christ. 14. The Julian era, or as it is sometimes called, the era of Julius Cæsar: this had for its foundation the reformation of the Roman Calendar by Julius Cæsar: and the change was made 45 years before the birth of Christ. Other eras might have been noticed, but those mentioned above were judged to be the most important.

For farther particulars relative to the history of the gospels, see the GENERAL PREFACE to the NEW TESTAMENT.

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. MATTHEW

- Usherian year of the World, 4000.
- Alexandrian year of the World, 5498.
- Antiochian year of the World, 5488.
- Constantinopolitan Æra of the World, 5504.
- Year of the Julian Period, 4709.
- Æra of the Seleucidæ, 308.
- Year before the vulgar Æra of Christ, 5.
- Year of the CXCIII. Olympiad, 4.
- Year of the building of Rome, 749.
- Year of the Emperor Augustus, i.e. from the battle of Actium, 26.
- Consuls, Augustus XII. and Lucius Cornelius Sulla.
- Year of the Paschal Cycle or *Dionysian* Period, 530.
- Year of the Solar Cycle, 5.
- Year of the Lunar Cycle, 13.
- Dominical Letters, B A.

CHAPTER 1.

The genealogy of Christ divided into three classes of fourteen generations each: The first fourteen, from Abraham to David, 2-6. The second fourteen, from Solomon to Jechonias, 7-10. The third fourteen, from Jechonias to Christ, 11-16. The sum of these generations, 17. Christ is conceived by the Holy Ghost, and born of the Virgin Mary, when she was espoused to Joseph, 18. Joseph's anxiety and doubts are removed by the ministry of an Angel, 19, 20; by whom the child is named JESUS, 21. The fulfilment of the prophecy of Isaiah relative to this, 22, 23. Joseph takes home his wife, Mary, and Christ is born, 24, 25.

NOTES ON CHAP. 1.

Verse 1. **The book of the generation of Jesus Christ]** I suppose these words to have been the original *title* to this Gospel; and that they signify, according to the Hebrew Phraseology, not only the *account* of the

genealogy of Christ, as detailed below, but the history of his birth, acts, sufferings, death, resurrection, and ascension.

The phrase, *book of the generation*, **twdl wt rps sepher toledoth**, is frequent in the Jewish writings, and is translated by the Septuagint, **βιβλος γενεσεως**, as here, by the evangelist; and regularly conveys the meaning given to it above; e. g. *This is the book of the generations of Adam*, **<0100>Genesis 5:1**. That is, the account of the life of Adam and certain of his immediate descendants. Again. *These are the generations of Jacob*, **<0137>Genesis 37:2**. That is, the account or history of Jacob, his son Joseph, and the other remarkable branches of the family. And again. *These are the generations of Aaron and Moses*, **<0100>Numbers 3:1**. That is, the history of the life and acts of these persons, and some of their immediate descendants. The same form of expression is also used, **<0100>Genesis 2:4**, when giving the history of the creation of heaven and earth.

Some have translated **βιβλος γενεσεως**, *The book of the genealogy*; and consider it the *title of this chapter* only; but the former opinion seems better founded.

Jesus Christ] See on **<0016>Matthew 1:16, 21**.

The son of David, the son of Abraham] No person ever born could boast, in a direct line, a more illustrious ancestry than Jesus Christ. Among his progenitors, the *regal*, *sacerdotal*, and *prophetic* offices, existed in all their *glory* and *splendour*. DAVID, the most renowned of sovereigns, was *king* and *prophet*: ABRAHAM, the most perfect character in all antiquity, whether sacred or profane, was *priest* and *prophet*: but the *three* offices were never united except in the person of Christ; he alone was *prophet*, *priest*, and *king*; and possessed and executed these offices in such a supereminent degree as no human being ever did, or ever could do. As the principal business of the *prophet* was to make known the will of God to men, according to certain partial communications received from Heaven; so Jesus, who lay in the bosom of the Father, and who was intimately and thoroughly acquainted with all the mysteries of the eternal world, came to declare the Divine nature and its counsels to mankind; see **<0018>John 1:18**. As the business of the *priest* was to offer sacrifices to God, to make atonement for the sins of the people; so Christ was constituted a high priest, to make, by the sacrifice of himself, an atonement for the sins of the whole world; see **<0017>1 John 2:2**, and the whole Epistle to the Hebrews.

As the office of *king* was to *reign* over, *protect*, and *defend* the people committed to his care by the Divine Providence; so Christ is set as a king upon Sion, having the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession, ^{<19106>}**Psalm 2:6, 8**, &c. Of the righteousness, peace, and increase of whose government, there shall be no end, ^{<23007>}**Isaiah 9:7**. This *three-fold* office, Christ executes not only in a general sense, in the world at large; but, in a particular sense, in every Christian soul. He is first a *prophet*, to teach the heart of man the will of God; to convict the conscience of sin, righteousness, and judgment; and fully to illustrate the way of salvation. He is next a *priest*, to apply that atonement to the guilty conscience, the necessity of which, as a *prophet*, he had previously made known. And lastly, as a *king*, he leads captivity captive, binds and casts out the strong man armed, spoils his goods, extends the sway of the sceptre of righteousness, subdues and destroys sin, and reigns Lord over all the powers and faculties of the human soul; so *that AS sin reigned unto death, EVEN so does grace reign through righteousness, unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord.* ^{<45621>}**Romans 5:21**.

It is remarkable, that the evangelist names *David* before *Abraham*, though the latter was many generations older: the reason seems to be this, that *David* was not only the most illustrious of our Lord's predecessors, as being both *king* and *prophet*; but because that promise, which at first was given to *Abraham*, and afterwards, through successive generations, confirmed to the Jewish people, was at last determined and restricted to the family of *David*. *Son of David*, was an epithet by which the Messiah was afterwards known among the Jews; and, under this title, they were led to expect him by prophetic authority. See ^{<19808>}**Psalm 89:3, 4**; ^{<19220>}**Psalm 132:10, 11**, compared with ^{<41323>}**Acts 13:23**, and ^{<23101>}**Isaiah 11:1**; ^{<42316>}**Jeremiah 23:5**. Christ was prophesied of under the very name of *David*. See ^{<26423>}**Ezekiel 34:23, 24; 37:24, 25**.

Verse 2. Abraham begat Isaac] In this genealogy, those persons only, among the ancestors of Christ, which formed the *direct* line, as specified: hence no mention is made of *Ishmael*, the son of *Abraham*, nor of *Esau*, the son of *Isaac*; and of all the twelve patriarchs, or sons of *Jacob*, *Judah* alone is mentioned.

Verse 3. Phares and Zara] The remarkable history of these twins may be seen, Gen. 38: Some of the ancients were of opinion, that the evangelist refers to the mystery of the *youngest being preferred to the eldest*, as

prefiguring the exaltation of the Christian Church over the synagogue. Concerning the *women* whose names are recorded in this genealogy, see the note at the end of the chapter.

Verse 8. Joram begat Ozias] This is the Uzziah, king of Judah, who was struck with the leprosy for his presumption in entering the temple to offer incense before the Lord. See ^{<14516>}**2 Chronicles 26:16**, &c. *Ozias* was not the immediate son of *Joram*: there were three kings between them, *Ahaziah*, *Joash*, and *Amaziah*, which swell the *fourteen* generations to *seventeen*: but it is observed that omissions of this kind are not uncommon in the Jewish genealogies. In ^{<13707>}**Ezra 7:3**, Azariah is called the son of *Meraioth*, although it is evident, from ^{<13307>}**1 Chronicles 6:7-9**, that there were *six* descendants between them. This circumstance the evangelist was probably aware of; but did not see it proper to attempt to correct what he found in the public accredited genealogical tables; as he knew it to be of no consequence to his argument, which was merely to show that Jesus Christ as surely descended, in an uninterrupted line from *David*, as *David* did from *Abraham*. And this he has done in the most satisfactory manner; nor did any person in those days pretend to detect any inaccuracy in his statement; though the account was published among those very people whose interest it was to expose the fallacy, in vindication of their own obstinate rejection of the Messiah, if any such fallacy could have been proved. But as *they* were silent, modern and comparatively modern unbelievers may for ever hold their peace. The objections raised on this head are worthy of no regard; yet the following statement deserves notice.

St. Matthew took up the genealogies just as he found them in the public Jewish records, which, though they were in the main correct, yet were deficient in many particulars. The Jews themselves give us sufficient proof of this. The *Talmud*, title *Kiddushim*, mentions *ten* classes of persons who returned from the Babylonish captivity: I. **ynhk** COHANEY, *priests*. II. **ywl** LEVEY, *Levites*. III. **l arvy** YISHRÆL, *Israelites*. IV. **yl wl j** CHULULEY, *common persons*, as to the priesthood; such whose *fathers* were priests, but their *mothers* were such as the priests should not marry. V. **yryg** GIREY, *proselytes*. VI. **yrrwj** CHARUREY, *freed-men*, or *servants* who had been *liberated* by their masters. VII. **yryzmm** MAMZIREY, *spurious*, such as were born in *unlawful wedlock*. VIII. **ynytn** NETHINEY, *Nethinim*. IX. **yqwtv** SHETUKEY, *bastards*, persons whose *mothers*, though well

known, could not ascertain the *fathers* of their children, because of their connections with different men. X. ypwsa ASUPHEY, such as were *gathered up* out of the streets, whose fathers and mothers were utterly unknown. Such was the *heterogeneous mass* brought up from Babylon to Jerusalem; and although we learn from the Jews, that great care was taken to separate the spurious from the true-born Israelites, and canons were made for that purpose, yet it so happened, that sometimes a spurious family had got into high authority, and therefore must not be meddled with. See several cases in *Lightfoot*. On this account, a faithful genealogist would insert in his roll such only as were indisputable. “It is therefore easy to guess,” says Dr. *Lightfoot*, “whence Matthew took the last *fourteen* generations of this genealogy, and Luke the first *forty* names of his: namely, from the genealogical rolls, at that time well known, and laid up in the public κειμηλια, repositories, and in the private also. And it was necessary indeed, in so noble and sublime a subject, and a thing that would be so much inquired into by the Jewish people, as the lineage of the Messiah would be, that the evangelists should deliver a truth, not only that could not be gainsayed, but also might be proved and established from certain and undoubted rolls of ancestors.” See *Horæ Talmudicæ*.

Verse 11. Josias begat Jechonias, &c.] There are *three* considerable difficulties in this verse. 1. Josias was not the *father* of Jechonias; he was only the grandfather of that prince: ^{<13B14>}**1 Chronicles 3:14-16**. 2. Jechonias had no *brethren*; at least, none are on record. 3. Josias died 20 years before the Babylonish captivity took place, and therefore *Jechonias and his brethren* could not have been begotten *about the time they were carried away to Babylon*. To this way be added a *fourth* difficulty, viz. there are only *thirteen* in this 2nd class of generations; or *forty-one*, instead of *forty-two*, in the whole. But all these difficulties disappear, by adopting a reading found in many MSS. Ιωσιας δε εγεννησε τος Ιωακειμ` Ιωακειμ δε εγεννησε τον Ιεχονιαν. And *Josias begat* JEHOIAKIM, or *Joakim*, and JOAKIM begat *Jechonias*. For this reading, see the authorities in *Griesbach*. *Josiah* was the immediate father of *Jehoiakim* (called also *Eliakeim* and *Joakim*) and his brethren, who were *Johanan*, *Zedekiah*, and *Shallum*: see ^{<13B15>}**1 Chronicles 3:15**. *Joakim* was the father of *Joachin* or *Jechonias*, about the time of the *first* Babylonish captivity: for we may reckon *three* Babylonish captivities. The *first* happened in the fourth year of *Joakim*, son of *Josiah*, about A. M. 3398. In this year, *Nebuchadnezzar*, having taken Jerusalem, led a great number of captives to Babylon. The

second captivity happened under Jechoniah, son of Joakim; who, having reigned three months, was taken prisoner in 3405, and was carried to Babylon, with a great number of the Jewish nobility. The *third* captivity took place under *Zedekiah*, A. M. 3416. And thus, says Calmet, ^{<0111>}**Matthew 1:11** should be read: *Josias begat Joakim and his brethren: and Joakim begat Jechonias about the time of the first Babylonish captivity; and Jechonias begat Salathiel, after they were brought to Babylon.* Thus, with the necessary addition of *Joakim*, the three classes, each containing *fourteen* generations, are complete. And to make this the more evident, I shall set down each of these three generations in a separate column, with the additional *Joakim*, that the reader may have them all at one view.

1 Abraham	1 Solomon	1 Jechonias
2 Isaac	2 Rehoboam	2 Salathiel
3 Jacob	3 Abia	3 Zorobabel
4 Judah	4 Asa	4 Abiud
5 Pharez	5 Josaphat	5 Eliakim
6 Esrom	6 Joram	6 Azor
7 Aram	7 Ozias	7 Sadoc
8 Aminadab	8 Joatham	8 Achim
9 Naason	9 Achaz	9 Eliud
10 Salmon	10 Ezekias	10 Eleazar
11 Booz	11 Manasses	11 Matthan
12 Obed	12 Amon	12 Jacob
13 Jesse	13 Josias	13 Joseph
14 David	14 Joachim	14 JESUS

In all *forty-two* generations.

Verse 12. Jechonias begat Salathiel] After Jechonias was brought to Babylon, he was put in prison by Nebuchadnezzar, where he continued till the death of this prince, and the accession of *Evilmerodach*, who brought him out of prison, in which he had been detained thirty-seven years, and restored him to such favour that his throne (seat) was exalted above all the kings which were with him in Babylon: ^{<45231>}**Jeremiah 52:31, 32.** But

though he thus became a royal favourite, he was never restored to his kingdom. And, according to the prophecy of Jeremiah, ^{<3220>}**Jeremiah 22:30**, no man of his seed *sat* upon the throne of David; yet the regal *line* was continued through his son *Salathiel*, who died in Babylon: but *Zorobabel*, his son, returned from captivity, and by him the race of David was continued, according to Matthew, by *Abiud*; and, according to Luke, by *Rhesa*. See on ^{<4123>}**Luke 3:23**, &c.

The term carrying away to *Babylon*, **μετοικεσια**, from **μετοικεω**, to *change a habitation*, or *place of residence*, would be more properly translated by the word *transportation*, which is here peculiarly appropriate: the *change* was not *voluntary*; they were *forced* away.

Verse 16. Jesus, who is called Christ.] As the word **χριστος** *Christ*, signifies the anointed or anointer, from **χρισω**, to *anoint*, it answers exactly to the Hebrew **j yvm mashiach**, which we pronounce *Messiah* or *Messias*; this word comes from the root **j vm mashac**, signifying the same thing. As the same person is intended by both the Hebrew and Greek appellation, it should be regularly translated *The Messiah*, or *The Christ*; whichever is preferred, the demonstrative article should never be omitted.

Priests, prophets, and kings, among the Jews, were *anointed* in order to the legitimate exercise of their respective offices. Hence the word **χριστος** *Christ*, or **j yvm Mashiach**, became a name of *dignity*, and often signified the same as *king*. See ^{<2350>}**Isaiah 45:1**; ^{<1945>}**Psalms 105:15**; ^{<1840>}**Leviticus 4:3**; **6:20**; ^{<1820>}**1 Samuel 2:10**. The words **j yvm Mashiach** and **ËI m melec**, **χριστος** and **βασιλευς**, *Christ* and *king*, are frequently interchanged. ^{<1820>}**1 Samuel 2:10**; ^{<1900>}**Psalms 2:2, 6**; ^{<4230>}**Luke 23:2**; and see the Scholia of *Rosenmuller* on this place. The reason of this may be seen in the following note, which I extract from the comment on ^{<1230>}**Exodus 29:7**.

“It appears from ^{<2350>}**Isaiah 61:1**, that *anointing with oil*, in consecrating a person to any important office, whether *civil* or *religious*, was considered as an emblem of the communication of the gifts and graces of the *Holy Spirit*. This ceremony was used on *three* occasions, viz. the installation of *prophets, priests, and kings*, into their respective offices. But why should such an anointing be deemed necessary? Because the common sense of men taught them that all good, whether spiritual or secular, must come from God, its

origin and cause. Hence it was taken for granted, 1. That no man could *foretell events*, unless inspired by the Spirit of God. And therefore the *prophet* was *anointed*, to signify the communication of the Spirit of wisdom and knowledge. 2. That no person could offer an acceptable *sacrifice* to God for the sins of men, or profitably minister in holy things, unless enlightened, influenced, and directed, by the Spirit of grace and holiness. Hence the *priest* was anointed, to signify his being divinely qualified for the due performance of his sacred functions. 3. That no man could enact just and equitable *laws*, which should have the prosperity of the community and the welfare of the individual continually in view, or could use the power confided to him only for the suppression of vice and the encouragement of virtue, but that man who was ever under the inspiration of the Almighty. Hence *kings* were inaugurated by anointing with oil. *Two* of these offices only exist in all civilized nations, the *sacerdotal* and *regal*; and, in some countries, the *priest* and *king* are still consecrated by *anointing*. In the Hebrew language **j vm** *mashach* signifies to *anoint*; and **j yvm** *mashiach*, the *anointed person*. But as no man was ever dignified by holding the *three* offices, so no person ever had the title *Mashiach*, the anointed one, but Jesus, The CHRIST. He alone is *King of kings*, and *Lord of lords*: the king who *governs* the universe, and *rules* in the hearts of his followers; the *prophet*, to instruct men in the way wherein they should go; and the great *high priest*, to make atonement for their sins. Hence he is called the *Messias*, a corruption of the word **j yvmh** *ha-mashiach*, THE ANOINTED ONE, in Hebrew; which gave birth to **o** *χριστος* *ho Christos*, which has precisely the same signification in Greek: of him, Melchisedeck, Abraham, Aaron, David, and others, were illustrious types. But none of these had the title of THE MESSIAH, or THE ANOINTED OF GOD. This does, and ever will, belong exclusively to JESUS, *The CHRIST*.”

Verse 17. Fourteen generations] See Clarke’s note on “⁴⁰¹¹Matthew 1:11”. The Jews had a sort of technical method of summing up generations in this way. In *Synopsis Sohar*, p. 132, n. 18, we have the following words; “From Abraham to Solomon were fifteen generations; and then the moon was at the full. From Solomon to Zedekiah were other fifteen generations; the moon was then in the wane, and Zedekiah’s eyes were put out.” That

is, the regal state came to its zenith of light and glory in the time of *Solomon*; but decreased gradually, till it became nearly extinct in the days of *Zedekiah*. See *Schoetgen*.

Verse 18. Espoused to Joseph] The word $\mu\eta\sigma\tau\epsilon\upsilon\theta\epsilon\iota\sigma\eta\varsigma$, from $\mu\eta\sigma\tau\epsilon\upsilon\omega$, to *contract*, or *betroth*, refers to the previous marriage agreement, in which the parties mutually bound themselves to each other; without which, no woman was ever married among the Jews. Among the Hindoos, a woman is espoused often a whole year, and even longer before the marriage takes place.

Before they came together] The woman was espoused at her own, or her father's house; and, generally, some time elapsed before she was taken home to the house of her husband: $\langle 63107 \rangle$ **Deuteronomy 20:7**; $\langle 071407 \rangle$ **Judges 14:7, 8**. This custom has been immemorially observed among the inhabitants of Ireland, who have not only this, but many Asiatic customs, which, added to various authentic historic proofs, are collateral evidences that they received the Christian religion, not from the *popes of Rome*, but through the means of *Asiatic missionaries*.

Among the Jews, the *espousal*, though the marriage had not been consummated, was considered as perfectly legal and binding on both sides; and hence a breach of this contract was considered as a case of adultery, and punished exactly in the same way. See $\langle 6225 \rangle$ **Deuteronomy 22:25, 28**. Nor could a contract of this kind, though there was no cohabitation, be broken but by a regular *divorce*, as Mr. Selden, in his *Uxor Hebraica*, has proved at large from the Jewish rabbins.

She was found with child] Her situation was the most distressing and humiliating that can be conceived. Nothing but the fullest consciousness of her own integrity, and the strongest confidence in God, could have supported her in such trying circumstances, where her reputation, her honour, and her *life* were at stake. What conversation passed between her and Joseph, on this discovery, we are not informed; but the issue proves that it was not satisfactory to him: nor could he resolve to consider her as his wife, till God had sent his angel to bear the most unequivocal testimony to the virgin's innocence. His whole conduct, on this occasion, was exceedingly benevolent and humane. He might at once have taken the advantage of the law, $\langle 6223 \rangle$ **Deuteronomy 22:23, 24**, and had her stoned to death.

Verse 19. To make her a public example] παραδειγματισαι, to expose her to public infamy; from παρα, *near*, and δεικνυμαι, *I show*, or *expose*; what is oddly, though emphatically, called in England, *showing up*-exposing a character to public view. Though Joseph was a *righteous* man, δικαιος, and knew that the law required that such persons as he supposed his wife to be should be put to death, yet, as *righteousness* is ever directed by *mercy*, he determined to put her away or divorce her *privately*, i.e. without assigning any cause, that her life might be saved; and, as the offence was against himself, he had a right to pass it by if he chose. Some have supposed that the term δικαιος should be translated *merciful*, and it certainly often has this signification; but here it is not necessary.

Verse 20. That which is conceived (or formed) in her] So I think γεννηθεν should be translated in this place: as it appears that the human nature of Jesus Christ was a *real creation* in the womb of the virgin, by the power of the Holy Spirit. The *angel of the Lord* mentioned here was probably the angel Gabriel, who, six months before, had been sent to Zacharias and Elisabeth, to announce the birth of Christ's forerunner, *John the Baptist*. See <0136> **Luke 1:36**.

Verse 21. JESUS] The same as Joshua, [vwhy Yehoshua, from [vy yasha, he *saved*, *delivered*, *put in a state of safety*. See on <0139> **Exodus 13:9**; <0136> **Numbers 13:16**, and in the preface to *Joshua*.

He shall save his people from their sins.] This shall be his great business in the world: the great errand on which he is come, viz. to make an atonement for, and to destroy, sin: deliverance from all the *power*, *guilt*, and *pollution* of sin, is the privilege of every believer in Christ Jesus. Less than this is not spoken of in the Gospel; and less than this would be unbecoming the Gospel. The perfection of the Gospel system is not that it makes *allowances* for sin, but that it makes an *atonement* for it: not that it *tolerates* sin, but that it *destroys* it. In <0101> **Matthew 1:1**, he is called *Jesus Christ*, on which Dr. Lightfoot properly remarks, "That the name of *Jesus*, so often added to the name of *Christ* in the New Testament, is not only that Christ might be thereby pointed out as the *Saviour*, but also that Jesus might be pointed out as the true *Christ* or *Messiah*, against the unbelief of the Jews." This observation will be of great use in numberless places of the New Testament. See <0126> **Acts 2:36**; **8:35**; <0102> **1 Corinthians 16:22**; <0122> **1 John 2:22**; <0115> **1 John 4:15**, &c.

Verse 22. By the prophet] ISAIAH is *added* here by several MSS., versions, and fathers. The prophecy is taken from ^{<23714>}**Isaiah 7:14**.

Verse 23. Behold, a virgin shall be with child] We have already seen, from the preceding verse, that this prophecy is taken from ^{<23714>}**Isaiah 7:14**; but it may be necessary to consider the circumstances of the *original* promise more particularly. At the time referred to, the kingdom of Judah, under the government of Ahaz, was reduced very low. *Pekah*, king of Israel, had slain in Judea 120,000 persons in one day, and carried away captives 200,000, including women and children, together with much spoil. To add to their distress, *Rezin*, king of Syria, being confederate with *Pekah*, had taken *Elath*, a fortified city of Judah, and carried the inhabitants away captive to Damascus. In this critical conjuncture, need we wonder that Ahaz was afraid that the enemies who were now united against him must prevail, destroy Jerusalem, and the kingdom of Judah, and annihilate the family of David! To meet and remove this fear, apparently well grounded, Isaiah is sent from the Lord to Ahaz, swallowed up now both by sorrow and by unbelief, in order to assure him that the counsels of his enemies should not stand; and that they should be utterly discomfited. To encourage Ahaz, he commands him to ask *a sign* or *miracle*, which should be a pledge in hand, that God should, in due time, fulfil the predictions of his servant, as related in the context. On Ahaz humbly refusing to ask any sign, it is immediately added, *Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign: Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son; and shall call his name Immanuel. Butter and honey shall he eat, &c.* Both the *Divine* and *human* nature of our Lord, as well as the miraculous conception, appear to be pointed out in the prophecy quoted here by the evangelist:-He shall be called **I a-wnm** [IM-MENU-EL; literally, *The STRONG GOD WITH US*: similar to those words in the New Testament:-*The Word which was God-was made flesh, and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth:* ^{<8101>}**John 1:1, 14**. And, *God was manifested in the flesh:* ^{<5416>}**1 Timothy 3:16**. So that we are to understand, *God with us*, to imply *God incarnated*-*God in human nature*. This seems farther evident from the words of the prophet, ^{<23715>}**Isaiah 7:15**. *Butter and honey shall he eat*-he shall be truly *man*, grow up and be nourished in a *human, natural way*; which refers to his being **WITH US**, i.e. incarnated. To which the prophet adds, *That he may know to refuse the evil and choose the good:*-or rather, *According to his knowledge, wt [dl le-daato, reprobating the evil, and choosing the good*. This refers to him as **GOD**; and is the same idea

given by this prophet, ^{<2531>}**Isaiah 53:11**: By (or in) *his knowledge* (the knowledge of Christ crucified, wt [db *be-dadto*]) shall my righteous servant sanctify many; for he shall bear their offences. Now this union of the Divine and human nature is termed a *sign* or *miracle*, twa oth, i.e. something which exceeds the power of nature to produce. And this *miraculous union* was to be brought about in a *miraculous way*: Behold a VIRGIN shall conceive: the word is very emphatic, hml [h *ha-almah*, THE virgin; the only one that ever was, or ever shall be, a *mother* in this way. But the *Jews*, and some called *Christians*, who have espoused their desperate cause, assert, that “the word hml [*almah* does not signify a VIRGIN *only*; for it is applied, ^{<3109>}**Proverbs 30:19**, to signify a young *married* woman.” I answer, that this latter text is no proof of the contrary doctrine: the words hml [b rbg *Ērd derec geber be-almah, the way of a man with a maid*, cannot be proved to mean *that* for which it is produced: beside, one of Deuteronomy Rossi’s MSS. reads wyml [b *be-almiau, the way of a strong, or stout, man (rbg geber) IN HIS YOUTH*; and in this reading the *Syriac, Septuagint, Vulgate, and Arabic* agree, which are followed by the *first version* in the English language, as it stands in a MS. in my own possession—the *weie of a man in his waring youthe*; so that this place, the only one that can with any *probability* of *success* be produced, were the interpretation contended for correct, which I am by no means disposed to admit, proves nothing. Beside, the consent of so many *versions* in the opposite meaning deprives it of much of its influence in this question.

The word hml [*almah*, comes from ml [*alam*, to *lie hid*, be concealed; and we are told that “virgins were so called, because they were *concealed* or *closely kept up* in their fathers’ houses, till the time of their marriage.” This is not correct: see the case of Rebecca, ^{<01243>}**Genesis 24:43**, and my note there: that of Rachel, ^{<01206>}**Genesis 29:6, 9**, and the note there also: and see the case of Miriam, the sister of Moses, ^{<0018>}**Exodus 2:8**, and also the Chaldee paraphrase on ^{<2010>}**Lamentations 1:4**, where the *virgins* are represented as *going out* in the dance. And see also the whole history of *Ruth*. This being *concealed*, or *kept at home*, on which so much stress is laid, is purely fanciful; for we find that young *unmarried* women drew water, kept sheep, gleaned publicly in the fields, &c., &c., and the same works they perform among the Turcomans to the present day. This reason, therefore, does not account for the radical meaning of the word; and we

must seek it elsewhere. Another well known and often used root in the Hebrew tongue will cast light on this subject. This is **hlg galah**, which signifies to *reveal*, *make manifest*, or *uncover*, and is often applied to matrimonial connections, in different parts of the Mosaic law: **ml [alam**, therefore, may be considered as implying the *concealment* of the *virgin*, as *such*, till lawful marriage had taken place. A virgin was not called **hml [almah**, because she was concealed by being kept at home in her father's house, which is not true, but *literally* and *physically*, because, as a woman, she had not been *uncovered*-she had not known man. This fully applies to the blessed virgin: see ^{<0134>}**Luke 1:34**. "How can this be, seeing *I know no man*?" and this text throws much light on the subject before us. This also is in perfect agreement with the ancient prophecy, "The seed of the woman shall bruise the head of the serpent," ^{<0135>}**Genesis 3:15**; for the person who was to destroy the work of the devil was to be the progeny of the *woman*, without any concurrence of the *man*. And, hence, the text in Genesis speaks as fully of the *virgin state* of the person, from whom *Christ*, according to the flesh, should come, as that in the *prophet*, or this in the *evangelist*. According to the original promise, there was to be a *seed*, a *human being*, who should destroy sin; but this *seed* or *human being* must come from the *woman* ALONE; and no *woman* ALONE, could produce such a human being, without being a *virgin*. Hence, *A virgin shall bear a son*, is the very spirit and meaning of the original text, independently of the *illustration* given by the prophet; and the *fact* recorded by the evangelist is the proof of the whole. But how could that be a *sign* to *Ahaz*, which was to take place so many hundreds of years after? I answer, the meaning of the prophet is plain: not only *Rezin* and *Pekah* should be unsuccessful against *Jerusalem* at *that time*, which was the fact; but *Jerusalem*, *Judea*, and the house of *David*, should be both preserved, notwithstanding their depressed state, and the multitude of their adversaries, till the time should come when a *VIRGIN should bear a son*. This is a most remarkable circumstance-the house of *David* could never fail, till a virgin should conceive and bear a son-nor did it: but when that incredible and miraculous fact did take place, the kingdom and house of *David* became extinct! This is an irrefragable confutation of every argument a Jew can offer in vindication of his opposition to the Gospel of *Christ*. Either the prophecy in *Isaiah* has been fulfilled, or the kingdom and house of *David* are yet standing. But the kingdom of *David*, we know, is destroyed: and where is the man, Jew or Gentile, that can show us a single descendant of *David* on the face of the

earth? The prophecy could not fail-the kingdom and house of David have failed; the *virgin*, therefore, must have brought forth her son-and this son is Jesus, the Christ. Thus Moses, Isaiah, and Matthew concur; and facts, the most unequivocal, have confirmed the whole! Behold the wisdom and providence of God!

Notwithstanding what has been said above, it may be asked, In what sense could this name *Immanuel* be applied to Jesus Christ, if he be not truly and properly GOD? Could the Spirit of truth ever design that Christians should receive him as an *angel* or a *mere man*, and yet, in the very beginning of the Gospel history, apply a character to him which belongs only to the most high God? Surely *no*. In what sense, then, is Christ GOD WITH US? Jesus is called Immanuel, or *God with us*, in his *incarnation*.-God united to our nature-*God with man*-*God in man*.-*God with us*, by his continual *protection*.-*God with us*, by the *influences* of his *Holy Spirit*-in the *holy sacrament*-in the *preaching* of his *word*-in *private prayer*. And *God with us*, through every *action* of our life, that we begin, continue, and end in his name. He is *God with us*, to *comfort*, *enlighten*, *protect*, and *defend* us in every time of *temptation* and *trial*, in the hour of *death*, in the day of *judgment*; and *God with us*, and *in us*, and we *with* and *in* him, to all eternity.

Verse 25. Her first-born son] τον υιον αυτης τον πρωτοτοκον.

Literally, *That son of hers, the first-born one*. That Mary might have had *other* children, any person may reasonably and piously believe; that she had *others*, many think exceedingly probable, and that this text is at least an indirect proof of it. However this may be, the *perpetual virginity* of Mary should not be made an article of faith. God has not made it one: indeed it can hardly bear the light of several texts in the Gospels.

He knew her not] Had no matrimonial intercourse with her-TILL *she had brought forth that son of hers*, of whom the evangelist had been just speaking, *the first-born*, the eldest of the family, to whom the *birthright* belonged, and who was miraculously born before she knew any man, being yet in a state of virginity. See on ~~JOHNS~~ **Matthew 13:55**. The virginity of Mary, previously to the birth of Christ, is an article of the utmost consequence to the Christian system; and therefore it is an article of faith: her *perpetual virginity* is of no consequence; and the learned labour spent to prove it has produced a mere castle in the air. The thing is *possible*; but it never has been, and never can be *proved*.

He called his name JESUS.] This name was given by the command of God, see ^{<0116>}**Matthew 1:16**, and was imposed on Christ when eight days old; for then, according to the Jewish law, he was circumcised: thus he had the name of *Saviour* given when he first began to *shed that blood* without which there could be no *remission of sins*.

The *goodness* of God is manifested, not only in his giving his Son to save a lost world, but also in the choice of the *persons* who were his progenitors: among whom we find, First, SAINTS, to excite our courage: *Abraham*, remarkable for his *faith*; *Isaac*, for his *obedience*; and *Jacob*, for his *fervour* and *constancy*.

Secondly, *Penitent SINNERS*, to excite our *confidence*: such as *David*, *Manasses*, &c.

Thirdly, *Sinners*, of whose repentance and salvation we hear nothing; to put us on our guard. Who can read the account of idolatrous Solomon, who, from the whole evidence of the sacred history, died In his sins, without trembling?

Four WOMEN are mentioned in this genealogy: two of these were *adulteresses*, *Tamar* and *Bathsheba*; and two were *Gentiles*, *Rahab* and *Ruth*, and strangers to the covenant of promise; to teach us that Jesus Christ came to save *sinners*, and that, though *strangers* to his people, we are not on that account excluded from a salvation which God has designed for *all men*. He is not the God of the *Jews* only; he is also the God of the *Gentiles*.

The state of the royal family of David, the circumstances of the holy virgin and her spouse Joseph, the very remarkable prophecy of Isaiah, the literal and circumstantial fulfilment of it, the names given to our blessed Lord, the genealogical scroll of the family, &c., &c., are all so many proofs of the wisdom, goodness, and providence of God. Every occurrence seems, at first view, to be abandoned to fortuitous influence, and yet the result of each shows that God managed the whole. These circumstances are of the greatest importance; nor can the Christian reader reflect on them without an increase of his *faith* and his *piety*.

ST. MATTHEW

CHAPTER 2.

Wise men come from the east to worship Christ, 1, 2. Herod, hearing of the birth of our Lord, is greatly troubled, 3; and makes inquiry of the chief priests and scribes, where the Christ should be born, 4. They inform him of the prophecy relative to Bethlehem, 5, 6. The wise men, going to Bethlehem, are desired by Herod to bring him word when they have found the child, pretending that he wished to do him homage, 7, 8. The wise men are directed by a star to the place where the young child lay, adore him, and offer him gifts, 9-11. Being warned of God not to return to Herod, they depart into their own country another way, 12. Joseph and Mary are divinely warned to escape into Egypt, because Herod sought to destroy Jesus, 13, 14. They obey, and continue in Egypt till the death of Herod, 15. Herod, finding that the wise men did not return, is enraged, and orders all the young children in Bethlehem, under two years of age, to be massacred, 16-18. Herod dies, and Joseph is divinely warned to return to the land of Israel, 19-21. Finding that Archelaus reigned in Judea in place of his father Herod, he goes to Galilee, and takes up his residence at Nazareth, 22, 23.

NOTES ON CHAP. 2.

Verse 1. Bethlehem of Judea] This city is mentioned in ^{<071707>}**Judges 17:7**, and must be distinguished from another of the same name in the tribe of Zebulun, ^{<06915>}**Joshua 19:15**. It is likewise called *Ephrath*, ^{<04807>}**Genesis 48:7**, or *Ephratah*, ^{<33812>}**Micah 5:2**, and its inhabitants Ephrathites, ^{<08012>}**Ruth 1:2**; ^{<09172>}**1 Samuel 17:12**. It is situated on the declivity of a hill, about six miles from Jerusalem. **בֵּית לֶחֶם** *Beth-lechem*, in Hebrew, signifies *the house of bread*. And the name may be considered as very properly applied to that *place* where Jesus, the Messiah, the true bread that came down from heaven, was manifested, to give life to the world. But **בֵּית לֶחֶם** also signifies *flesh*, and is applied to that part of the sacrifice which was burnt upon the altar. See ^{<08811>}**Leviticus 3:11-16; 21:6**. The word is also used to signify a *carcass*, ^{<30117>}**Zephaniah 1:17**. The Arabic version has [Arabic] *Beet lehem*, and the Persic [Persic] *Beet allehem*: but [Arabic] *lehem*, in Arabic, never signifies *bread*, but always means *flesh*. Hence it is more proper to consider the name as signifying *the house of flesh*, or, as some might suppose, *the house of the incarnation*, i.e. the

place where *God was manifested in the flesh* for the salvation of a lost world.

In the days of Herod the king] This was HEROD, improperly denominated the GREAT, the son of Antipater, an Idumean: he reigned 37 years in Judea, reckoning from the-time he was created-king of that country by the Romans. Our blessed Lord was born in the last year of his reign; and, at this time, the sceptre had literally departed from Judah, a *foreigner* being now upon the throne.

As there are several princes of this name mentioned in the New Testament, it may be well to give a list of them here, together with their genealogy.

Herod, the Great, married ten wives, by whom he had several children, Euseb. l. i. c. 9. p. 27. The first was *Doris*, thought to be an Idumean, whom he married when but a private individual; by her he had *Antipater*, the eldest of all his sons, whom he caused to be executed five days before his own death.

His second wife was *Mariamne*, daughter to *Hircanus*, the sole surviving person of the *Asmonean*, or Maccabean, race. Herod put her to death. She was the mother of *Alexander* and *Aristobulus*, whom Herod had executed at Sebastia, (Joseph. Antiq. l. xvi. c. 13.-Deuteronomy Bello, l. i. c. 17,) on an accusation of having entered into a conspiracy against him. *Aristobulus* left three children, whom I shall notice hereafter.

His third wife was *Mariamne*, the daughter of *Simon*, a person of some note in Jerusalem, whom Herod made high priest, in order to obtain his daughter. She was the mother of *Herod Philippus*, or Herod Philip, and Salome. Herod or Philip married *Herodias*, mother to *Salome*, the famous dancer, who demanded the head of John the Baptist, ^{<41022>}**Mark 6:22**. Salome had been placed, in the will of Herod the Great, as second heir after Antipater; but her name was erased, when it was discovered that *Mariamne*, her mother, was an accomplice in the crimes of Antipater, son of Herod the Great. Joseph de Bello, lib. i. c. 18,19,20.

His fourth wife was *Malthake*, a Samaritan, whose sons were *Archelaus* and *Philip*. The first enjoyed half his father's kingdom under the name of *tetrarch*, viz. Idumea, Judea, and Samaria: Joseph. Antiq. l. xvii. c. 11. He reigned nine years; but, being accused and arraigned before the Emperor Augustus, he was banished to Vienna, where he died: Joseph. Antiq. l. xvii. c. 15. This is the Archelaus mentioned in ^{<41022>}**Matthew 2:22**.

His brother *Philip* married *Salome*, the famous dancer, the daughter of Herodias; he died without children, and she was afterwards married to Aristobulus.

The fifth wife of Herod the Great was *Cleopatra* of Jerusalem. She was the mother of Herod surnamed Antipas, who married Herodias, the wife of his brother Philip, while he was still living. Being reprov'd for this act by John the Baptist, ^{<0140>}**Matthew 14:3**; ^{<40617>}**Mark 6:17**; ^{<01819>}**Luke 3:19**, and having imprisoned this holy man, he caused him to be beheaded, agreeable to the promise he had rashly made to the daughter of his wife Herodias, who had pleased him with her dancing. He attempted to seize the person of Jesus Christ, and to put him to death. It was to this prince that Pilate sent our Lord, ^{<02131>}**Luke 13:31, 32**. He was banished to Lyons, and then to Spain, where both he and his wife Herodias died. Joseph. Antiq. l. xv. c. 14.-Deuteronomy Bello, l. ii. c. 8.

The sixth wife of Herod the Great was *Pallas*, by whom he had Phasaelus: his history is no ways connected with the New Testament.

The seventh was named *Phoedra*, the mother of *Roxana*, who married the son of *Pheroras*.

The eighth was *Elpida*, mother of *Salome*, who married another son of *Pheroras*.

With the names of two other wives of Herod we are not acquainted; but they are not connected with our history, any more than are *Pallas*, *Phoedra*, and *Elpida*, whose names I merely notice to avoid the accusation of inaccuracy.

ARISTOBULUS, the son of Herod the Great by Mariamne, a descendant of the Asmoneans, left two sons and a daughter, viz. *Agrippa*, *Herod*, and *Herodias*, so famous for her incestuous marriage with *Antipas*, in the life-time of his brother *Philip*.

AGRIPPA, otherwise named *Herod*, who was imprisoned by Tiberius for something he had inconsiderately said against him, was released from prison by Caligula, who made him king of Judea: Joseph. Antiq. l. xviii. c. 8. It was this prince who put St. James to death, and imprisoned Peter, as mentioned in xii. of Acts. He died at Cæsarea, in the way mentioned in the Acts, as well as by Josephus, Antiq. l. xix. c. 7. He left a son named Agrippa, who is mentioned below.

HEROD, the *second* son of Aristobulus, was king of Chalcis, and, after the death of his brother, obtained permission of the emperor to keep the ornaments belonging to the high priest, and to nominate whom he pleased to that office: Joseph. Antiq. l. xx. c. 1. He had a son named Aristobulus, to whom Nero gave Armenia the lesser, and who married *Salome*, the famous dancer, daughter to Herodias.

AGRIPPA, son of Herod Agrippa, king of Judea, and grandson to Aristobulus and Mariamne; he was at first king of Chalcis, and afterwards tetrarch of Galilee, in the room of his uncle Philip: Joseph. Antiq. l. xx. c. 5. It was before him, his sister *Berenice*, and *Felix*, who had married *Drusilla*, Agrippa's second daughter, that St. Paul pleaded his cause, as mentioned Acts 26.

HERODIAS, the daughter of Mariamne and Aristobulus, is the person of whom we have already spoken, who married successively the two brothers *Philip* and *Antipas*, her uncles, and who occasioned the death of John the Baptist. By her first husband she had *Salome*, the dancer, who was married to *Philip*, tetrarch of the Trachonitis, the son of Herod the Great. Salome having had no children by him, she was married to Aristobulus, her cousin-german, son of Herod, king of Chalcis, and brother to Agrippa and Herodias: she had by this husband several children.

This is nearly all that is necessary to be known relative to the race of the Herods, in order to distinguish the particular persons of this family mentioned in the New Testament. See *Basnage*, *Calmet*, and *Josephus*.

There came wise men from the east] Or, *Magi came from the eastern countries*. "The Jews believed that there were prophets in the kingdom of *Saba* and *Arabia*, who were of the posterity of *Abraham* by *Keturah*; and that they taught in the name of God, what they had received in tradition from the mouth of *Abraham*."-WHITBY. That many Jews were mixed with this people there is little doubt; and that these eastern *magi*, or philosophers, astrologers, or whatever else they were, might have been *originally* of that class, there is room to believe. These, knowing the promise of the Messiah, were now, probably, like other believing Jews, waiting for the consolation of Israel. The Persic translator renders the Greek **μαγοι** by [Persic] *mejooseean*, which properly signifies a *worshipper of fire*; and from which we have our word *magician*. It is very probable that the ancient Persians, who were considered as *worshippers of fire*, only honoured it as the symbolical representation of the Deity; and,

seeing this unusual appearance, might consider it as a sign that the God they worshipped was about to manifest himself among men. Therefore they say, We have seen his *star*-and are come to worship *him*; but it is most likely that the Greeks made their **μαγοι** *magi*, which we translate *wise men*, from the Persian [Persian] *mogh*, and [Persian] *moghan*, which the *Kushuf ul Loghat*, a very eminent Persian lexicon, explains by [Persian] *atush perest*, a *worshipper of fire*; which the Persians suppose all the inhabitants of *Ur* in Chaldea were, among whom the Prophet Abraham was brought up. The Mohammedans apply this title by way of *derision* to *Christian monks* in their *associate* capacity; and by a yet stronger *catachresis*, they apply it to a *tavern*, and the *people that frequent it*. Also, to ridicule in the most forcible manner the *Christian priesthood*, they call the *tavern-keeper* [Arabic], *peeri Mughan*, the *priest*, or *chief of the idolaters*. It is very probable that the persons mentioned by the evangelist were a sort of astrologers, probably of Jewish extraction, that they lived in Arabia-Felix, and, for the reasons above given, came to worship their new-born sovereign. It is worthy of remark, that the Anglo-saxon translates the word **μαγοι** by [Anglo-Saxon], which signifies *astrologers*, from [Anglo-Saxon] a *star* or *planet*, and [Anglo-Saxon], to *know* or *understand*.

Verse 2. We have seen his star] Having discovered an unusual luminous appearance or meteor in the heavens, supposing these persons to have been Jews, and knowing the prophecies relative to the redemption of Israel, they probably considered this to be the *star* mentioned by Balaam, ^{<02417>}**Numbers 24:17**. See the note there.

In the east] **εν τη ανατολη**, At its rise. **ανατολη** and **δυσην** are used in the New Testament for *east* and *west*.

To worship him.] Or, *To do him homage*; **προσκυνησαι αυτω**. The word **προσκυνω**, which is compounded of **προς**, *to*, and **κυων**, *a dog*, signifies to *crouch* and *fawn* like a dog at his master's feet. It means, to prostrate oneself to another, according to the eastern custom, which is still in use. In this act, *the person kneels, and puts his head between his knees, his forehead at the same time touching the ground*. It was used to express both civil and religious reverence. In Hindostan, religious homage is paid by prostrating the body at full length, so that the two knees, the two hands, forehead, nose, and cheeks all touch the earth at the same time. This kind of homage is paid also to great men. AYEEN AKBERY, vol. iii. p. 227.

As to what is here called a *star*, some make it a *meteor*, others a luminous appearance like an *Aurora Borealis*; others a *comet*! There is no doubt, the appearance was very striking: but it seems to have been a simple meteor provided for the occasion. See Clarke on “~~“¹⁰⁰”~~ Matthew 2:9”.

Verse 3. When Herod-heard these things, he was troubled] Herod’s consternation was probably occasioned by the agreement of the account of the *magi*, with an opinion predominant throughout the *east*, and particularly in Judea, that some great personage would soon make his appearance, for the deliverance of Israel from their enemies; and would take upon himself universal empire.

SUETONIUS and TACITUS, two Roman historians, mention this. Their words are very remarkable:-

Percrebuerat Oriente toto, vetus et constans opinio, esse in fatis, ut eo tempore Judaea profecti rerum potirentur. Id de imperatore Romano, quantum eventu postea predictum patuit, Judaei ad se trahentes, rebellarunt. SÜETON. VESP.

“An ancient and settled persuasion prevailed throughout the east, that the fates had decreed some to proceed from Judea, who should attain universal empire. This persuasion, which the event proved to respect the Roman emperor, the Jews applied to themselves, and therefore rebelled.”

The words of *Tacitus* are nearly similar:-

Pluribus persuasio inerat, antiquis sacerdotum literis contineri, eo ipso tempore fore, ut valesceret Oriens, profectique Judæa rerum potirentur. Quæ ambages Vespasianum ac Titum prædixerant.

“Many were persuaded, that it was contained in the ancient books of their priests, that at that very time the east should prevail: and that some should proceed from Judea and possess the dominion. It was Vespasian and Titus that these ambiguous prophecies predicted.” *Histor. v.*

Verse 4. The chief priests] Not only the *high priest* for the time being, called **varh** ^{hk} *cohen ha-rosh*, ^{<12518>} **2 Kings 25:18**, and his *deputy*, called **hnvm** ^{hk} *cohen mishneh*, with those who had formerly borne the *high priest’s office*; but also, the *chiefs or heads of the twenty four*

sacerdotal families, which David distributed into so many *courses*, 1 Chronicles 24. These latter are styled **μνηκῆ ὑρε** *sarey ha-cohanim*, *chief of the priests*, ^{<14614>}**2 Chronicles 36:14**; ^{<15783>}**Ezra 8:24**; and **μνηκῆ ὑαρ** *roshey ha-cohanim*, *heads of the priests*, ^{<16117>}**Nehemiah 12:7**.

Josephus calls them by the same name as the writers of the New Testament. In his *Life*, sect. 8, he mentions **πολλοὺς τῶν ἀρχιερέων**, *MANY of the chief priests*. The word is used in the singular in this last sense, for *a chief of the priests*, ^{<41914>}**Acts 19:14**.

Scribes] The word **γραμματεὺς**, in the Septuagint, is used for a *political* officer, whose business it was to assist kings and civil magistrates, and to keep *an account in writing* of public acts and occurrences. Such an officer is called in Hebrew **Ēl mh rps** *seper hamelech*, **ὁ γραμματεὺς τοῦ βασιλεως**, *the king's scribe*, or *secretary*. See LXX. ^{<121210>}**2 Kings 12:10**.

The word is often used by the LXX. for a *man of learning*, especially for one skilled in the *Mosaic law*: and, in the same sense, it is used by the New Testament writers. **γραμματεὺς** is therefore to be understood as always implying a *man of letters*, or *learning*, capable of instructing the people. The derivation of the names proves this to be the genuine meaning of the word **γράμμα**: a *letter*, or *character*, in writing: or **γράμματα**, *letters*, *learning*, *erudition*, and especially that gained from *books*. The Hebrew **רפּע** or **רפּוּע** *sopher*, from *saphar*, to *tell*, *count*, *cypher*, signifies both a book, volume, roll, &c., and a notary, recorder, or historian; and always signifies a *man of learning*. We often term such a person a *man of letters*.

The word is used ^{<441925>}**Acts 19:35**, for a *civil magistrate* at Ephesus, probably such a one as we would term *recorder*. It appears that Herod at this time gathered the whole Sanhedrin, in order to get the fullest information on a subject by which all his jealous fears had been alarmed.

Verse 5. In Bethlehem of Judea: for thus it is written by the prophet] As there have been several confused notions among the Jews, relative not only to the Messiah, and his character, but also to the time of his birth, it may be necessary to add, to what has already been said on this subject, the following extracts from the Talmudists and Gemarists, quoted by LIGHTFOOT. At the close of a long dissertation on the year of our Lord's birth, (which he places in the 35th of the reign of Herod, not the last or 37th as above,) he says: "It will not be improper here to produce the *Gemarists* themselves openly confessing that the *Messias* had been born, a

good while ago before their times. For so they write: *After this the children of Israel shall be converted, and shall inquire after the Lord their God, and David their king:* ^{<2018>}**Hosea 3:5.** *Our rabbins say, That is King Messias, If he be among the living, his name is David, or if dead, David is his name. R. Tanchum said, Thus I prove it: He showeth mercy to David his Messiah.* (^{<1918>}**Psalm 18:50.**) *R. Joshua ben Levi saith, His name is j mx tsemach, a Branch.* (^{<2018>}**Zechariah 3:8.**) *R. Juban bar Arbu saith, His name is Menahem. (That is, παρακλητος, the Comforter.) ‘And that which happened to a certain Jew, as he was ploughing, agreeth with this business. A certain Arabian travelling, and hearing the ox bellow, said to the Jew at plough, O Jew, loose thy oxen, and loose thy ploughs, for behold! The temple is laid waste. The ox belloweth the second time; the Arabian saith to him, O Jew, Jew, yoke thy oxen, and fit thy ploughs: aj yvm akl m ryl y ahw For behold! King Messiah is born. But, saith the Jew, What is his name? Menahem, saith he (i.e. the Comforter.) And what is the name of his Father? Hezekiah, saith the Arabian. To whom the Jew, But whence is He? The other answered, From the palace of the king of Bethlehem Judah. Away he went, and sold his oxen and his ploughs, and became a seller of infants’ swaddling clothes, going about from town to town. When he came to that city, (Bethlehem,) all the women bought of him, but the mother of Menahem bought nothing. He heard the voice of the women saying, O thou mother of Menahem, thou mother of Menahem, carry thy son the things that are here sold. But she replied, May the enemies of Israel be strangled, because on the day that he was born, the temple was laid waste. To whom he said, But we hoped, that as it was laid waste at his feet, so at his feet it would be built again. She saith, I have no money. To whom he replied, But why should this be prejudicial to him? Carry him what you buy here, and if you have no money today, after some days I will come back and receive it. After some days, he returned to that city, and saith to her, How does the little infant? And she said, From the time you saw me last, spirits and tempests came, and snatched him away out of my hands. R. Bon saith, What need have we to learn from an Arabian? Is it not plainly written, And Lebanon shall fall before the powerful one? (^{<2104>}**Isaiah 10:34.**) And what follows after? A branch shall come out of the root of Jesse. (^{<2110>}**Isaiah 11:1.**)*

“The Babylonian doctors yield us a confession not very unlike the former. R. Charinah saith: *After four hundred years are passed from the destruction of the temple, if any one shall say to you, Take to thyself for*

one penny a field worth a thousand pence, do not take it. And again, After four thousand two hundred thirty and one years from the creation of the world, if any shall say to you, Take for a penny a field worth a thousand pence, take it not. The gloss is, For that is the time of redemption, and you shall be brought back to the holy mountain, to the inheritance of your fathers; why, therefore, should you misspend your penny?

“You may fetch the reason of this calculation, if you have leisure, out of the tract *Sanhedrin*. *The tradition of the school of Elias, the world is to last six thousand years, &c.* And a little after, *Elias said to Rabh Judah, The world shall last not less than eighty-five jubilees: and in the last jubilee shall the Son of David come. He saith to him, Whether in the beginning of it, or in the end? He answered him, I know not. Whether is this whole time to be finished first, or not? He answered him, I know not. But Rabh Asher asserted, that he answered thus, Until then, expect him not, but from thence expect him.* Hear your own countrymen, O Jew! How many centuries of years are passed by and gone from the eighty-fifth jubilee of the world, that is, the year MMMMCCL, and yet the Messiah of your expectation is not yet come!

“*Daniel’s* weeks had so clearly defined the time of the true Messiah, his coming, that the minds of the whole nation were raised into the expectation of him. Hence, it was doubted of the *Baptist*, whether he were not the Messiah, ^{ⲘⲓⲠⲔ} **Luke 3:15**. Hence it was, that the *Jews* are gathered together from all countries unto *Jerusalem*, Acts 2:, expecting and coming to see, because at that time the term of revealing the Messiah, that had been prefixed by *Daniel*, was come. Hence it was that there was so great a number of false Christs, ^{ⲘⲓⲠⲔ} **Matthew 24:5**, &c., taking the occasion of their impostures hence, that now the time of that great expectation was at hand, and fulfilled: and in one word, *They thought the kingdom of God should presently appear*, ^{ⲘⲓⲠⲔ} **Luke 19:11**.

“But when those times of expectation were past, nor did such a Messiah appear as they expected, (for when they saw the true Messiah, they would not see him,) they first broke out into various, and those wild, conjectures of the time; and at length, all those conjectures coming to nothing, all ended in this curse (the just cause of their eternal blindness) ^{ⲗⲓⲃⲓⲛⲓⲛⲓ} **^twr tph ^yxq ykvtm I v**, *May their soul be confounded who compute the times!*” They were fully aware that the time foretold by the prophets must be long since fulfilled; and that their obstinacy must be confounded by their own

history, and the chronology of their own Scriptures; and therefore they have pronounced an anathema on those who shall attempt to examine, by chronological computations, the prophecies that predict his coming. Who can conceive a state of wilful blindness or determined obstinacy superior to this!

Verse 6. And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda] To distinguish it from Bethlehem, in the tribe of Zebulon. ^{<61915>}**Joshua 19:15.** See Clarke on “^{<1021>}**Matthew 2:1**”.

Art not the least] In ^{<33812>}**Micah 5:2**, it is read, *Though thou be little-* *twyhl ry[x tsair lehayoth, little to be. Houbigant*, struck with the oddness of the construction of the Hebrew, by dividing the last word, and making a small change in two of the letters, makes the prophet agree with the evangelist, *tyyh al ry[x tsair lo hayita, thou art not the least.* Several learned men are of opinion, that the copy from which St. Matthew quoted, had the text in this way. However, some MSS. of very good note, among which is the *Codex Bezae*, have *μη ελαχιστη ει*, for *ουδαμως ελαχιστη ει*, *Art thou not the least?* This reconciles the prophet and evangelist without farther trouble. See the authorities for this reading in *Griesbach* and *Wetstein*.

Among the princes of Juda] In ^{<33812>}**Micah 5:2**, it is, *the thousands of Judah*. There is much reason to believe that each tribe was divided into small portions called *thousands*, as in England certain small divisions of counties are called *hundreds*. For the proof of the first, the reader is referred to ^{<10615>}**Judges 6:15**, where, instead of *my FAMILY is poor in Manasseh*, the Hebrew is, *my THOUSAND (ypl a) is the meanest in Manasseh*: and to ^{<91019>}**1 Samuel 10:19**, *Present yourselves before the Lord by your TRIBES and by your THOUSANDS*: and to ^{<13122>}**1 Chronicles 12:20**, *Captains of the THOUSANDS of Manasseh*. Now these THOUSANDS being petty governments, Matthew renders them by the word *ηγεμοσις*, because the word *princes* or *governors* was more intelligible in the Greek tongue than *thousands*, though, in this case, they both signify the same. See *Wakefield*.

That shall rule my people Israel.] *οστις ποιμανει*, *Who shall FEED my people*. That is as a shepherd feeds his flock. Among the Greeks, kings are called, by *Homer*, *λαων ποιμενες*, *shepherds of the people*. This appellation probably originated from the *pastoral* employment, which kings

and patriarchs did not blush to exercise in the times of primitive simplicity; and it might particularly refer to the case of David, the great type of Christ, who was a keeper of his father's sheep, before he was raised to the throne of Israel. As the government of a good king was similar to the care a good shepherd has of his flock, hence ποιμην signified both *shepherd* and *king*; and ποιμαίνω, to *feed* and to *rule* among the ancient Greeks.

Verse 8. That I may come and worship him also.] See ^{<AMP>}Matthew 2:2, and on ^{<OITB>}Genesis 17:3, and ^{<ODS>}Exodus 4:31. What exquisite hypocrisy was here! he only wished to find out the child that he might murder him; but see how that God who searches the heart prevents the designs of wicked men from being accomplished!

Verse 9. In the east] Or, *at its rise*. See Clarke on "^{<AMP>}Matthew 2:2".

Stood over where the young child was.] *Super caput pueri*, Over the head of the child, as the OPUS IMPERFECTUM, on this place, has it. See Griesbach's Var. Lect. So it appears to have been a simple luminous meteor in a star-like form, and at a very short distance from the ground, otherwise it could not have ascertained the place where the child lay. But the last quoted reading, from the Opus Imperfectum, justifies the opinion that the luminous appearance which had hitherto directed them now encompassed the head of the child; and probably this gave the first idea to the ancient painters, of representing Christ in the manger, with a *glory surrounding his head*. This glory, or nimbus, is usually given also to saints and eminent persons, especially in the Roman Church, by all Roman Catholic painters.

Verse 11. They presented unto him gifts] The people of the east never approach the presence of kings and great personages, without a *present* in their hands. This custom is often noticed in the Old Testament, and still prevails in the east, and in some of the newly discovered South Sea Islands.

Gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.] Some will have these gifts to be emblematic of the Divinity, regal office, and manhood of Christ. "They offered him *incense* as their *God*; *gold* as their *king*; and *myrrh*, as united to a human body, subject to *suffering* and *death*." *Aurum, thus, myrrham, regique*, DEO, HOMINIQUE, *dona ferunt*. JUVENCUS. Rather, they offered him the things which were in most esteem among themselves; and which were productions of their own country. The gold was probably a very providential supply, as on it, it is likely, they subsisted while in Egypt.

Verse 13. Flee into Egypt] Many Jews had settled in Egypt; not only those who had fled thither in the time of Jeremiah, see Jer. 48; but many others who had settled there also, on account of the temple which *Onias* IV. had built at *Heliopolis*. Those who could speak the Greek tongue enjoyed many advantages in that country: besides, they had the Greek version of the Septuagint, which had been translated nearly 300 years before this time. Egypt was now a Roman province, and the rage of Herod could not pursue the holy family to this place. There is an apocryphal work in Arabic, called *the Gospel of the infancy*, which pretends to relate all the acts of Jesus and Mary while in Egypt. I have taken the pains to read this through, and have found it to be a piece of gross superstition, having nothing to entitle it to a shadow of credibility.

Verse 15. Out of Egypt have I called my son.] This is quoted from ^{<8101>}**Hosea 11:1**, where the deliverance of Israel, and that only, is referred to. But as that deliverance was extraordinary, it is very likely that it had passed into a proverb, so that “Out of Egypt have I called my son,” might have been used to express any signal deliverance. I confess, I can see no other reference it can have to the case in hand, unless we suppose, which is possible, that God might have referred to this *future* bringing up of his son Jesus from Egypt, under the type of the past deliverance of Israel from the same land. *Midrash Tehillin*, on ^{<4907>}**Psalm 2:7**, has these remarkable words: *I will publish a decree*: this decree has been published in the *Law*, in the *Prophets*, and in the *Hagiographia*. In the *Law*, *Israel is my first-born son*: ^{<1042>}**Exodus 4:22**. In the *Prophets*, *Behold, my servant shall deal prudently*: ^{<2513>}**Isaiah 52:13**. In the *Hagiographia*, *The Lord said unto my lord*: ^{<4901>}**Psalm 110:1**. All these passages the Jews refer to the Messiah. See *Schoetgen*.

Verse 16. Slew all the children] This cruelty of Herod seems alluded to in very decisive terms by *Macrobius*, who flourished toward the conclusion of the fourth Century. In his chapter *Deuteronomy jocos Augusti in alios, et aliorum rursus in ipsum*, he says, *Cum audisset inter pueros, quos in Syria Herodes, rex Judeorum, intra bimatum jussit interfici, filium quoque ejus occisum, ait, Melius est Herodis PORCUM esse, quam FILIUM*. “When he heard that among those male infants about two years old, which Herod, the king of the Jews, ordered to be slain in Syria, one of his sons was also murdered, he said: ‘It is better to be Herod’s HOG than his SON.’” *Saturn. lib. ii. c. 4*. The *point* of this saying consists in this, that Herod, professing Judaism, his religion forbade his killing *swine*, or having any thing to do

with their flesh; therefore his *hog* would have been safe, where his *son* lost his life.

Verse 18. In Rama was there a voice heard] These words, quoted from ^{<B115>}**Jeremiah 31:15**, were originally spoken concerning the captivity of the ten tribes; but are here elegantly applied to the murder of the innocents at Bethlehem. As if he had said, Bethlehem at this time resembled Rama; for as Rachel might be said to weep over her children, which were slaughtered or gone into captivity; so in Bethlehem, the mothers lamented bitterly their children, because they were slain. The word **ἄρηνος**, *lamentation* is omitted by the Codd. *Vatic. Cypr.* one of *Selden's* MSS. the *Syriac, Arabic, Persic, Æthiopic*, all the *Itala*, (except that in the *Cod. Bezae*,) *Vulgate*, and *Saxon*, several of the fathers, and above all *Jeremiah*, ^{<B115>}**Jeremiah 31:15**, from which it is quoted. Griesbach leaves it in the text with a note of doubtfulness. This mourning may refer to cases far from uncommon in the *east*, where all the children have been massacred. The lamentations of a Hindoo mother for her child are loud and piercing; and it is almost impossible to conceive of a scene more truly heart-rending than that of a whole town of such mothers wailing over their massacred children. See **WARD**.

Verse 20. They are dead] Both Herod and Antipater his son; though some think the plural is here used for the singular, and that the death of Herod alone is here intended. But as Herod's son *Antipater* was at this time heir apparent to the throne, and he had cleared his way to it by procuring the death of both his elder brothers, he is probably alluded to here, as doubtless he entered into his father's designs. **THEY** are dead—Antipater was put to death by his father's command, five days before this execrable tyrant went to his own place. See Josephus, *Antiq.* xvi. 11; xvii. 9.

Verse 22. When he heard that Archelaus did reign] Herod, having put Antipater his eldest son to death, altered his will, and thus disposed of his dominions: he gave the tetrarchy of Galilee and Petrea to his son Antipas; the tetrarchy of Gaulonitis, Trachonitis, Batanea, and Paneadis, to his son Philip; and left the kingdom of Judea to his eldest remaining son, Archelaus. This son partook of the cruel and blood-thirsty disposition of his father: at one of the passovers, he caused three thousand of the people to be put to death in the temple and city. For his tyranny and cruelty, Augustus deprived him of the government, and banished him. His character

considered, Joseph, with great propriety, forbore to settle under his jurisdiction.

He turned aside into the parts of Galilee] Here *Antipas* governed, who is allowed to have been of a comparatively mild disposition: and, being intent on building two cities, *Julias* and *Tiberias*, he endeavoured, by a mild carriage and promises of considerable immunities, to entice people from other provinces to come and settle in them. He was besides in a state of enmity with his brother Archelaus: this was a most favourable circumstance to the holy family; and though God did not permit them to go to any of the new cities, yet they dwelt in peace, safety, and comfort at Nazareth.

Verse 23. That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets]

It is difficult to ascertain by what prophets this was spoken. The margin usually refers to ^{<07136>}**Judges 13:5**, where the angel, foretelling the birth of Samson, says, *No razor shall come upon his head; for the child shall be a NAZARITE (ryzn nezir) unto God from the womb.* The second passage usually referred to is ^{<23101>}**Isaiah 11:1**: *There shall come forth a rod from the stem of Jesse, and a BRANCH (rxn netser) shall grow out of his roots.* That this refers to Christ, there is no doubt. Jeremiah, ^{<22315>}**Jeremiah 23:5**, is supposed to speak in the same language—*I will raise unto David a righteous BRANCH*: but here the word is **j mx tsemach**, not **rxn netser**; and it is the same in the parallel place, ^{<38118>}**Zechariah 3:8; 6:12**; therefore, these two prophets cannot be referred to; but the passages in *Judges* and *Isaiah* may have been in the eye of the evangelist, as well as the whole *institution* relative to the *Nazarite* (ryzn nezir) delivered at large, Num. 6; where see the notes. As the *Nazarite* was the most *pure* and *perfect institution* under the law, it is possible that God intended to point out by it, not only the perfection of our Lord, but also the purity of his followers. And it is likely that, before St. Matthew wrote this Gospel, those afterwards called *Christians* bore the appellation of *Nazarites*, or *Nazoreans*, for so the Greek word, **ναζωραῖος**, should be written. Leaving the spiritual reference out of the question, the *Nazarene* or *Nazorean* here may mean simply an *inhabitant* or person of *Nazareth*; as *Galilean* does a *person* or *inhabitant of Galilee*. The evangelist evidently designed to state, that neither the sojourning at Nazareth, nor our Lord being called a *Nazarene*, were *fortuitous* events, but were wisely

determined and provided for in the providence of God; and therefore *foretold* by *inspired* men, or *fore-represented* by significant *institutions*.

But how shall we account for the manner in which St. Matthew and others apply this, and various other circumstances, to the fulfilment of ancient traditions? This question has greatly agitated divines and critics for more than a century. *Surenhusius*, Hebrew professor at Amsterdam, and editor of a very splendid and useful edition of the *Mishna*, in six vols. fol. published an express treatise on this subject, in 1713, full of deep research and sound criticism. He remarks great difference in the mode of *quoting* used in the Sacred Writings: as, *It hath been said-it is written-that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets-the Scripture says-see what is said-the Scripture foreseeing-he saith-is it not written?-the saying that is written, &c., &c.* With great pains and industry, he has collected *ten* rules out of the *Talmud* and the *rabbins*, to explain and justify all the quotations made from the Old Testament in the New.

RULE I. *Reading the words, not according to the regular vowel points, but to others substituted for them.* He thinks this is done by *Peter*, ~~<4182>~~ **Acts 3:22, 23**; by *Stephen*, ~~<4074>~~ **Acts 7:42**, &c.; and by *Paul*, ~~<6154>~~ **1 Corinthians 15:54**; ~~<70815>~~ **2 Corinthians 8:15**.

RULE II. *Changing the letters, as done by St. Paul*, ~~<5083>~~ **Romans 9:33**; ~~<4000>~~ **1 Corinthians 9:9**, &c.; ~~<8089>~~ **Hebrews 8:9.**, &c.; ~~<8105>~~ **Hebrews 10:5**.

RULE III. *Changing both letters and vowel points, as he supposes is done by St. Paul*, ~~<4134>~~ **Acts 13:40, 41**; ~~<70815>~~ **2 Corinthians 8:15**.

RULE IV. *Adding some letters, and retrenching others.*

RULE V. *Transposing words and letters.*

RULE VI. *Dividing one word into two.*

RULE VII. *Adding other words to make the sense more clear.*

RULE VIII. *Changing the original order of the words.*

RULE IX. *Changing the original order, and adding other words.*

RULE X. *Changing the original order, and adding and retrenching words, which he maintains is a method often used by St. Paul.*

Let it be observed, that although all these rules are used by the rabbins, yet, as far as they are employed by the sacred writers of the New Testament, they never, in any case, contradict what they quote from the Old, which cannot be said of the rabbins: they only *explain* what they quote, or *accommodate* the passage to the *facts* then in question. And who will venture to say that the Holy Spirit has not a right, in any subsequent period, to *explain* and *illustrate* his own meaning, by showing that it had a *greater extension* in the Divine mind than could have been then perceived by men? And has HE not a right to *add* to what he has formerly said, if it seem right in his own sight? Is not the whole of the New Testament, an *addition* to the *Old*, as the *apostolic* epistles are to the *narrative* of our Lord's *life* and *acts*, as given by the *evangelists*?

Gusset, Wolf, Rosenmuller, and others, give *four* rules, according to which, the phrase, *that it might be fulfilled*, may be applied in the New Testament.

RULE I. When the thing predicted is *literally* accomplished.

RULE II. When that is done, of which the Scripture has spoken, not in a *literal* sense, but in a *spiritual* sense.

RULE III. When a thing is done neither in a *literal* nor *spiritual* sense, according to the fact referred to in the Scripture; but is *similar* to that fact.

RULE IV. When that which has been mentioned in the Old Testament as formerly done, is accomplished in a *larger* and more *extensive sense* in the New Testament.

St. Matthew seems to quote according to all these rules; and it will be useful to the reader to keep them constantly in view. I may add here, that the writers of the *New Testament* seem often to differ from those of the *Old*, because they appear uniformly to quote from some copy of the *Septuagint* version; and most of their quotations agree verbally, and often even *literally*, with *one* or *other* of the *copies* of that *version* which *subsist to the present day*. Want of attention to the difference of *copies*, in the *Septuagint* version, has led some divines and critics into strange and even ridiculous mistakes, as they have taken that for THE SEPTUAGINT which existed in the printed copy before them; which sometimes happened not to be the most correct.

ON the birth-place of our Lord, a pious and sensible man has made the following observations:-

“At the first sight, it seems of little consequence to know the *place* of Christ’s nativity; for we should consider him as our Redeemer, whatever the circumstances might be which attended his mortal life. But, seeing it has pleased God to announce, beforehand, the place where the Saviour of the world should be born, it became necessary that it should happen precisely in that place; and that this should be one of the characteristics whereby Jesus Christ should be known to be the true Messiah.

“It is also a matter of small importance to us where we may live, provided we find genuine happiness. There is no place on earth, however poor and despicable, but may have better and more happy inhabitants than many of those are who dwell in the largest and most celebrated cities. Do we know a single place on the whole globe where the works of God do not appear under a thousand different forms, and where a person may not feel that blessed satisfaction which arises from a holy and Christian life? For an individual, that place is preferable to all others where he can *get* and *do* most good. For a number of people, that place is best where they can find the greatest number of wise and pious men. Every nation declines, in proportion as virtue and religion lose their influence on the minds of the inhabitants. The place where a young man first beheld the dawn and the beauty of renewed nature, and with most lively sensations of joy and gratitude adored his God, with all the veneration and love his heart was capable of; the place where a virtuous couple first met, and got acquainted; or where two friends gave each other the noblest proofs of their most tender affection; the village where one may have given, or seen, the most remarkable example of goodness, uprightness, and patience; such places, I say, must be dear to their hearts.

“Bethlehem was, according to this rule, notwithstanding its smallness, a most venerable place; seeing that there so many pious people had their abode, and that acts of peculiar piety had often been performed in it. First, the patriarch *Jacob* stopped some time in it, to erect a monument to his well-beloved *Rachel*. It was at Bethlehem that honest *Naomi*, and her modest daughter-in-law,

Ruth, gave such proofs of their faith and holiness; and in it *Boaz*, the generous benefactor, had his abode and his possessions. At Bethlehem the humble *Jesse* sojourned, the happy father of so many sons; the youngest of whom rose from the pastoral life to the throne of Israel. It was in this country that *David* formed the resolution of building a house for the Lord, and in which he showed himself the true shepherd and father of his subjects, when, at the sight of the destroying angel, whose sword spread consternation and death on all hands, he made intercession for his people. It was in Bethlehem that *Zerubbabel* the prince was born, this descendant of *David*, who was the type of that Ruler and Shepherd under whose empire Israel is one day to assemble, in order to enjoy uninterrupted happiness. Lastly, in this city the *Son of God* appeared; who, by his birth, laid the foundation of that salvation, which, as Redeemer, he was to purchase by his death for the whole world. Thus, in places which from their smallness are entitled to little notice, men sometimes spring, who become the benefactors of the human race. Often, an inconsiderable village has given birth to a man, who, by his wisdom, uprightness, and heroism, has been a blessing to whole kingdoms.”

Sturm's Reflections, translated by A. C. vol. iv.

ST. MATTHEW

CHAPTER 3.

John the Baptist begins to preach, 1. The subject of his preaching, 2, 3. Description of his clothing and food, 4. The success of his ministry, 5, 6. His exhortation to the Pharisees, 7-9. He denounces the judgments of God against the impenitent, 10. The design of his baptism, and that of Christ, 11, 12. He baptizes Christ in Jordan, 13-15; who is attested to be the Messiah by the Holy Spirit, and a voice from heaven, 16, 17.

NOTES ON CHAP. 3.

Verse 1. John the Baptist] John, surnamed The Baptist, because he required those to be baptized who professed to be contrite because of their sins, was the son of a priest named Zacharias, and his wife Elisabeth, and was born about A. M. 3999, and about six months before our blessed Lord. Of his almost miraculous conception and birth, we have a circumstantial account in the Gospel of Luke, chap. 1: to which, and the notes there, the reader is requested to refer. For his fidelity in reproving Herod for his incest with his brother Philip's wife, he was cast into prison, no doubt at the suggestion of Herodias, the profligate woman in question. He was at last beheaded at her instigation, and his head given as a present to *Salome*, her daughter, who, by her elegant dancing, had highly gratified Herod, the paramour of her incestuous mother. His ministry was short; for he appears to have been put to death in the 27th or 28th year of the Christian æra.

Came-preaching] κηρυσσων, proclaiming, as a *herald*, a matter of great and solemn importance to men; the subject not his own, nor of himself, but from that God from whom alone he had received his commission. See on the nature and importance of the *herald's* office, at the end of this chapter. κηρυσσειν, says Rosenmuller, *de iis dicitur, qui in PLATEIS, in CAMPIS, in ÆRE aperto, ut a multis audiantur, vocem tollunt, &c.* "The verb κηρυσσειν is applied to those who, in the *streets, fields, and open air*, lift up their voice, that they may be heard by many, and proclaim what has been committed to them by *regal or public authority*; as the KERUKES among the *Greeks*, and the PRECONES among the *Romans*."

The wilderness of Judea] That is, the *country* parts, as distinguished from the *city*; for in this sense the word *wilderness*, **rbdm midbar** or **twyrbdm midbarioth**, is used among the rabbins. John's manner of life gives no countenance to the eremite or hermit's life, so strongly recommended and applauded by the Roman Church.

Verse 2. Repent] **μετανοείτε**. This was the *matter* of the preaching. The verb **μετανοεω** is either compounded of **μετα**, *after*, and **νοειν** *to understand*, which signifies that, *after hearing* such preaching, the sinner is led to *understand*, that the way he has walked in was the way of misery, death, and hell. Or the word may be derived from **μετα** *after*, and **ανοια**, *madness*, which intimates that the whole life of a sinner is no other than a continued course of *madness* and *folly*: and if to live in a constant opposition to all the dictates of *true wisdom*; to wage war with his own best interests in time and eternity; to provoke and insult the living God; and, by habitual sin, to prepare himself only for a state of misery, be evidences of *insanity*, every sinner exhibits them plentifully. It was from this notion of the word, that the Latins termed repentance *resipiscentia*, *a growing wise again*, from *re* and *sapere*; or, according to Tertullian, *Resipiscentia*, quasi *receptio mentis ad se*, restoring the mind to itself: *Contra Marcion*, lib. ii. Repentance, then, implies that a measure of Divine *wisdom* is communicated to the sinner, and that he thereby becomes *wise* to salvation. That his *mind*, *purposes*, *opinions*, and *inclinations*, are *changed*; and that, in consequence, there is a total change in his conduct. It need scarcely be remarked, that, in this state, a man feels deep anguish of soul, because he has sinned against God, unfitted himself for heaven, and exposed his soul to hell. Hence, a true penitent has that sorrow, whereby he forsakes sin, not only because it has been ruinous to his own soul, but because it has been offensive to God.

The kingdom of heaven is at hand] Referring to the prophecy of Daniel, ^{<20713>}**Daniel 7:13,14**, where the reign of Christ among men is expressly foretold. This phrase, and *the kingdom of God*, mean the same thing, viz. the dispensation of infinite mercy, and manifestation of eternal truth, by Christ Jesus, producing the true knowledge of God, accompanied with that worship which is pure and holy, worthy of that God who is its institutor and its object. But why is this called a *kingdom*? Because it has its *laws*, all the moral precepts of the Gospel: its *subjects*, all who believe in Christ Jesus: and its *king*, the Sovereign of heaven and earth. N. B. Jesus Christ never saved a soul which he did not *govern*; nor is this Christ precious or

estimable to any man who does not feel a spirit of *subjection* to the Divine will.

But why is it called the *kingdom of HEAVEN*? Because God designed that his kingdom of grace here should resemble the kingdom of glory above. And hence our Lord teaches us to pray, Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. *The kingdom of heaven is not meat and drink*, says St. Paul, ^{<51417>}**Romans 14:17**; does not consist in the gratification of sensual passions, or worldly ambition; *but is righteousness, peace, and joy, in the Holy Ghost*. Now what can there be *more* than this in glory? *Righteousness*, without mixture of *sin*; *peace*, without *strife* or *contention*; *joy*, in the Holy Ghost, spiritual joy, without mixture of *misery*! And all this, it is possible, by the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, to enjoy here below. How then does *heaven* itself differ from this state? Answer. It makes the righteousness *eternal*, the peace *eternal*, and the joy *eternal*. This is the heaven of heavens! The phrase, *kingdom of heaven*, מַמְלַכְתּוֹת שָׁמַיִם *malcuth shamayim*, is frequently used by the rabbinical writers, and always means, the purity of the Divine worship, and the blessedness which a righteous man feels when employed in it.

It is farther added, This kingdom *is at hand*. The dispensation of the glorious Gospel was now about to be fully opened, and the Jews were to have the first offers of salvation. This kingdom is also at hand to us; and wherever *Christ crucified* is preached, there is salvation to be found. JESUS is proclaimed to *thee*, O man! as infinitely able and willing to save. Believe in his name-cast thy soul upon his atonement, and enter into rest!

Verse 3. The voice of one crying in the wilderness] Or, A voice of a crier in the wilderness. This is quoted from ^{<24018>}**Isaiah 40:3**, which clearly proves that John the Baptist was the person of whom the prophet spoke.

The idea is taken from the practice of eastern monarchs, who, whenever they entered upon an expedition, or took a journey through a desert country, sent *harbingers* before them, to prepare all things for their passage; and *pioneers* to *open the passes*, to *level the ways*, and to *remove all impediments*. The officers appointed to superintend such preparations were called by the *Latins*, *stratores*.

Diodorus's account of the march of *Semiramis* into *Media* and *Persia*, will give us a clear notion of the preparation of the way for a royal expedition. "In her march to *Ecbatane*, she came to the *Zarcean* mountain, which,

extending many furlongs, and being full of *craggy precipices* and *deep hollows*, could not be passed without making a great compass about. Being therefore desirous of leaving an everlasting memorial of herself, as well as shortening the way, she ordered the *precipices to be digged down*, and the *hollows to be filled up*; and, at a great expense, she made a shorter and more expeditious road, which, to this day, is called from her, *The road of Semiramis*. Afterwards she went into *Persia*, and all the other countries of Asia, subject to her dominion; and, wherever she went, she ordered the *mountains* and *precipices* to be *levelled*, raised *causeways* in the plain country, and, at a great expense, made the ways passable.” *Diod. Sic. lib. ii. and Bp. Lowth.*

The Jewish Church was that *desert country*, to which John was sent, to announce the coming of the Messiah. It was destitute at that time of all religious cultivation, and of the spirit and practice of piety; and John was sent to prepare the way of the Lord, by preaching the doctrine of *repentance*. The desert is therefore to be considered as affording a proper emblem of the rude state of the Jewish Church, which is the true *wilderness* meant by the prophet, and in which John was to prepare the way of the promised Messiah. The *awful importance* of the *matter*, and the *vehemence* of the *manner* of the Baptist’s preaching, probably acquired him the character of *the crier*, βωων.

For the meaning of the word JOHN, see the note on ~~41004~~ **Mark 1:4**.

Verse 4. His raiment of camel’s hair] A sort of *coarse* or *rough* covering, which, it appears, was common to the prophets, ~~381304~~ **Zechariah 13:4**. In such a garment we find *Elijah* clothed, ~~13008~~ **2 Kings 1:8**. And as *John* had been designed under the name of this prophet, ~~3006~~ **Malachi 4:5**, whose spirit and qualifications he was to possess, ~~40117~~ **Luke 1:17**, he took the same habit and lived in the same state of self-denial.

His meat was locusts] ακριδες. ακρις may either signify the *insect* called the *locust*, which still makes a part of the *food* in the land of Judea; or the *top of a plant*. Many eminent commentators are of the latter opinion; but the first is the most likely. The Saxon translator has [Anglo-Saxon] *grasshoppers*.

Wild honey.] Such as he got in the rocks and hollows of trees, and which abounded in Judea: see ~~09426~~ **1 Samuel 14:26**. It is most likely that the dried locusts, which are an article of food in Asiatic countries to the present day,

were fried in the honey, or *compounded* in some manner with it. The Gospel according to the Hebrews, as quoted by *Epiphanius*, seems to have taken a similar view of the subject, as it *adds* here to the text, **ου η γευσις ην του μαννα,ως εγκρις εν ελαιω**. *And its taste was like manna, as a sweet cake baked in oil.*

Verse 5. Jordan] Many of the best MSS. and versions, with ^{<41005>}**Mark 1:5**, add **ποταμω**, the *river* Jordan; but the definitive article, with which the word is generally accompanied, both in the Hebrew and the Greek, is, sufficient; and our article *the*, which should ever be used in the translation, expresses the force of the other.

Verse 6. Were baptized] In what form baptism was originally administered, has been deemed a subject worthy of serious dispute. Were the people *dipped* or *sprinkled*? for it is certain **βαπτω** and **βαπτιζω** mean both. They were all *dipped*, say some. Can any man suppose that it was possible for John to dip *all the inhabitants of Jerusalem and Judea, and of all the country round about the Jordan*? Were both men and women dipped, for certainly *both* came to his baptism? This could never have comported either with safety or with *decency*. Were they dipped in their *clothes*? This would have endangered their lives, if they had not with them *change* of raiment: and as such a baptism as John's (however administered) was, in several respects, a *new* thing in Judea, it is not at all likely that the people would come thus provided. But suppose these were *dipped*, which I think it would be impossible to prove, does it follow that, in all regions of the world, men and women must be *dipped*, in order to be evangelically baptized? In the eastern countries, *bathings* were frequent, because of the heat of the climate, it being there so necessary to *cleanliness* and *health*; but could our climate, or a more *northerly* one, admit of this with safety, for at least three-fourths of the year? We may rest assured that it could not. And may we not presume, that if John had opened his commission in the north of Great Britain, for many months of the year, he would have *dipped* neither man nor woman, unless he could have procured a tepid bath? Those who are *dipped* or *immersed* in water, in the name of the Holy Trinity, I believe to be evangelically baptized—those who are washed or sprinkled with water in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, I believe to be equally so; and the *repetition* of such a baptism I believe to be *profane*. Others have a right to believe the contrary, if they see good. After all, it is the *thing* signified, and not the *mode*, which is the essential part of the sacrament. See the note on ^{<41006>}**Mark 10:16**.

Confessing their sins.] ἐξομολογουμενοι, *earnestly acknowledging that their sins were their own.* And thus taking the whole blame upon themselves, and laying nothing to the charge of GOD or *man.* This is essential to true repentance; and, till a man take the *whole blame on himself,* he cannot feel the absolute need he has of casting his soul on the mercy of God, that he may be saved.

Verse 7. Pharisees] A very numerous sect among the Jews, who, in their *origin,* were, very probably, a pure and holy people. It is likely that they got the name of Pharisees, i.e. *Separatists,* (from **φρπ** *pharash,* to *separate,*) from their separating themselves from the pollution of the Jewish national worship; and hence, the word in the Anglo-saxon version is [Anglo-Saxon], *holy persons who stand apart,* or by themselves: but, in process of time, like all *religious sects and parties,* they *degenerated:* they lost the *spirit* of their *institution,* they ceased to recur to first principles, and had only the *form* of godliness, when Jesus Christ preached in Judea; for he bore witness, that they did make the *outside* of the cup and platter clean—they observed the rules of their institution, but the spirit was gone.

Sadducees] A sect who denied the existence of angels and spirits, consequently all *Divine influence and inspiration,* and also the resurrection of the dead. The Sadducees of that time were the *Materialists* and *Deists* of the Jewish nation. When the sect of the Pharisees arose cannot be distinctly ascertained; but it is supposed to have been some time after the Babylonish captivity. The sect of the Sadducees were the followers of one Sadok, a disciple of Antigonus Sochaeus, who flourished about three centuries before Christ. There was a third sect among the Jews, called the *Essenes* or *Essenians,* of whom I shall have occasion to speak on

<01912> **Matthew 19:12.**

Come to his baptism] The Æthiopic version adds the word *privately* here, the translator probably having read **λαθρα** in his copy, which gives a very remarkable turn to the passage. The multitudes, who had no worldly interest to support, no character to maintain by living in their usual way, came *publicly,* and *openly* acknowledged that they were SINNERS; and stood in need of mercy. The *others,* who endeavoured to secure their worldly interests by making a fair show in the flesh, are supposed to have come *privately,* that they might not be exposed to reproach; and that they might not lose their reputation for *wisdom* and *sanctity,* which their

consciences, under the preaching of the Baptist, told them they had no right to. See below.

O generation of vipers] **γεννηματα εχιδνων.** A terribly expressive speech. *A serpentine brood, from a serpentine stock.* As their fathers were, so were they, children of the wicked one. This is God's estimate of a SINNER, *whether he wade in wealth, or soar in fame.* The Jews were the seed of the serpent, who should bruise the heel of the woman's seed, and whose head should be bruised by him.

Who hath warned you] Or, *privately shown you.* **τις επεδιξεν-φροπο,** *under,* and **δεικνυμαι,** *to show.* Does not this seem to allude to the reading of the *Æthiopic* noticed above? They came *privately:* and John may be supposed to address them thus: "Did any person give you a *private* warning? No, you received your convictions under the *public* ministry of the word. The multitudes of the poor and wretched, who have been convinced of sin, have *publicly* acknowledged their crimes, and sought mercy-God will unmask *you-you* have deceived the people-you have deceived yourselves-you must *appear* just what you are; and, if you expect mercy from God, act like the penitent multitude, and bring forth FRUIT worthy of repentance. Do not begin to trifle with your convictions, by thinking, that because you are descendants of Abraham, therefore you are entitled to God's favour; God can, out of these stones (pointing probably to those scattered about in the desert, which he appears to have considered as an emblem of the Gentiles) raise up a faithful seed, who, though not natural descendants of your excellent patriarch, yet shall be his worthy children, as being partakers of his faith, and friends of his God." It should be added, that the Greek word also signifies *plain* or *ample information.* See on ^{<0167>}**Luke 6:47.**

The wrath to come?] The desolation which was about to fall on the Jewish nation for their wickedness, and threatened in the last words of their own Scriptures. See ^{<3005>}**Malachi 4:6.** *Lest I come and smite the earth xrah ta (et ha-arets, this very land) with a curse.* This wrath or curse was coming: they did not prevent it by turning to God, and receiving the Messiah, and therefore the wrath of God came upon them to the uttermost. Let him that readeth understand.

Verse 10. And now also the axe is laid] Or, *Even now the axe lieth.* As if he had said, There is not a moment to spare-God is about to cut off every

impenitent soul-you must therefore either turn to God *immediately*, or be utterly and finally ruined. It was customary with the prophets to represent the *kingdoms, nations, and individuals*, whose ruin they predicted, under the notion of *forests and trees*, doomed to be cut down. See ^{<4462>}**Jeremiah 46:22, 23**; ^{<2310>}**Ezekiel 31:3, 11, 12**. The Baptist follows the same metaphor: the *Jewish nation* is the *tree*, and the *Romans* the *axe*, which, by the just judgment of God, was speedily to cut it down. It has been well observed, that there is an allusion here to a woodman, who, having marked a tree for excision, lays his axe at its root, and strips off his outer garment, that he may wield his blows more powerfully, and that his work may be quickly performed. For about sixty years before the coming of Christ, this axe had been lying at the root of the Jewish tree, Judea having been made a province to the Roman empire, from the time that *Pompey* took the city of Jerusalem, during the contentions of the two brothers *Hyrchanus* and *Aristobulus*, which was about sixty-three years before the coming of Christ. See Joseph. Antiq. l. xiv. c. 1-5. But as the country might be still considered as in the hands of the Jews, though subject to the Romans, and God had waited on them now nearly ninety years from the above time, expecting them to bring forth fruit, and none was yet produced; he kept the Romans as an axe, lying at the root of this tree, who were ready to cut it down the moment God gave them the commission.

Verse 11. But he that cometh after me] Or, *I coming after me*, who is now on his way, and will shortly make his appearance. Jesus Christ began his ministry when he was thirty years of age, ^{<4123>}**Luke 3:23**, which was the age appointed by the law, ^{<0043>}**Numbers 4:3**. John the Baptist was born about *six months* before Christ; and, as he began his public ministry when thirty years of age, then this *coming after* refers to six months after the commencement of John's public preaching, at which time Christ entered upon his.

Whose shoes I am not worthy to bear] This saying is expressive of the most profound *humility* and *reverence*. To *put on, take off, and carry the shoes* of their masters, was, not only among the *Jews*, but also among the *Greeks* and *Romans*, the work of the vilest slaves. This is amply proved by *Kypke*, from *Arrian, Plutarch, and the Babylonian Talmud*.

With the Holy Ghost, and with fire] That the influences of the *Spirit of God* are here designed, needs but little proof. Christ's religion was to be a spiritual religion, and was to have its seat in the *heart*. Outward precepts,

however well they might *describe*, could not *produce* inward spirituality. This was the province of the Spirit of God, and of it *alone*; therefore he is represented here under the similitude of *fire*, because he was to *illuminate* and *invigorate* the soul, *penetrate* every part, and *assimilate* the whole to the image of the God of glory. See on ~~
~~**John 3:5**.

With **fire**] **καὶ πυρὶ**. This is wanting in E. S. (two MSS. one of the ninth, the other of the tenth century) eight others, and many *Evangelistaria*, and in some *versions* and printed *editions*; but it is found in the parallel place, ~~
~~**Luke 3:16**, and in the most authentic MSS. and versions. It was probably the different interpretations given of it by the fathers that caused some transcribers to leave it out of their copies.

The *baptism of fire* has been differently understood among the primitive fathers. Some say, it means the *tribulations*, *crosses*, and *afflictions*, which believers in Christ are called to pass through. Hence the author of the *Opus Imperfectum*, on Matthew, says, that there are *three* sorts of baptism, 1. that of *water*; 2. that of the *Holy Ghost*; and, 3. that of *tribulations* and *afflictions*, represented under the notion of *fire*. He observes farther, that our blessed Lord went through these *three* baptisms: 1. That of *water*, he received from the hands of *John*. 2. That of the *Holy Spirit* he received from the *Father*. And, 3. That of *fire*, he had in his contest with *Satan* in the desert. St. *Chrysostom* says; it means the *superabundant graces* of the *Spirit*. *Basil* and *Theophilus* explain it of the *fire of hell*. *Cyril*, *Jerome*, and others, understand by it the descent of the Holy Spirit, on the day of pentecost.

Hilary says, it means a fire that the righteous must pass through in the day of judgment, to purify them from such defilements as necessarily cleaved to them here, and with which they could not be admitted into glory.

Ambrose says, this baptism shall be administered at the gate of paradise, by John Baptist; and he thinks that this is what is meant by the *flaming sword*, ~~
~~**Genesis 3:24**.

Origen and *Lactantius* conceive it to be a *river of fire*, at the gate of heaven, something similar to the *Phlegethon* of the heathens; but they observe, that when the righteous come to pass over, the liquid flames shall divide, and give them a free passage: that Christ shall stand on the brink of it, and receive through the flames all those, and *none* but those, who have received in this world the *baptism of water* in his name: and that *this*

baptism is for those who, having received the faith of Christ, have not, in every respect, lived conformably to it; for, though they laid the good foundation, yet they built *hay, straw, and stubble* upon it, and this work of theirs must be tried, and destroyed by this *fire*. This, they think, is St. Paul's meaning, ^{<4181>}**1 Corinthians 3:13-15**. *If any man build on this foundation (viz. Jesus Christ) gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; every man's work shall be made manifest: and the fire shall try every man's work, of what sort it is.-If any man's work be burnt, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as BY FIRE.* From this fire, understood in this way, the fathers of the following ages, and the schoolmen, formed the famous and lucrative doctrine of PURGATORY. Some in the primitive Church thought that *fire* should be, in some way or other, joined to the *water* in baptism; and it is supposed that they administered it by causing the person to pass between two fires, or to leap through the flame; or by having a *torch, or lighted candle*, present. Thus have those called *Doctors of the Church* trifled. The exposition which I have given, I believe to be the only genuine one.

Verse 12. Whose fan is in his hand] The Romans are here termed God's *fan*, as, in ^{<41810>}**Matthew 3:10**, they were called his *axe*, and, in ^{<41217>}**Matthew 22:7**, they are termed his *troops* or *armies*.

The winnowing fan of the Hindoos is square, made of split bamboo; and the corn is winnowed by *waving* the *fan* backwards with *both hands*—"Whose *fan* is in *his hand*."

His floor] Does not this mean the *land of Judea*, which had been long, as it were, the *threshing-floor* of the Lord? God says, he will now, by the winnowing fan (viz. the Romans) *thoroughly cleanse this floor-the wheat*, those who believe in the Lord Jesus, *he will gather into his garner*, either take to heaven from the evil to come, or put in a place of safety, as he did the Christians, by sending them to *Pella*, in *Coelosyria*, previously to the destruction of *Jerusalem*. *But he will burn up the chaff*-the disobedient and rebellious Jews, who would not come unto Christ, that they might have life.

Unquenchable fire.] That cannot be extinguished by *man*.

Verse 14. John forbad him] Earnestly and pressingly opposed him: this is the proper import of the words *δὲκωλεῦεν αὐτόν*. I have observed that

δια, in composition, most *frequently*, if not *always*, strengthens the signification in classic authors. -Wakefield.

Verse 15. To fulfil all righteousness.] That is, *Every righteous ordinance*: so I think the words **πασαν δικαιοσυνην** should be translated; and so our common version renders a similar word, ^{<ED106>}**Luke 1:6**. The following passage, quoted from *Justin Martyr*, will doubtless appear a strong vindication of this translation. “Christ was circumcised, and observed all the other ordinances of the law of Moses, not with a view to his own justification; but to fulfil the dispensation committed to him by the Lord, the God and Creator of all things.”- Wakefield.

How remarkable are the following words of *Creeshna* (an *Incarnation* of the Supreme God, according to the *Hindoo* theology) related in the *Bhagvat Geeta*, p. 47. Addressing his disciple *Arjoon*, he says, “I myself, *Arjoon*, have not, in the three regions of the universe, any thing which is *necessary* for me to perform; nor any thing to obtain, which is not obtained; and yet *I live in the exercise of the moral duties*. If I were not vigilantly to attend to those duties, all men would presently follow my example. If I were not to perform the moral actions, this world would fail in their duties: I should be the cause of spurious births, and should drive the people from the right way. As the ignorant perform the duties of life from a *hope of reward*, so the *wise man*, out of *respect to the opinions and prejudices* of mankind, should perform the same without motives of interest. The wise man, by industriously performing all the duties of life, should induce the vulgar to attend to them.”

The Septuagint use this word often for the Hebrew **tpvm mishpat**, *judgment, appointment*. And in ^{<261819>}**Ezekiel 18:19, 21**, the person who **δικαιοσυνην και ελεος πεποιηκε**-*hath done righteousness and mercy*, is he who sacredly attended to the performance of all the religious *ordinances* mentioned in that chapter, and performed them in the genuine *spirit of mercy*. **δικαιωματα** is used 1Mac 1:13, 49; 2:21, and in ^{<8100>}**Hebrews 10:1, 10**, to denote religious ceremonies. Michaelis supposes that **qj l k kol chok**, all religious statutes or ordinances, were the words used in the Hebrew original of this Gospel.

But was this an *ordinance*? Undoubtedly: it was the *initiatory* ordinance of the Baptist’s dispensation. Now, as Christ had submitted to *circumcision*, which was the *initiatory* ordinance of the Mosaic dispensation, it was

necessary that he should submit to this, which was instituted by no less an authority, and was the *introduction* to his own dispensation of eternal mercy and truth. But it was necessary on another account: Our Lord represented the high priest, and was to be the high priest over the house of God:- now, as the high priest was initiated into his office by *washing* and *anointing*, so must Christ: and hence he was baptized, washed, and anointed by the Holy Ghost. Thus he fulfilled the righteous ordinance of his initiation into the office of high priest, and thus was prepared to make an atonement for the sins of mankind.

Then he suffered him.] In the *Opus Imperfectum*, quoted by Griesbach, there is the following addition, which, at least, may serve to show the opinion of its author: *Et Johannes quidem baptizavit illum in aqua, ille autem Johannem cum Spiritu.* “Then John baptized him with water, and he baptized John with the Spirit.”

Verse 16. The heavens were opened unto him] That is, to John the Baptist-*and he, John, saw the Spirit of God-lighting upon him*, i.e. Jesus. There has been some controversy about the manner and form in which the *Spirit of God* rendered itself visible on this occasion. St. Luke, ◀B12> **Luke 3:22**, says it was *in a bodily shape like to a dove*: and this *likeness* to a *dove* some refer to a *hovering motion*, like to that of a dove, and not to the *form* of the dove itself: but the terms of the text are too precise to admit of this far-fetched interpretation.

This passage affords no mean proof of the doctrine of the *Trinity*. That *three distinct persons* are here, represented, there can be no dispute. 1. The *person of Jesus Christ*, baptized by John in Jordan. 2. The *person of the Holy Ghost in a bodily shape*, (σωματικῶ εἶδει, ◀B12> **Luke 3:22**) like a dove. 3. The *person of the Father*; a *voice* came out of heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, &c. The voice is here represented as proceeding from a *different place* to that in which the *persons* of the *Son* and *Holy Spirit* were manifested; and merely, I think, more forcibly to mark this *Divine personality*.

Verse 17. In whom I am well pleased.] ἐν ᾧ εὐδίακησα *in whom I have delighted*-though it is supposed that the *past* tense is here used for the *present*: but **See Clarke’s note on** ◀D17B> **Matthew 17:5**”. By this *voice*, and *overshadowing of the Spirit*, the mission of the Lord Jesus was publicly and solemnly accredited; God intimating that he had before delighted in him: the law, in all its ordinances, having pointed him out, for

they could not be pleasing to God, but as they were fulfilled in, and showed forth, the Son of man, till, he came.

As the office of a *herald* is frequently alluded to in this chapter, and also in various other parts of the New Testament, I think it best to give a full account of it here, especially as the office of the ministers of the Gospel is represented by it. Such persons can best *apply* the different correspondences between their own and the *herald's* office.

At the Olympic and Isthmian games, heralds were persons of the utmost consequence and importance. Their office was:-

1. To proclaim from a scaffold, or elevated place, the *combat* that was to be entered on.
2. To summon the *Agonistæ*, or contenders, to make their appearance, and to announce their names.
3. To specify the *prize* for which they were to contend.
4. To *admonish* and *animate*, with appropriate discourses, the *athletæ*, or combatants.
5. To set before them, and explain, the *laws* of the *agones*, or contenders; that they might see that even the *conqueror* could not receive the *crown* or *prize*, unless he had strove *lawfully*.
6. After the conflict was ended, to bring the business before the *judges*, and, according to their determination, to *proclaim* the *victor*.
7. To deliver the *prize* to the *conqueror*, and to put the *crown* on his head, in the presence of the assembly.
8. They were the persons who convoked all *solemn* and *religious* assemblies, and brought forth, and often *slew*, the *sacrifices* offered on those occasions.
9. They frequently called the attention of the people, during the sacrifices, to the *subject* of *devotion*, with *hoc age!* **ΤΟΥΤΟ ΠΡΑΤΤΕ**: *mind what you are about, don't be idle; think of nothing else*. See PLUTARCH in *Coriolanus*.

The office, and nearly the word itself, was in use among the ancient Babylonians, as appears from ²⁷⁰⁴**Daniel 3:4**, where the Chaldee word

azwrk *caroza*, is rendered by the Septuagint κηρυξ *kerux*, and by our translation, very properly, *herald*. His business in the above place was to *call an assembly* of the people, for the purpose of *public worship*; to *describe the object and nature* of that worship, and the *punishment* to be inflicted on those who did not join in the worship, and properly assist in the solemnities of the occasion.

<2004> **Daniel 3:4**, is the only place in our *translation*, in which the word *herald* is used: but the word κηρυξ, used by St. Paul, <4007> **1 Timothy 2:7**; <5011> **2 Timothy 1:11**, and by St. Peter, <6005> **2 Peter 3:5**, is found in the Septuagint, <0443> **Genesis 41:43**, as well as in <2004> **Daniel 3:4**, and the verb κηρυσσω is found in different places of that version, and in a great number of places in the New Testament.

It is worthy of remark, that the office of the κηρυξ, *kerux*, or *herald*, must have been anciently known, and indeed established, among the *Egyptians*: for in <0443> **Genesis 41:43**, where an account is given of the promotion of Joseph to the *second* place in the kingdom, where we say, *And they cried before him, saying, Bow the knee*; the Septuagint has και εκηρυξεν εμπροσθεν αυτου κηρυξ` *And a HERALD made proclamation before him*. As the Septuagint translated this for Ptolemy Philadelphus, the Egyptian king, and were in Egypt when they translated the law, we may safely infer that the office was not only *known*, but in *use* among the Egyptians, being denominated in their language qrba *abrek*, which our translators, following the Vulgate, have rendered, *Bow the knee*; but which the Septuagint understood to be the title of an officer, who was the same among the Egyptians as the κηρυξ among the Greeks. This is a probable meaning of the word, which escaped me when I wrote the note on <0443> **Genesis 41:43**.

As every kind of office had some peculiar *badge*, or *ensign*, by which it was known among the ancients, so the heralds were known by generally carrying a *caduceus*. This was a rod with *two spread wings* at the top, and about which *two serpents* were *entwined*. The poets fabled that this rod was given by *Apollo*, the god of *wisdom* and *music*, to *Mercury*, the god of *eloquence*, and the *messenger* of the gods. To it wonderful properties are ascribed- especially that it produces *sleep*, and that it raises the *dead*. Who does not at once see, that the *caduceus* and its properties clearly point out the *office, honour, and influence* of the *herald*? As persons of *strong voice, and ready speech, and copious eloquence*, were always chosen for

heralds, they were represented as endowed with wisdom and eloquence from *above*. They *lulled men to sleep*, i.e. by their persuasive powers of speech, they *calmed* the turbulent dispositions of an inflamed populace, when proceeding to acts of *rebellion* and *anarchy*; or they *roused* the *dormant zeal* of the community, who, through long oppression, despairing of succour or relief, seemed careless about their best interests being stupidly resolved to sink under their burdens, and expect release only in death.

As to the *caduceus* itself, it was ever the emblem of peace among the ancients: the *rod* was the emblem of *power*; the *two serpents*, of *wisdom* and *prudence*; and the *two wings*, of *diligence* and *despatch*. The first idea of this wonderful *rod* seems to have been borrowed from the *rod of Moses*. See Clarke's note on "^{H17}Exodus 4:17".

The word κηρυξ *kerux*, or *herald*, here used, is evidently derived from κηρυσσειν, to *proclaim, call aloud*; and this from γηρυς, the *voice*; because these persons were never employed in any business, but such only as could not be transacted but by the *powers of speech*, and the energy of *ratiocination*.

For the derivation of the word *herald*, we must look to the *northern* languages. Its meaning in *Junius*, *Skinner*, and *Minshieu*, are various, but not essentially different; they all seem to point out different parts of the herald's office. 1. In the *Belgic*, *heer* signifies *army*. Hence *heer-alt*, a *senior officer*, or *general*, in the *army*. 2. Or *heer-held*, the *hero* of the *army*: he who had distinguished himself most in his country's behalf. 3. Or from the Gallo-teutonic *herr-haut*, the *high lord*, because their persons were so universally respected, as we have already seen. 4. Or from the simple Teutonic *herr-hold*, he who is *faithful* to his *lord*. And, lastly, according to *Minshieu*, from the verb *hier-holden*, *stop here*; because, in proclaiming peace, they *arrested* bloodshed and death, and prevented the farther *progress* of war.

These officers act an important part in all heroic history, and particularly in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, from which, as the subject is of so much importance, I shall make a few extracts.

I. Their character was *sacred*. Homer gives them the epithet of *divine*, θειοι.

-----**δολων, ευμηδεος υιος,**
κηρυκος θειοι. Iliad x. 315.

“Dolon, son of Eumedes, the *divine herald*.” They were also termed *inviolable*, **ασυλοι**; also, *great, admirable*, &c. In the first book of the Iliad, we have a proof of the respect paid to *heralds*, and the inviolability of their persons. Agamemnon commands the heralds, *Talthybius* and *Eurybates*, his faithful ministers, to go to the tent of *Achilles*, seize the young *Briseis*, and bring her to him. They reluctantly obey; but, when they come into the presence of *Achilles*, knowing the injustice of their master’s cause, they are afraid to announce their mission. Achilles, guessing their errand, thus addresses them:-

Χαιρετε, κηρυκες, Διος αγγελιοι, ηδε και ανδρων. κ. τ. λ.

“Hail, O ye heralds, messengers of God and of men! come forward. I cannot blame *you*-Agamemnon only is culpable, who has sent you for the beautiful *Briseis*. But come, O godlike *Patroclus*, bring forth the damsel, and deliver her to them, that they may lead her away,” &c., Iliad i. 334, &c.

II. Their functions were numerous; they might enter without danger into *besieged cities*, or even into *battles*.

III. They convoked the assemblies of the leaders, according to the orders they received from the general or king.

IV. They commanded *silence*, when kings were to address the assembly, (Iliad xviii. 503. **κηρυκες δ αρα λαων εσητυον.** See also Iliad ii. 280,) and delivered the sceptre into their hands, before they began their harangue.

Ην δ απα κηρυξ
Χερσι σκηπτρον εθηκε,σιωπησαι τ̄ εκελευσεν.
 Iliad xxiii. 567.

V. They were the carriers and executors of the royal commands, (Iliad i. 320,) and went in search of those who were summoned to appear, or whose presence was desired.

VI. They were entrusted with the most important missions; and accompanied princes in the most difficult circumstances. *Priam*, when he went to *Achilles*, took no person besides a herald with him. (Iliad xxiv.

674, 689.) When *Ulysses* sent two of his companions to treat with the *Lestrygons*, he sent a *herald* at the same time. (Odys. x. 102.)

Agamemnon, when he wished to soften Achilles, joined Eurybates and Hodius, his *heralds*, to the deputation of the princes. (Iliad ix. 170.)

VII. *Heralds* were employed to proclaim and publish whatever was to be known by the people. (Odys. xx. 276.)

VIII. They declared war and proclaimed peace. (Odys. xviii. 334.)

IX. They took part in all sacred ceremonies: they mingled the wine and water in the large bowls for the libations, which were made at the conclusion of treaties. They were the priests of the people in many cases; they led forth the victims, cut them in pieces, and divided them among those engaged in the sacrifices. (Odys. i. 109, &c.)

X. In Odyssey lib. xvii., a *herald* presents a piece of flesh to Telemachus, and pours out his wine.

XI. They sometimes waited on princes at table, and rendered them many other personal services. (Iliad ii. 280; Odys. i. 143, &c., 146, 153; ii. 6,38.) In the Iliad, lib. x. 3, *Eurybates* carries the clothes to Ulysses. And a *herald* of Alcinous conducts Demodocus, the singer, into the festive hall. (Odys. viii. 470.) Many others of their functions, services, and privileges, the reader may see, by consulting DAMM'S *Homeric Lexicon*, under κρω.

ST. MATTHEW

CHAPTER 4.

Jesus, in the wilderness, is tempted by Satan, 1-11. He goes into Galilee, 12; and Capernaum, 13. The prophecy which was thus fulfilled, 14-16. He begins to preach publicly, 17. Calls Simon Peter, and his brother Andrew, 18-20. Calls also James and John, the sons of Zebedee, 21, 22. Preaches and works miracles throughout Galilee, 23. Becomes famous in Syria, and is followed by multitudes from various quarters, among whom he works a great variety of miracles, 24, 25.

NOTES ON CHAP. 4.

Verse 1. Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit] This transaction appears to have taken place immediately after Christ's baptism; and this bringing up of Christ was through the influence of the Spirit of God; that Spirit which had rested upon him in his baptism.

To be tempted] The first act of the ministry of Jesus Christ was a combat with Satan. Does not this receive light from ^{<10817>}**Genesis 3:17.** *I will put enmity between the woman's seed and thy seed: it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.*

Verse 2. And when he had fasted forty days] It is remarkable that *Moses*, the great lawgiver of the Jews, previously to his receiving the law from God, fasted forty days in the mount; that *Elijah*, the chief of the prophets, fasted also forty days; and that Christ, the giver of the New Covenant, should act in the same way. Was not all this intended to show, that God's kingdom on earth was to be *spiritual* and *Divine*?-that it should not consist in meat and drink, but in righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost? ^{<51417>}**Romans 14:17.** Relative to the forty days' fast of Moses, there is a beautiful saying in the Talmudists. "Is it possible that any man can fast forty days and forty nights? To which Rabbi Meir answered, When thou takest up thy abode in any particular city, thou must live according to its customs. Moses ascended to heaven, where they neither eat nor drink therefore he became assimilated to them. We are accustomed to eat and drink; and, when angels descend to us, they eat and drink also." Moses, Elijah, and our blessed Lord could fast forty days and forty nights, because they were in communion with God, and living a heavenly life.

Verse 3. And when the tempter] This onset of Satan was made (speaking after the manner of men) *judiciously*: he came when Jesus, after having fasted forty days and forty nights, was hungry: now, as hunger naturally diminishes the strength of the body, the mind gets enfeebled, and becomes easily irritated; and if much *watching* and *prayer* be not employed, the uneasiness which is occasioned by a lack of food may soon produce *impatience*, and in this state of mind the tempter has great advantages. The following advice of an Arabian philosopher to his son is worthy of attention. “My son, never go out of the house in the morning, till thou hast eaten something: by so doing, thy mind will be more firm; and, shouldst thou be insulted by any person, thou wilt find thyself more disposed to suffer patiently: for hunger dries up and disorders the brain.” Bibliot. Orient. Suppl. p. 449. The state of our bodily health and worldly circumstances may afford our adversary many opportunities of doing us immense mischief. In such cases, the sin to which we are tempted may be justly termed, as in ^{<S120>}**Hebrews 12:1**, **την ευπεριστατον αμαρτιαν**, *the well circumstanced sin*, because all the circumstances of *time*, *place*, and *state* of *body* and *mind*, are favourable to it.

If thou be the Son of God] Or, *a son of God*, **υιος του θεου**. **υιος** is here, and in ^{<D048>}**Luke 4:3**, written without the article; and therefore should not be translated **THE Son**, as if it were **ο υιος**, which is a phrase that is applicable to Christ as *the Messiah*: but it is certain, whatever Satan might *suspect*, he did not fully *know* that the person he tempted was the *true Messiah*. Perhaps one grand object of his temptation was to find this out.

Command that these stones] The meaning of this temptation is: “Distrust the Divine providence and support, and make use of illicit means to supply thy necessities.”

Verse 4. But by (or, upon, επι) every word] **ρημα**, in Greek, answers to **rbd** *dabar* in Hebrew, which means not only *a word spoken*, but also *thing*, *purpose*, *appointment*, &c. Our Lord’s meaning seems to be this: God purposes the welfare of his creatures—all his appointments are calculated to promote this end. Some of them may appear to man to have a contrary tendency; but even *fasting* itself, when used in consequence of a Divine injunction, becomes a mean of supporting that life which it seems naturally calculated to impair or destroy.

Verse 5. Pinnacle of the temple] It is very likely that this was what was called the **στοα βασιλικη**, *the king's gallery*; which, as Josephus says, “deserves to be mentioned among the most magnificent things under the sun: for upon a stupendous depth of a valley, scarcely to be fathomed by the eye of him that stands above, Herod erected a gallery of a vast height, from the top of which if any looked down, he would grow dizzy, his eyes not being able to reach so vast a depth.”—*Ant.* l. xv. c. 14. See Dr. *Lightfoot* on this place.

Verse 6. Cast thyself down] Our Lord had repelled the first temptation by an act of confidence in the power and goodness of God; and now Satan solicits him to make trial of it. Through the unparalleled subtlety of Satan, the very means we make use of to repel one temptation may be used by him as the groundwork of another. This method he often uses, in order to confound us in our confidence.

He shall give his angels charge, &c.] This is a mutilated quotation of ^{<1911>}**Psalm 91:11**. The clause, *to keep thee in all thy ways*, Satan chose to leave out, as quite unsuitable to his design. That God has promised to protect and support his servants, admits of no dispute; but, as the path of *duty* is the way of *safety*, they are entitled to no good when they walk out of it.

In their hands they shall bear thee up] This quotation from ^{<1911>}**Psalm 91:11**, is a metaphor taken from a nurse's management of her child: in teaching it to walk, she guides it along plain ground; but, when stones or other obstacles occur, she lifts up the child, and carries it over them, and then sets it down to walk again. Thus she keeps it in all its ways, watching over, and guarding every step it takes. To this St. Paul seems also to allude, ^{<3107>}**1 Thessalonians 2:7**. *We were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children*. Thus the most merciful God deals with the children of men, ever guarding them by his eye, and defending them by his power.

Verse 7. Thou shalt not tempt] To expose myself to any danger naturally destructive, with the vain presumption that God will protect and defend me from the ruinous consequences of my imprudent conduct, is *to tempt God*.

Verse 8. An exceeding high mountain, and showeth him] If the words, *all the kingdoms of the world*, be taken in a literal sense, then this must have been a visionary representation, as the highest mountain on the face of

the globe could not suffice to make evident even one hemisphere of the earth, and the other must of necessity be in darkness.

But if we take the *world* to mean only the land of Judea, and some of the surrounding nations, as it appears sometimes to signify, (see on ^{<4111>}**Luke 2:1**.) then the mountain described by the Abbe *Mariti* (Travels through Cyprus, &c.) could have afforded the prospect in question. Speaking of it, he says, “Here we enjoyed the most beautiful prospect imaginable. This part of the mountain overlooks the *mountains of Arabia*, the *country of Gilead*, the *country of the Amorites*, the *plains of Moab*, the *plains of Jericho*, the *river Jordan*, and the *whole extent of the Dead Sea*. It was here that the devil said to the Son of God, *All these kingdoms will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.*” Probably St. Matthew, in the Hebrew original, wrote **xrah** *haarets*, which signifies the *world*, the *earth*, and often the *land of Judea* only. What renders this more probable is, that at this time Judea was divided into several kingdoms, or governments under the three sons of Herod the Great, viz. Archelaus, Antipas, and Philip; which are not only called ethnarchs and tetrarchs in the Gospels, but also βασιλεις, *kings*, and are said βασιλευειν, to *reign*, as Rosenmuller has properly remarked. See ^{<4112>}**Matthew 2:22; 14:9**.

Verse 9. If thou wilt fall down and worship me] As if he had said, “The whole of this land is now under my government; do me homage for it, and I will deliver it into thy hand.”

Verse 10. Get thee hence] Or, *behind me*, οπισω μου. This is added by a multitude of the best MSS., VERSIONS, and FATHERS. This temptation savouring of nothing but diabolical impudence, Jesus did not treat it as the others; but, with Divine authority, commanded the tempter to return to his own place.

In the course of this trial, it appears that our blessed Lord was tempted, 1st. To DISTRUST. *Command these stones to become bread.* 2dly. To PRESUMPTION. *Cast thyself down.* 3dly. To worldly AMBITION. *All these will I give.* 4thly. To IDOLATRY. *Fall down and worship me, or do me homage.* There is probably not a temptation of Satan, but is reducible to one or other of these four articles.

From the whole we may learn:

First. No man, howsoever holy, is exempted from temptation: for God manifested to the flesh was tempted by the devil.

Secondly. That the best way to foil the adversary, is by the *sword of the Spirit*, which is *the word of God*, ^{<40517>}**Ephesians 6:17**.

Thirdly. That to be tempted even to the greatest abominations (while a person *resists*) is not sin: for Christ was tempted to *worship* the DEVIL.

Fourthly. That there is no temptation which is from its own nature, or favouring circumstances, irresistible. God has promised to bruise even *Satan* under our feet.

As I wish to speak what I think most necessary on every subject, when I first meet it, and once for all, I would observe, first, That the *fear of being tempted* may become a most dangerous snare.

Secondly, That when God permits a temptation or trial to come he will give grace to bear or overcome it.

Thirdly, That our spiritual interests shall be always advanced, in proportion to our trials and faithful resistance.

Fourthly, That a more than ordinary measure of Divine consolation shall be the consequence of every victory.

Verse 11. Behold, angels came and ministered unto him.] That is, brought that food which was necessary to support nature.

The name given to Satan in the third verse is very emphatic, ο πειραζων, the *tempter*, or *trier*, from πειρω, to pierce through. To this import of the name there seems to be an allusion, ^{<40516>}**Ephesians 6:16**: *The fiery DARTS of the wicked one*. This is the precise idea of the word in ^{<6012>}**Deuteronomy 8:2**. *To humble thee, and to prove thee, TO KNOW WHAT WAS IN THY HEART: Ἐτcηλ linesteca, πειραση σε, LXX. that he might bore thee through*. The quality and goodness of many things are proved by *piercing* or *boing through*; for this shows what is in the heart. Perhaps nothing tends so much to discover *what we are*, as trials either from men or devils.

Shalt thou serve, or pay religious veneration, λαρρευσεις. This is Mr. Wakefield's translation, and I think cannot be mended. *λατρηια* comes from *λα*, *very much*, and *τρεω*, *I tremble*. When a sinner approaches the

presence of God, conscious of HIS infinite holiness and justice, and of his own vileness, he will then fully comprehend what this word means. See this religious reverence exemplified in the case of Moses, when in the presence of God; *I exceedingly fear, said he, and tremble,* ^{<8122>}**Hebrews 12:21**. And yet this fear of God is the beginning of wisdom. See the observations at the end of the chapter.

Verse 13. And leaving Nazareth] Or, *entirely leaving Nazareth,* και καταλιπων την ναζαρετ, from κατα, *intensive,* and δειπω, *I leave.* It seems that, from this time, our blessed Lord made *Capernaum* his ordinary place of residence; and utterly forsook Nazareth, because they had wholly rejected his word, and even attempted to take away his life. See ^{<102>}**Luke 4:29**.

Galilee was bounded by mount Lebanon on the north, by the river Jordan and the sea of Galilee on the east, by Chison on the south, and by the Mediterranean on the west.

Nazareth, a little city in the tribe of Zebulon, in lower Galilee, with Tabor on the east, and Ptolemais on the west. It is supposed that this city was the usual residence of our Lord for the first thirty years of his life. It was *here* he became incarnate, lived in subjection to Joseph and Mary, and from which he took the name of a *Nazorean*.

Capernaum, a city famous in the New Testament, but never mentioned in the Old. Probably it was one of those cities which the Jews built after their return from Babylon. It stood on the sea-coast of Galilee, on the borders of Zabulon and Nephthalim, as mentioned in the text. This was called his own city, ^{<1001>}**Matthew 9:1**, &c., and here, as a citizen, he paid the half shekel, ^{<1072>}**Matthew 17:24**. Among the Jews, if a man became a resident in any city for twelve months, he thereby became a citizen, and paid his proportion of dues and taxes. See *Lightfoot*. Capernaum is well known to have been the principal scene of our Lord's miracles during the three years of his public ministry.

Zabulon, the country of this tribe, in which Nazareth and Capernaum were situated, bordered on the lake of Gennesareth, stretching to the frontiers of Sidon, ^{<104913>}**Genesis 49:13**. Nephthalim was contiguous to it, and both were on the east side of Jordan, ^{<105934>}**Joshua 19:34**.

Verse 15. Galilee of the Gentiles] Or of the *nations*. So called, because it was inhabited by *Egyptians*, *Arabians*, and *Phoenicians*, according to the testimony of *Strabo* and others. The Hebrew **גוים** *goyim*, and the Greek **εθνον**, signify *nations*; and, in the Old and New Testaments, mean those people who were not descendants of any of the *twelve* tribes. The word *Gentiles*, from *gens*, a *nation*, signifies the same. It is worthy of remark, that it was a regular tradition among the ancient Jews, that the Messiah should begin his ministry in Galilee. See the proofs in *Schoetgen*.

Verse 16. The people which sat in darkness] This is quoted from **Isaiah 9:2**, where, instead of *sitting*, the prophet used the word *walked*. The evangelist might on purpose *change* the term, to point out the *increased* misery of the state of these persons. *Sitting in darkness* expresses a greater degree of intellectual blindness, than *walking in darkness* does. In the time of Christ's appearing, the people were in a much worse state than in the time of the prophet, which was nearly 700 years before; as, during all this period, they were growing more ignorant and sinful.

The region and shadow of death] These words are amazingly descriptive. *A region of death-DEATH'S country*, where, in a peculiar manner, *Death* lived, reigned, and triumphed, subjecting all the people to his sway.

Shadow of death] **σκια θανατου**, used only here and in **Luke 1:79**, but often in the Old Covenant, where the Hebrew is **צל מות** *tsal maveth*. It is not easy to enter fully into the ideal meaning of this term. As in the former clause, *death* is *personified*, so here. A *shadow* is that darkness cast upon a place by a body raised between it and the light or sun. *Death* is here represented as standing between the land above mentioned, and the *light of life*, or *Sun of righteousness*; in consequence of which, all the inhabitants were, involved in a continual cloud of intellectual darkness, misery, and sin. The heavenly sun was continually *eclipsed* to them, till this glorious time, when Jesus Christ, the *true light*, shone forth in the beauty of holiness and truth. Christ began his ministry in Galilee, and frequented this uncultivated place more than he did Jerusalem and other parts of Judea: here his preaching was peculiarly needful; and by this was the prophecy fulfilled.

Verse 17. Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent] See on **Matthew 3:1, 2**. Every preacher commissioned by God to proclaim salvation to a lost world, begins his work with preaching the doctrine of

repentance. This was the case with all the *prophets*, *John the Baptist*, *Jesus Christ*, all the *apostles*, and all their genuine *successors* in the Christian ministry. The reasons are evident in the notes already referred to; and for the explanation of the word *κηρυσσειν*, *preaching* or *proclaiming as a herald*, see at the end of chap. 3.

Verse 18. Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother] Why did not Jesus Christ call some of the eminent *Scribes* or *Pharisees* to publish his Gospel, and not poor unlearned fishermen, without credit or authority? Because it was the *kingdom of heaven* they were to preach, and their teaching must come from *above*: besides, the conversion of sinners, though it be effected instrumentally by the preaching of the Gospel, yet the grand agent in it is the *Spirit of God*. As the *instruments* were comparatively *mean*, and, the work which was accomplished by them was *grand* and *glorious*, the excellency of the power at once appeared to be of *GOD*, and not of *man*; and thus the glory, due alone to *his* name, was secured, and the great Operator of all good had the deserved praise. *Seminaries of learning*, in the order of God's providence and grace, have great and important uses; and, in reference to such uses, they should be treated with great respect: but to make preachers of the Gospel is a matter to which they are utterly inadequate; it is a, prerogative that God never did, and never will, delegate to man.

Where the seed of the kingdom of God is sowed, and a dispensation of the Gospel is committed to a man, a good education may be of great and general use: but it no more follows, because a man has had a good education, that therefore he is qualified to preach the Gospel, than it does, that because he has not had that, therefore he is unqualified; for there may be much ignorance of Divine things where there is much human learning; and a man may be well taught in the things of God, and be able to teach others, who has not had the advantages of a liberal education.

Men-made ministers have almost ruined the heritage of God. To prevent this, our Church requires that a man be *inwardly moved* to take upon himself this ministry, before he can be ordained to it. And he who cannot say, that he *trusts* (has rational and Scriptural conviction) *that he is moved by the Holy Ghost to take upon himself this office*, is an intruder into the heritage of God, and his ordination, *ipso facto*, vitiated and of none effect. See the truly apostolic *Ordination Service* of the Church of England.

Fishers.] Persons employed in a lawful and profitable avocation, and faithfully discharging their duty in it. It was a tradition of the elders, that one of Joshua's *ten* precepts was, that all men should have an equal right to spread their nets and fish in the sea of Tiberias, or Galilee. The persons mentioned here were doubtless men of pure morals; for the minister of God should have a good report from them that are without.

Verse 19. Follow me] *Come after me*, **δευτε οπισω μου**. Receive my doctrines, imitate me in my conduct-in every respect be my disciples. We may observe that most of the calls of God to man are expressed in a few solemn words, which alarm, the conscience, and deeply impress the heart.

I will make you fishers of men.] Ezekiel ^{<26708>} **Ezekiel 47:8-10**, casts much light on this place; and to this prophet our Lord probably alludes. To follow Christ, and be admitted into a partnership of his ministry, is a great honour; but those only who are by *himself* fitted for it, God calls. Miserable are those who do not wait for this call-who presume to take the name of *fishers of men*, and know not how to cast the net of the Divine word, because not brought to an acquaintance with the saving power of the God who bought them. Such persons, having only their *secular* interest in view, study not to catch men, but to catch money: and though, for charity's sake, it may be said of a pastor of this spirit, he does not enter the sheepfold as a *thief*, yet he certainly lives as a *hireling*. See *Quesnel*.

*Some teach to work, but have no hands to row;
Some will be eyes, but have no light to see;
Some will be guides, but have no feet to go;
Some deaf, yet ears, some dumb, yet tongues will be;
Dumb, deaf, lame, blind, and maimed, yet fishers all!
Fit for no use but store an hospital.*
Fletcher's Piscatory Eclogues. Ec. iv. 5, 18.

Following a person, in the Jewish phrase, signifies being his *disciple* or *scholar*. See a similar mode of speech, ^{<2369>} **2 Kings 6:19**.

Verse 20. They straightway left their nets] A change, as far as it respected secular things, every way to their disadvantage. The proud and the profane may exult and say, "Such preachers as these cannot be much injured by their sacrifices of *secular* property-they have nothing but *nets*, &c., to leave." Let such carpens at the institution of Christ know, that he who has *nothing* but a *net*, and leaves *that* for the sake of doing good to the souls of men, leaves his ALL: besides, he lived comfortably by his net

before; but, in becoming the servant of all for Christ's sake, he often exposes himself to the want of even a morsel of bread. See on

~~<01927>~~ **Matthew 19:27.**

Verse 22. Left the ship and their father] By the *ship*, **το πλοιον**, we are to understand the mere fishing-boat, used for extending their nets in the water and bringing the hawser or rope of the farther end to shore, by which the net was pulled to land. But why should these be called to leave their employment and their father, probably now aged? To this I answer, that to be obedient to, provide for, and comfort our parents, is the highest duty we owe or can discharge, except that to God. But, when God calls to the work of the ministry, father and mother and all must be left. Were we necessary to their comfort and support before? Then God, if he call us into another work or state, will take care to supply to them our lack of service some other way; and, if this be not done, it is a proof we have mistaken our call. Again, were our parents necessary to us, and in leaving them for the sake of the Gospel, or in obedience to a Divine command, do we deprive ourselves of the comforts of life? No matter: we should prefer the honour of serving the Most High, even in *poverty* and *humility*, to all the comforts of a father's house. But what an honour was the vocation of James and John, to old Zebedee their father! His sons are called to be heralds of the God of heaven! Allowing him to have been a pious man, this must have given him unutterable delight.

Verse 23. Teaching in their synagogues] *Synagogue*, **συναγωγη**, from **συν**, *together*, and **αγω**, *I bring*, a public assembly of persons, or the *place* where such persons publicly assembled. *Synagogues*, among the Jews, were not probably older than the return from the Babylonish captivity. They were erected not only in cities and towns, but in the country, and especially by rivers, that they might have water for the convenience of their frequent washings.

Not less than ten persons of respectability composed a synagogue; as the rabbins supposed that this number of persons, of independent property, and well skilled in the law, were necessary to conduct the affairs of the place, and keep up the Divine worship. See *Lightfoot*. Therefore, where this number could not be found, no synagogue was built; but there might be many synagogues in one city or town, provided it were populous. Jerusalem is said to have contained 480. This need not be wondered at,

when it is considered that every Jew was obliged to worship God in public, either in a *synagogue* or in the *temple*.

The chief things belonging to a synagogue were:

1st. The *ark* or *chest*, made after the mode of the ark of the covenant, containing the *Pentateuch*.

2dly. The *pulpit* and *desk*, in the middle of the synagogue, on which he stood who read or expounded the law.

3dly. The *seats* or *pews* for the men below, and the *galleries* for the women above.

4thly. The *lamps* to give light in the evening service, and at the feast of the dedication. And,

5thly. Apartments for the utensils and alms-chests.

The synagogue was governed by a council or assembly, over whom was a president, called in the Gospels, *the ruler of the synagogue*. These are sometimes called *chiefs of the Jews*, the *rulers*, the *priests* or *elders*, the *governors*, the *overseers*, the *fathers of the synagogue*. Service was performed in them three times a day—*morning*, *afternoon*, and *night*. Synagogue, among the Jews, had often the same meaning as *congregation* among us, or place of judicature, see ~~SM~~ **James 2:2**.

Preaching the Gospel of the kingdom] Or, *proclaiming the glad tidings of the kingdom*. See the preceding notes. Behold here the perfect pattern of an evangelical preacher: 1. He goes about seeking sinners on every side, that he may show them the way to heaven. 2. He proclaims the glad tidings of the kingdom, with a freedom worthy of the King whom he serves. 3. He makes his reputation and the confidence of the people subservient not to his own interest, but to the salvation of souls. 4. To his preaching he joins, as far as he has ability, all works of mercy, and temporal assistance to the bodies of men. 5. He takes care to inform men that diseases, and all kinds of temporal evils, are the effects of sin, and that their hatred to iniquity should increase in proportion to the evils they endure through it. 6. And that nothing but the *power of God* can save them from *sin* and its *consequences*.

For *glad tidings*, or *Gospel*, see chap. 1. title. *Proclaiming*, see <OR1> **Matthew 3:1**, and end; and for the meaning of *kingdom*, see <OR2> **Matthew 3:2**.

All manner of sickness, and all manner of disease] There is a difference between *νοσος*, translated here *sickness*, and *μαλακια*, translated *disease*. The first is thus defined: *νοσος, την χρονιαν κακοπαθειαν*, a disease of some standing, a *chronic* disorder.

Infirmity, *μαλακια την προσκαιρον ανωμαλιαν τοι σωματος*, a *temporary* disorder of the body. *Theophylact*. This is a proper distinction, and is necessary to be observed.

Verse 24. Sick people] *τους, κακος εχοντας*, *those who felt ill*—were afflicted with any species of malady.

And torments] *βασανους*, from *βασανιζω*, to *examine by torture*, such as *cholics*, *gouts*, and *rheumatisms*, which racked every joint.

Possessed with devils] *Dæmoniacs*. Persons possessed by evil spirits. This is certainly the plain obvious meaning of *dæmoniac* in the Gospels.

Many eminent men think that the sacred writers accommodated themselves to the unfounded prejudices of the common people, in attributing certain diseases to the influence of evil spirits, which were merely the effects of natural causes: but that this explanation can never comport with the accounts given of these persons shall be proved as the places occur.

Our common version, which renders the word, *those possessed by devils*, is not strictly correct; as the word *devil*, *διαβολος*, is not found in the plural in any part of the Sacred Writings, when speaking of evil spirits: for though there are multitudes of *dæmons*, <OR3> **Mark 5:9**, yet it appears there is but *one* DEVIL, who seems to be *supreme*, or *head*, over all the rest. *διαβολος* signifies an *accuser* or *slanderer*, <SOB1> **1 Timothy 3:11**; <SOB2> **2 Timothy 3:3**; <SOB3> **Titus 2:3**. Perhaps Satan was called so, 1st. because he *accused* or *slandered* God in paradise, as averse from the increase of man's knowledge and happiness, <OR5> **Genesis 3:5**; <SOB4> **John 8:44**; and 2dly. because he is the *accuser of men*, <SOB5> **Revelation 12:9, 10**. See also **Clarke on “<SOB6> Job 1:2”**. The word comes from *δια*, *through*, and *βαλλειν*, to *cast*, or *shoot*, because of the influence of his evil suggestions; compared, <SOB6> **Ephesians 6:16**, to *fiery darts*; and thus it is nearly of the

same meaning with ο *πειραζων*, he who *pierces through*. See on ◀0048▶ **Matthew 4:3**.

Lunatic] Persons afflicted with *epileptic* or other disorders, which are always known to have a singular increase at the *change* and *full* of the *moon*. This undoubtedly proceeds from the superadded *attractive* influence of the *sun* and *moon* upon the earth's atmosphere, as, in the periods mentioned above, these two luminaries are both in *conjunction*; and their united attractive power being exerted on the earth at the same time, not only causes the *flux* and *reflux* of the ocean, but occasions a variety of important *changes* in the bodies of infirm persons, of animals in general, but more particularly in those who are more sensible of these variations. And is this any wonder, when it is well known, that a very slight alteration in the *atmosphere* causes the most uncomfortable sensations to a number of invalids! But sometimes even these diseases were caused by demons. See on ◀0086▶ **Matthew 8:16, 34**, and ◀0075▶ **Matthew 17:15**.

Palsy] Palsy is defined, *a sudden loss of tone and vital power in a certain part of the human body*. This may affect a limb, the whole side, the tongue, or the whole body. This disorder is in general *incurable*, except by the *miraculous* power of God, unless in its slighter stages.

He healed them.] Either with a word or a touch; and thus proved that all nature was under his control.

Verse 25. This verse is immediately connected with the fifth chapter, and should not be separated from it.

Great multitudes] This, even according to the Jews, was one proof of the days of the Messiah: for they acknowledged that in his time there should be a great famine of the word of God; and thus they understood Amos, ◀0081▶ **Amos 8:11**. *Behold, the days come-that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread-but of hearing the words of the Lord*. And as the Messiah was to dispense this word, the bread of life, hence they believed that vast multitudes from all parts should be gathered together to him. See *Schoettgenius* on this place.

Decapolis] A small country, situated between Syria and Galilee of the nations. It was called *Decapolis*, *δεκαπολις*, from *δεκα*, *ten*, and *πολις*, *a city*, because it contained only *ten cities*; the metropolis, and most ancient of which, was *Damascus*.

From **beyond Jordan.**] Or, *from the side of Jordan*. Probably this was the country which was occupied anciently by the two tribes of *Reuben* and *Gad*, and the half tribe of *Manasseh*; for the country of Decapolis lay on both sides of the river Jordan. See ^{<0433B>}Numbers 32:5, 33.

THE account of our Lord's temptation, as given by the evangelist, is acknowledged on all hands to be extremely difficult. *Two* modes of interpretation have been generally resorted to, in order to make the whole plain and intelligible: viz. the *literal* and *allegorical*. In all cases, where it can possibly apply, I prefer the first: the latter should never be used, unless obviously indicated in the text itself; or so imperiously necessary that no other mode of interpretation can possibly apply. In the preceding observations, I have taken up the subject in a *literal* point of view; and it is hoped that most of the difficulties in the relation have been removed, or obviated, by this plan. An ingenious correspondent has favoured me with some observations on the subject, which have much more than the merit of novelty to recommend them. I shall give an abstract of some of the most striking; and leave the whole to the reader's farther consideration.

The thoughts in this communication proceed on this ground: "These temptations were addressed to Christ as a *public person*, and respected his conduct in the execution of his ministry; and are reported to his Church as a forcible and practical instruction, concerning the proper method of promoting the kingdom of God upon earth. They are warnings against those Satanic illusions, by which the servants of Christ are liable to be hindered in their great work, and even stopped in the prosecution of it.

"As our Lord had, at his baptism, been declared to be the SON of God, i.e. the promised Messiah, this was probably well known to Satan, who did not mean to insinuate any thing to the contrary, when he endeavoured to engage him to put forth an act of that power which he possessed as the Messiah. The mysterious *union* of the *Divine* with the *human* nature, in our Lord's state of humiliation, Satan might think possible to be broken; and therefore endeavoured, in the first temptation, *Command these stones to be made bread*, to induce our Lord to put forth a *separate, independent* act of power; which our Lord repelled, by showing his intimate union with the Divine will, which he was come to *fulfil-Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God*. Thus showing, as he did on

another occasion, that it was his *meat and drink* to do the *will* of his Father.

“2. The ground of the temptation was then changed; and the *fulfilment of the Divine will*, in the completion of a prophetic promise, was made the ostensible object of the next attack. *Cast thyself down-for it is WRITTEN, He will give his angels charge concerning thee, and in their hands shall they bear thee up, &c.* This our Lord repelled with-*Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God*-as Satan had designed to induce him to seek this *public* miraculous confirmation of God’s peculiar care over him, as the promised Messiah, of his being which, according to the hypothesis above, Satan had no doubt. Moses, being appointed to a great and important work, *needed* miraculous signs to strengthen his faith; but the sacred humanity of our blessed Lord needed them not; nor did his wisdom judge that such a sign from heaven was essential to the instruction of the people.

“3. The last temptation was the most subtle and the most powerful-*All these will I give unto thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. To inherit all nations*, had been repeatedly declared to be the birthright of the Messiah. His right to *universal empire* could not be controverted; nor could Satan presume to make the investiture. What, then, was his purpose? Satan had hitherto opposed, and that with considerable success, the kingdom of God upon earth; and what he appears to propose here, were *terms of peace*, and an *honourable retreat*. The *worship* which he exacted was an act of *homage*, in return for his *cession* of that *ascendancy* which, through the sin of man, he had obtained in the world. Having long established his rule among men, it was not at first to be expected that he would resign it without a *combat*: but the purpose of this last temptation appears to be an offer to decline any farther contest; and, yet more, if his terms were accepted, apparently to engage his influence to promote the kingdom of the Messiah. And as the condition of this proposed alliance, he required, not *Divine worship*, but such an *act of homage* as implied *amity* and *obligation*; and if this construction be allowed, he may be supposed to have enforced the necessity of the measure, by every suggestion of the *consequences of a refusal*. The *sufferings* which would inevitably result from a provoked opposition, which would render

the victory, though certain to Christ himself, dearly bought; added to which, the conflict he was prepared to carry on through succeeding ages, in which all his subtlety and powers should be employed to hinder the progress of Christ's cause in the earth, and that with a considerable degree of *anticipated* success. Here the devil seems to propose to make over to Christ the power and influence he possessed in this world, on *condition* that he would enter into terms of peace with him; and the inducement offered was, that thereby our Lord should *escape those sufferings*, both in his *own person*, and in that of his adherents, which a provoked contest would ensure. And we may suppose that a similar temptation lies hid in the desires excited even in some of the servants of Christ, who may feel themselves often induced to employ *worldly* influence and power for the promotion of his kingdom, even though, in so doing, an apparent communion of Christ and Belial is the result: for it will be found that neither worldly riches, nor power, can be employed in the service of Christ, till, like the spoils taken in war, ^{<0512>}**Deuteronomy 31:21-23**, they have passed through the fire and water, as, without a Divine purification, they are not fit to be employed in the service of God and his Church.

“Hence we may conclude, that the first temptation had for its professed object, 1st, our Lord's *personal relief and comfort*, through the inducement of performing a *separate and independent* act of power.-The second temptation professed to have in view his *public acknowledgment by the people*, as the MESSIAH: for, should they see him work such a miracle as throwing himself down from the pinnacle of the temple without receiving any hurt, they would be led instantly to acknowledge his Divine mission; and the *evil* of this temptation may be explained, as seeking to secure the success of his mission by other means than those which, as the Messiah, he had received from the Father. Compare ^{<0514>}**John 14:31**. The *third* temptation was a subtle attempt to induce Christ to acknowledge Satan as an *ally*, in the establishment of his kingdom.” E. M. B.

The above is the substance of the ingenious theory of my correspondent, which may be considered as a *third* mode of interpretation, partaking equally of the *allegoric* and *literal*. I still, however, think, that the nearer we keep to the *letter* in all such difficult cases, the more tenable is our

ground, especially where the subject itself does not obviously require the allegorical mode of interpretation. Among many things worthy of remark in the preceding theory the following deserves most attention: That Satan is ever ready to tempt the governors and ministers of the Christian Church to suppose that *worldly means, human policy, secular interest and influence*, are all essentially necessary for the support and extension of that *kingdom which is not of this world!* Such persons can never long preserve *hallowed hands*: they bring the *world* into the *Church*; endeavour to sanctify the *bad means* they use, by the *good end* they aim at; and often, in the prosecution of their object, by means which are not of God's devising, are driven into straits and difficulties, and to extricate themselves, tell lies for God's sake. This human policy is from beneath-God will neither *sanction* nor *bless it*. It has been the bane of true religion in all ages of the world; and, in every country where the cause of Christianity has been established, such schemers and plotters in the Church of God are as dangerous to its interests as a plague is to the health of society. The governors and ministers of the Christian Church should keep themselves pure, and ever do God's work in *his own way*. If the *slothful* servant should be cast out of the vineyard, he that *corrupts the good seed* of the Divine field, or sows tares among the wheat, should be considered as an enemy to righteousness, and be expelled from the sacred pale as one who closes in with the temptation-"All these things (the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them) will I give unto THEE, if thou wilt fall down and *worship* ME." However necessary the Church may be to the state, and the state to the Church, as some people argue, yet the latter is never in so much danger as when the former smiles upon it.

ST. MATTHEW

CHAPTER 5.

Christ begins his sermon on the mount, 1, 2. The beatitudes, 3-12. The disciples the salt of the earth, and light of the world, 13-16. Christ is not come to destroy, but confirm and fulfil, the Law and the Prophets, 17-19. Of the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, 20. Interpretation of the precepts relative to murder, anger, and injurious speaking, 21, 22. Of reconciliation, 23-26. Of impure acts and propensities, and the necessity of mortification, 27-30. Of divorce, 31, 32. Of oaths and profane swearing, 33-37. Of bearing injuries and persecution, 38-41. Of borrowing and lending, 42. Of love and hatred, 43-46. Of civil respect, 47. Christ's disciples must resemble their heavenly Father, 48.

NOTES ON CHAP. 5

Verse 1. And seeing the multitudes] Τους οχλους, *these multitudes*, viz. those mentioned in the preceding verse, which should make the first verse of this chapter.

He went up into a mountain] That he might have the greater advantage of speaking, so as to be heard by that great concourse of people which followed him. It is very probable that nothing more is meant here than a small hill or eminence. Had he been on a high mountain they could not have heard; and, had he been at a great distance, he would not have *sat down*. See Clarke's note on "~~40514~~ Matthew 5:14".

And when he was set] The usual posture of public teachers among the Jews, and among many other people. Hence *sitting* was a synonymous term for *teaching* among the rabbins.

His disciples] The word μαθητης signifies literally a *scholar*. Those who originally followed Christ, considered him in the light of a *Divine teacher*; and conscious of *their* ignorance, and the importance of *his* teaching, they put themselves under his tuition, that they might be instructed in heavenly things. Having been taught the mysteries of the kingdom of God, they became closely attached to their Divine Master, imitating his life and manners; and recommending his salvation to all the circle of their acquaintance. This is *still* the characteristic of a genuine disciple of Christ.

Verse 3. Blessed are the poor in spirit, &c.] Or, *happy*, μακαριοι from μα or μη, *not*, and κηρ, *fate*, or *death*: intimating, that such persons were endued with *immortality*, and consequently were not liable to the caprices of *fate*. Homer, Iliad i, 330, calls the supreme gods, θεων μακαρων, *the ever happy and IMMORTAL gods*, and opposes them to θνητων ανθρωπων, *mortal men*.

τω δ αυτω μαρτυροι εστων
Προς τε θεων μακαρων, προς τε θνητων ανθρωπων.

“Be ye witnesses before the immortal gods, and before mortal men.” From this definition we may learn, that the person whom Christ terms happy is one who is not under the influence of *fate* or *chance*, but is governed by an all-wise *providence*, having every step directed to the attainment of *immortal glory*, being transformed by the *power* into the *likeness* of the ever-blessed God. Though some of the persons, whose states are mentioned in these verses, cannot be said to be as yet *blessed* or *happy*, in being made partakers of the Divine nature; yet they are termed *happy* by our Lord, because they are on the straight way to this blessedness.

Taken in this light the meaning is similar to that expressed by the poet when describing a *happy man*.

*FELIX, qui potuit rerum cognoscere causas:
Atque metus omnes et inexorabile FATUM
Subjecit pedibus; strepitumque Acherontis avari!*
Virg. Geor. ii. v. 490.

Which may be thus paraphrased:-

“Happy is he who gains the knowledge of the first cause of all things; who can trample on every fear, and the doctrine of *inexorable FATE*; and who is not terrified by death, nor by the threatened torments of the invisible world!”

Poor in spirit] One who is deeply sensible of his spiritual poverty and wretchedness. πτωχος, *a poor man*, comes from πτωσσω, *to tremble*, or *shrink with fear*. Being destitute of the *true riches*, he is *tremblingly* alive to the necessities of his soul, *shrinking* with fear lest he should perish without the salvation of God. Such Christ pronounces happy, because there is but a step between them and that kingdom which is here promised. Some contend, that μακαριοι should be referred to, πνευματι, and the

verse translated thus: *Happy, or blessed in spirit, are the poor.* But our Lord seems to have the humiliation of the spirit particularly in view.

Kingdom of heaven.] Or, **των ουρανων**, *of the heavens.* A participation of all the blessings of the new covenant here, and the blessings of glory above. **See this phrase explained, Clarke's notes** "^{<418D>}**Matthew 3:2**". Blessed are the poor! this is God's word; but who believes it? Do we not say, Yea, rather, Blessed is the *rich*?

The Jewish rabbins have many good sayings relative to that *poverty* and *humility* of spirit which Christ recommends in this verse. In the treatise called Bammidbar Rabbi, s. 20, we have these words: There were three (evils) in Balaam: *the evil eye*, (envy,) *the towering spirit*, (pride,) and *the extensive mind* (avarice.)

Tanchum, fol. 84. *The law does not abide with those who have the extensive mind, (avarice,) but with him only who has a contrite heart.*

Rabbi Chanina said, "Why are the words of the law compared to *water*? Because as waters flow from heights, and settle in low places, so the words of the law rest only with him who is of an *humble* heart." See *Schoettgen*.

Verse 4. Blessed are they that mourn] That is, those who, feeling their *spiritual poverty*, mourn after God, lamenting the iniquity that separated them from the fountain of blessedness. Every one flies from *sorrow*, and seeks after *joy*, and yet true joy must necessarily be the *fruit of sorrow*. The whole need not (do not *feel* the need of) the physician, but they that are *sick* do; i.e. they who are sensible of their disease. Only such persons as are deeply convinced of the sinfulness of sin, feel the plague of their own heart, and turn with disgust from all worldly consolations, because of their insufficiency to render them *happy*, have God's promise of solid comfort. *They SHALL BE comforted*, says Christ, **παρακληθησονται**, from **παρα**, *near*, and **καλεω**, *I call*. He will *call them to himself*, and speak the words of *pardon, peace, and life eternal*, to their hearts. See this notion of the word expressed fully by our Lord, ^{<40128>}**Matthew 11:28**, *COME UNTO ME all ye who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*

Verse 5. Blessed are the meek] Happy, **οι πραεις**, from **ραος**, *easy*, those who are of a *quiet, gentle* spirit, in opposition to the proud and supercilious Scribes and Pharisees and their disciples. We have a compound word in English, which once fully expressed the meaning of the

original, viz. *gentleman*; but it has now almost wholly lost its original signification. Our word *meek* comes from the old Anglo-saxon *meca*, or *mecca*, a *companion* or *equal*, because he who is of a *meek* or *gentle* spirit, is ever ready to associate with the meanest of those who fear God, feeling himself *superior* to none; and well knowing that he has nothing of spiritual or temporal good but what he has received from the mere bounty of God, having never *deserved* any favour from his hand.

For they shall inherit the earth.] Or, **την γην**, *the land*. Under this expression, which was commonly used by the prophets to signify the *land of Canaan*, in which all temporal good abounded, **Judges 18:9, 10**, Jesus Christ points out that abundance of spiritual good, which was provided for men in the Gospel. Besides, Canaan was a *type* of the kingdom of God; and who is so likely to inherit *glory* as the man in whom the *meekness* and *gentleness* of Jesus dwell? In some good MSS. and several ancient versions, the *fourth* and *fifth* verses are transposed: see the authorities in the various readings in Professor Griesbach's edition. The present arrangement certainly is most natural: 1. *Poverty*, to which the promise of the kingdom is made. 2. *Mourning* or distress, on account of this impoverished state, to which consolation is promised. And 3. *Meekness* established in the heart by the *consolations* received.

Verse 6. They which do hunger and thirst] As the body has its natural appetites of hunger and thirst for the food and drink suited to its nourishment, so has the soul. No being is *indestructible* or *unfailing* in its nature but GOD; no being is *independent* but him: as the body *depends* for its nourishment, health, and strength upon the *earth*, so does the soul upon *heaven*. Heavenly things cannot support the *body*; they are not suited to its nature: *earthly* things cannot support the *soul*, for the same reason. When the uneasy sensation termed *hunger* takes place in the stomach, we know we must get food or perish. When the soul is awakened to a tense of its wants, and begins to *hunger* and *thirst* after righteousness or *holiness*, which is its proper food, we know that it must be purified by the Holy Spirit, and be made a partaker of that living bread, **John 8:48**, or perish everlastingly. Now, as God never inspires a prayer but with a design to answer it, he who hungers and thirsts after the full salvation of God, may depend on being speedily and effectually blessed or *satisfied*, well-fed, as the word **χορτασθησονται** implies. Strong and intense desire after any object has been, both by poets and orators, represented metaphorically by *hunger* and *thirst*. See the well-known words of Virgil, *Æneid* iii. 55.

-----*Quid non mortalia pectora cogis,
Auri sacra FAMES!*

“O cursed *hunger* after gold! what canst thou not influence the hearts of men to perpetrate?” How frequently do we find, *inexplebilis honorum* FAMES-SITIENS *virtutis-famæ* SITUS, the insatiable *hunger* after honour, a *thirst* for virtue, *thirst* after fame, and such like! *Righteousness* here is taken for all the blessings of the new covenant—all the graces of the Messiah’s kingdom—a full restoration to the image of God!

Verse 7. The merciful] The word *mercy*, among the Jews, signified two things: the *pardon of injuries*, and *almsgiving*. Our Lord undoubtedly takes it in its fullest latitude here. To know the nature of mercy, we have only to consult the grammatical meaning of the Latin word *miseriordia*, from which ours is derived. It is composed of two words: *miserans*, pitying, and *cor*, the heart; or *miseria cordis*, pain of heart. Mercy supposes two things: 1. A distressed object: and, 2. A disposition of the heart, through which it is affected at the sight of such an object. This virtue, therefore, is no other than a lively emotion of the heart, which is excited by the discovery of any creature’s misery; and such an emotion as manifests itself outwardly, by effects suited to its nature. The merciful man is here termed by our Lord *ελεημων*, from *ελεος*, which is generally derived from the Hebrew *ללך* *chil*, to be in pain, as a woman in travail: or from *ללך* *galal*, to cry, or lament grievously; because a merciful man enters into the miseries of his neighbour, feels for and mourns with him.

They shall obtain mercy.] Mercy is not purchased but at the price of mercy itself; and even this *price* is a *gift* of the *mercy* of God. What mercy can those vindictive persons expect, who forgive nothing, and are always ready to improve every advantage they have of avenging themselves? Whatever mercy a man shows to another, God will take care to show the same to him. The following elegant and nervous saying of one of our best poets is worthy of the reader’s most serious attention:-

*“The quality of mercy is not strained;
It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven
Upon the place beneath. It is twice blessed;
It blesseth him who gives, and him who takes:*

*'Tis mightiest in the mightiest: it becomes
The throned monarch better than his crown.
It is an attribute of God himself;
And earthly power doth then show likest God's,*

*When mercy seasons justice.-----
Though justice be thy plea, consider this,
That, in the course of justice, none of us
Should see salvation. We do pray for mercy;
And that same prayer doth teach us all to render*

*The deeds of mercy.-----
Why, all the souls that are, were forfeit once:
And he who might the 'vantage best have took
Found out the remedy. How would you be,*

*If He who is the top of judgment should
But judge you as you are? O! think on that;
And mercy then will breathe within your lips,
Like man, new made.
How shalt thou hope for mercy, rend'ring none?"*

In the tract *Shabbath*, fol. 151, there is a saying very like this of our Lord. "He who shows mercy to men, God will show mercy to him: but to him who shows no mercy to man, God will show no mercy.

Verse 8. Pure in heart] In opposition to the Pharisees, who affected outward purity, while their hearts were full of corruption and defilement. A principal part of the Jewish religion consisted in outward *washings* and *cleansings*: on this ground they expected to *see God*, to enjoy eternal glory: but Christ here shows that a purification of the *heart*, from all vile affections and desires, is essentially requisite in order to enter into the *kingdom of God*. He whose soul is not delivered from all sin, through the blood of the covenant, can have no Scriptural hope of ever being with God. There is a remarkable illustration of this passage, quoted by Mr. Wakefield from Origen, *Contra Cels.* lib. vi. "God has no body, and therefore is invisible: but men of contemplation can discern him with the heart and understanding. But A DEFILED HEART CANNOT SEE GOD: but HE MUST BE PURE WHO WISHES TO ENJOY A PROPER VIEW OF A PURE BEING."

Shall see God.] This is a Hebraism, which signifies, *possess God, enjoy his felicity*: as *seeing* a thing, was used among the Hebrews for possessing it. See ^{<191610>} **Psalm 16:10.** *Thou wilt not suffer thy Holy One to see corruption,*

i.e. he shall not *be corrupted*. So ~~EXB~~ **John 3:3**: *Except a man be born again, he cannot SEE the kingdom of God*, i.e. he cannot *enjoy* it. So ~~EXB~~ **John 3:16**. *He that believeth not the Son, shall not SEE life*, i. e shall not be put in *possession* of eternal glory. The Hindoo idolaters vainly boast of what the genuine followers of Christ actually enjoy-having the Divine favour witnessed to their souls by the Holy Spirit. The Hindoos pretend that some of their sages have been favoured with a sight of their guardian deity.-See WARD'S *Customs*.

Probably our Lord alludes to the advantages those had, who were legally *pure*, of entering into the sanctuary, into the presence of God, while those who had contracted any legal *defilement* were excluded from it. This also was obviously *typical*.

Verse 9. The peace-makers] εἰρηνη, *peace*, is compounded of εἰρεῖν (εἰς) εἰν, *connecting into one*: for as WAR *distracts* and *divides* nations, families, and individuals, from each other, inducing them to pursue different objects and different interests, so PEACE restores them to a state of *unity*, giving them one *object*, and one *interest*. A *peace-maker* is a man who, being endowed with a generous public spirit, labours for the public good, and feels his own interest promoted in promoting that of others: therefore, instead of fanning the fire of strife, he uses his influence and wisdom to reconcile the contending parties, adjust their differences, and restore them to a state of *unity*. As all men are represented to be in a state of *hostility* to God and each other, the Gospel is called the Gospel of *peace*, because it tends to reconcile men to God and to each other. Hence our Lord here terms *peace-makers the children of God*: for as *he* is the *Father of peace*, those who promote it are reputed *his children*. But whose children are they who foment divisions in the *Church*, the *state*, or among *families*? Surely they are not of that GOD, who is the *Father of peace*, and lover of concord; of that CHRIST, who is the *sacrifice* and *mediator* of it; of that SPIRIT, who is the *nourisher* and *bond* of peace; nor of that CHURCH of the Most High, which is the kingdom and family of peace.

St. Clement, Strom. lib. iv. s. 6, *in fin.* says, that “Some who transpose the Gospels add this verse: *Happy they who are persecuted by justice, for they shall be perfect: happy they who are persecuted on my account, for they shall have a place where they shall not be persecuted.*”

Verse 10. They which are persecuted] δεδιωγμενοι, they who are hard pressed upon and pursued with repeated acts of enmity. *Parkhurst. They*

are happy who suffer, seems a strange saying: and that the *righteous* should suffer, merely because they are *such*, seems as strange. But such is the enmity of the human heart to every thing of God and goodness, that all those who live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution in one form or other. As the religion of Christ gives no quarter to vice, so the vicious will give no quarter to this religion, or to its professors.

For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.] That spiritual kingdom, explained <4082>**Matthew 3:2**, and that kingdom of glory which is its counterpart and consequence.

Verse 11. When men shall revile you, and persecute] The persecution mentioned in the preceding verse comprehends all *outward* acts of *violence*-all that the *hand* can do. This comprehends all *calumny*, *slander*, &c., all that the *tongue* can effect. But as **διωκειν**, which we render *to persecute*, is a forensic term, and signifies legal persecutions and public accusations, which, though totally unsubstantiated, were the means of destroying multitudes of the primitive Christians, our Lord probably refers to such. No Protestant can think, without horror, of the great numbers burnt alive in this country, on such accusations, under the *popish* reign of her who is emphatically called *Bloody Queen Mary*.

Verse 12. Rejoice] In the testimony of a good conscience; for, without this, suffering has nothing but *misery* in it.

Be exceeding glad] **αγαλλιασθε**, *leap for joy*. There are several cases on record, where this was *literally* done by the martyrs, in Queen Mary's days.

Great is your reward in heaven] In the Talmudical tract *Pirkey Aboth*, are these words: "Rabbi *Tarpon* said, The day is short: the work is great: the labourers are slow: the REWARD IS GREAT: and the father of the family is urgent."

The followers of Christ are encouraged to suffer joyfully on two considerations. 1. They are thereby conformed to the prophets who went before. 2. Their reward in heaven is a great one. God gives the grace to suffer, and then crowns that grace with glory; hence it is plain, the reward is not of *debt*, but of *grace*: <5123>**Romans 6:23**.

Verse 13. Ye are the salt of the earth] Our Lord shows here what the preachers of the Gospel, and what all who profess to follow him, should

be; the *salt* of the earth, to preserve the world from putrefaction and destruction. See Clarke's note on "~~4013~~ Leviticus 2:13".

But if the salt have lost his savour] That this is possible in the land of Judea, we have proof from Mr. *Maundrell*, who, describing the *Valley of Salt*, speaks thus: "Along, on one side of the valley, toward *Gibul*, there is a small precipice about two men's lengths, occasioned by the continual taking away of the salt; and, in this, you may see how the veins of it lie. I broke a piece of it, of which that part that was exposed to the rain, sun, and air, though it had the sparks and particles of salt, YET IT HAD PERFECTLY LOST ITS SAVOUR: the inner part, which was connected to the rock, retained its savour, as I found by proof." See his *Trav.*, 5th edit., last page. A preacher, or private Christian, who has lost the life of Christ, and the witness of his Spirit, out of his soul, may be likened to this salt. He may have the *sparks and glittering particles* of true wisdom, but without its *unction* or *comfort*. Only that which is *connected with the rock*, the soul that is in union with Christ Jesus by the Holy Spirit, can preserve its *savour*, and be instrumental of good to others.

To be trodden underfoot] There was a species of salt in Judea, which was generated at the lake Asphaltites, and hence called *bituminous salt*, easily rendered vapid, and of no other use but to be spread in a part of the temple, to prevent slipping in wet weather. This is probably what our Lord alludes to in this place. The existence of such a salt, and its application to such a use, *Schoettgenius* has largely proved in his *Horæ Hebraicæ*, vol. i. p. 18, &c.

Verse 14. Ye are the light of the world] That is, the instruments which God chooses to make use of to illuminate the minds of men; as he uses the sun (to which probably he pointed) to enlighten the world. *Light of the world*, מִן אֱלֹהִים לְנוֹרָה לְעוֹלָם, *ner olam*, was a title applied to the most eminent rabbins. Christ transfers the title from these, and gives it to his own disciples, who, by the doctrines that he taught them, were to be the means of diffusing the light of life throughout the universe.

A city that is set on a hill] This place may receive light from the following passage in *Maundrell's Travels*. "A few points toward the north (of *Tabor*) appears that which they call the *Mount of Beatitudes*, a small rising, from which our blessed Saviour delivered his sermon in the fifth, sixth, and seventh chapters of Matthew. (See Clarke's note on "~~4015~~ Matthew 5:5".)

Not far from this little hill is the city *Saphet*, supposed to be the ancient *Bethulia*. It stands upon a very *eminent* and *conspicuous* mountain, and is SEEN FAR and NEAR. May we not suppose that Christ alludes to this city, in these words of his, *A city set on a hill cannot be hid?*” p. 115. Quesnell remarks here: “The Christian life is something very *high* and *sublime*, to which we cannot arrive without pains: while it withdraws us from the earth, and carries us nearer heaven, it places us in view, and as a *mark*, to the malice of carnal men.”

Verse 15. Neither do men light a candle and put it under a bushel] A bushel **μοδιος**:-a measure both among the Greeks and Romans, containing a little more than a *peck* English. From some ancient writers we learn, that only those who had bad designs hid a candle under a bushel; that, in the dead of the night, when all were asleep, they might rise up, and have light at hand to help them to effect their horrid purposes of murder, &c. See *Wetstein, Kypke, Wolf, &c.*

Verse 16. Let your light so shine] Or more literally, *Thus let your light shine*, **οὕτω λαμψατω το φως**. As the sun is lighted up in the firmament of heaven to diffuse its light and heat freely to every inhabitant of the earth; and as the lamp is not set under the bushel, but placed upon the lamp-stand that it may give light to all in the house; THUS let every follower of Christ, and especially every preacher of the Gospel, diffuse the *light* of heavenly knowledge, and the *warmth* of Divine love through the whole circle of their acquaintance.

That they may see your good works] It is not sufficient to have light-we must walk in the light, and by the light. Our whole conduct should be a perpetual comment on the doctrine we have received, and a constant exemplification of its power and truth.

And glorify your Father] The following curious saying is found in *Bammidbar Rabba*, s. 15. “The Israelites said to the holy blessed God, Thou commandest us to light lamps to thee; and yet thou art the, Light of the world, and with thee the light dwelleth. The holy blessed God answered, I do not command this because I need light; but that you may reflect light upon me, as I have illuminated you:-that the people may say, Behold, how the Israelites illustrate him, who illuminates them in the sight of the whole earth.” See more in *Schoettgen*. Real Christians are the *children* of God-they are partakers of his holy and happy nature: they should ever be concerned for their Father’s honour, and endeavour so to

recommend him, and his salvation, that others may be prevailed on to come to the light, and walk in it. Then God is said to be glorified, when the glorious power of his grace is manifested in the salvation of men.

Verse 17. Think not that I am come to destroy the law] *Do not imagine that I am come to violate the law καταλυσαι, from κατα, and λυω, I loose, violate, or dissolve-I am not come to make the law of none effect-to dissolve the connection which subsists between its several parts, or the obligation men are under to have their lives regulated by its moral precepts; nor am I come to dissolve the connecting reference it has to the good things promised. But I am come, πληρωσαι, to complete-to perfect its connection and reference, to accomplish every thing shadowed forth in the Mosaic ritual, to fill up its great design; and to give grace to all my followers, πληρωσαι, to fill up, or complete, every moral duty. In a word, Christ completed the law: 1st. In itself, it was only the shadow, the typical representation, of good things to come; and he added to it that which was necessary to make it perfect, HIS OWN SACRIFICE, without which it could neither satisfy God, nor sanctify men. 2dly. He completed it in himself by submitting to its types with an exact obedience, and verifying them by his death upon the cross. 3dly. He completes this law, and the sayings of his prophets, in his members, by giving them grace to love the Lord with all their heart, soul, mind, and strength, and their neighbour as themselves; for this is all the law and the prophets.*

It is worthy of observation, that the word **רמג** *gamar*, among the rabbins, signifies not only to fulfil, but also to teach; and, consequently, we may infer that our Lord intimated, that the law and the prophets were still to be taught or inculcated by him and his disciples; and this he and they have done in the most pointed manner. See the Gospels and epistles; and see especially this sermon on the mount, the Epistle of James, and the Epistle to the Hebrews. And this meaning of the word gives the clear sense of the apostle's words, ^{<510125>}**Colossians 1:25.** *Whereof I am made a minister, πληρωσαι τος λογον του θεου, to fulfil the word of God, i.e. to teach the doctrine of God.*

Verse 18. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven] In the very commencement of his ministry, Jesus Christ teaches the instability of all visible things. "The heaven which you see, and which is so glorious, and the earth which you inhabit and love, shall pass away; for the things which are seen are temporal, προσκαιρα, are for a time; but the things which

are not seen are eternal **αἰὼνῖα**, *ever-during*,” ^{<4048>} **2 Corinthians 4:18**. And the WORD of the Lord endureth for ever.

One jot or one tittle] One yod, (y,) the smallest letter in the Hebrew alphabet. One *tittle* or *point*, **κεραία**, either meaning those *points* which serve for vowels in this language, if they then existed; or the *seraphs*, or points of certain letters, such as **ר** *resh*, or **ד** *daleth*, **ה** *he*, or **י** *cheth* (as the change of any of these into the other would make a most essential alteration in the sense, or, as the rabbins say, destroy the world.) Or our Lord may refer to the little ornaments which certain letters assume on their tops, which cause them to appear like small *branches*. The following letters only can assume coronal *apices*, **ס** *tsaddi-g* **ג** *gimel-z* **ז** *zain-n* **נ** *nun-c* **צ** *teth- [ayin-v* **ש** *shin*. These, with the *coronal apices*, often appear in MSS.

That this saying, *one jot or one tittle*, is a proverbial mode of expression among the Jews, and that it expressed the meaning given to it above, is amply proved by the extracts in *Lightfoot* and *Schoettgen*. The reader will not be displeased to find a few of them here, if he can bear with the *allegorical* and strongly figurative language of the rabbins.

“The book of Deuteronomy came and prostrated itself before the Lord, and said: ‘O Lord of the world, thou hast written in me thy law; but now, a Testament defective in some parts is defective in all. Behold, Solomon endeavours to root the letter *yod* out of me.’ (In this text, ^{<6176>} **Deuteronomy 17:5**. **מַיְבֵן חֲבֵרֵי אֵל** *lo yirbeh, nashim, he shall not multiply wives*.) The holy blessed God answered, ‘Solomon and a thousand such as he *shall perish, but the least word shall not perish out of thee*.’”

In *Shir Hashirim Rabba*, are these words:

“Should all the inhabitants of the earth gather together, in order to *whiten* one feather of a *crow*, they could not succeed: so, if all the inhabitants of the earth should unite to abolish one **y** *yod*, which is the smallest letter in the whole law, they should not be able to effect it.”

In *Vayikra Rabba*, s. 19, it is said: “Should any person in the words of ^{<6104>} **Deuteronomy 6:4**, *Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is **dj a** achad*, ONE Lord, change the **d** *daleth* into a **ר** *resh*, he would ruin the world.”

[Because, in that case, the word **rj a achar**, would signify a *strange or false God*.]

“Should any one, in the words of ^{<02344>}**Exodus 34:14**, *Thou shalt worship no OTHER, rj a achar, God*, change **r resh** into **d daleth**, he would ruin the world.” [Because the command would then run, *Thou shalt not worship the ONLY or true God*.]

“Should any one in the words of ^{<02320>}**Leviticus 22:32**, *Neither shall ye PROFANE wl l j t techelelu, my holy name*, change **j cheth** into **h he**, he would ruin the world.” [Because the sense of the commandment would then be, *Neither shall ye PRAISE my holy name*.]

“Should any one, in the words of ^{<02306>}**Psalms 150:6**, *Let every thing that hath breath PRAISE, l l h t tehalel, the Lord*, change **h he** into **j cheth**, he would ruin the world.” [Because the command would then run, *Let every thing that hath breath PROFANE the Lord*.]

“Should any one, in the words of ^{<02310>}**Jeremiah 5:10**, *They lied AGAINST the Lord, hwhyb beihovah*, change **b beth** into **k caph**, he would ruin the world.” [For then the words would run, *They lied LIKE the Lord*.]

“Should any one, in the words of Hosea, ^{<02307>}**Hosea 5:7**, *They have dealt treacherously, hwhyb beihovah, AGAINST the Lord*, change **b beth** into **k caph**, he would ruin the world.” [For then the words would run, *They have dealt treacherously LIKE the Lord*.]

“Should any one, in the words of ^{<02302>}**1 Samuel 2:2**, *There is none holy AS the Lord*, change **k caph** into **b beth**, he would ruin the world.” [For then the words would mean, *There is no holiness IN the Lord*.]

These examples fully prove that the **μια κεραια** of our Lord, refers to the *apices, points, or corners*, that distinguish **b beth** from **k caph**; **j cheth** from **h he**; and **r resh** from **d daleth**. For the reader will at once perceive, how easily a **k caph** may be turned into a **b beth**; a **h he** into a **j cheth**;

and a **r** *resh* into a **d** *daleth*: and he will also see of what infinite consequence it is to *write* and *print* such letters *correctly*.

Till all be fulfilled.] Or, *accomplished*. Though all earth and hell should join together to hinder the accomplishment of the great designs of the Most High, yet it shall all be in vain—even the sense of a single letter shall not be lost. The *words* of God, which point out his designs, are as unchangeable as his *nature* itself. Every sinner, who perseveres in his iniquity, shall surely be punished with separation from God and the glory of his power; and every soul that turns to God, through Christ, shall as surely be saved, as that Jesus himself hath died.

Verse 19. Whosoever shall break one of these least commandments]

The Pharisees were remarkable for making a distinction between weightier and lighter matters in the law, and between what has been called, in a corrupt part of the Christian Church, *mortal* and *venial sins*. See Clarke on “⁴⁰²³⁶Matthew 22:36”.

Whosoever shall break. What an awful consideration is this! He who, by his mode of *acting*, *speaking*, or *explaining* the words of God, sets the holy precept *aside*, or explains away its *force* and *meaning*, *shall be called least*—shall have no place in the kingdom of Christ here, nor in the kingdom of glory above. That this is the meaning of these words is evident enough from the following verse.

Verse 20. Except your righteousness shall exceed] περισσευση, *Unless your righteousness abound more*—unless it take in, not only the *letter*, but the *spirit* and *design* of the *moral* and *ritual* precept; the one directing you how to *walk* so as to please God; the other pointing out Christ, the great Atonement, through and by which a sinner is enabled to do *so-more than that of the scribes and Pharisees*, who only attend to the *letter* of the law, and had indeed made even that of no effect by their traditions—*ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven*. This fully explains the meaning of the preceding verse. The old English word is [Anglo-Saxon], *right-wiseness*, i.e. *complete, thorough, excellent WISDOM*. For a full explanation of this verse, see ⁴²¹⁸¹⁰Luke 18:10, &c.

Verse 21. Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time] τοις αρχαιοις, *to or by the ancients*. By the *ancients*, we may understand those who lived *before* the law, and those who lived *under* it; for murder

was, in the most solemn manner, forbidden *before*, as well as *under*, the law, ~~ⲁⲓⲟⲩⲥ~~ **Genesis 9:5, 6.**

But it is very likely that our Lord refers here merely to traditions and glosses relative to the ancient Mosaic ordinance; and such as, by their operation, rendered the primitive command of little or no effect. *Murder* from the beginning has been punished with death; and it is, probably, the only crime that should be punished with *death*. There is much reason to doubt, whether the punishment of *death*, inflicted for any other crime, is not in itself *murder*, whatever the authority may be that has instituted it. GOD, and the greatest *legislators* that have ever been in the universe, are of the same opinion. See *Montesquieu*, *Blackstone*, and the Marquis *Beccaria*, and the arguments and testimonies lately produced by Sir *Samuel Romilly*, in his motion for the amendment of the criminal laws of this kingdom. It is very remarkable, that the criminal code published by Joseph II., late emperor of Germany, though it consists of *seventy-one* capital crimes, has not *death* attached to any of them. Even *murder*, with all intention to *rob*, is punished only with “*imprisonment for thirty years, to lie on the floor, to have no nourishment but bread and water, to be closely chained, and to be publicly whipped once a year, with less than one hundred lashes.*” See *Colquhoun* on the Police of the City of London, p. 272.

Verse 22. Whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause] ⲟⲣⲱⲓⲗⲟⲙⲉⲛⲟⲥ”ⲉⲓⲕⲏ, *who is vainly incensed.* “This translation is literal; and the very objectionable phrase, *without a cause*, is left out, ⲉⲓⲕⲏ being more properly translated by that above.” What our Lord seems here to prohibit, is not merely that miserable facility which some have of being *angry at every trifle*, continually taking offence against their best friends; but that anger which leads a man to commit *outrages* against another, thereby subjecting himself to that punishment which was to be inflicted on those who break the peace. ⲉⲓⲕⲏ, *vainly*, or, as in the common translation, *without a cause*, is wanting in the famous *Vatican MS.* and two others, the *Ethiopic*, latter *Arabic*, *Saxon*, *Vulgate*, two copies of the old *Itala*, *J. Martyr*, *Ptolomeus*, *Origen*, *Tertullian*, and by all the ancient copies quoted by *St. Jerome*. It was probably a marginal gloss originally, which in process of time crept into the text.

Shall be in danger of the judgment] ⲉⲛⲟⲭⲟⲥ ⲉⲥⲧⲁⲓ, *shall be liable to the judgment.* That is, to have the matter brought before a senate, composed of

twenty-three magistrates, whose business it was to judge in cases of murder and other capital crimes. It punished criminals by *strangling* or *beheading*; but Dr. Lightfoot supposes the judgment of God to be intended. See at the end of this chapter.

Raca] *hqyr* from the Hebrew *qr rak*, to *be empty*. It signifies a *vain*, *empty*, *worthless fellow*, *shallow brains*, a term of great contempt. Such expressions were punished among the *Gentoo*s by a heavy fine. See all the cases, *Code of Gentoo Laws*, chap. 15: sec. 2.

The council] *συνεδριον*, the famous council, known among the Jews by the name of *Sanhedrin*. It was composed of *seventy-two* elders, *six* chosen out of each tribe. This grand Sanhedrin not only received appeals from the inferior Sanhedrins, or court of *twenty-three* mentioned above; but could alone take cognizance, in the first instance, of the highest crimes, and alone inflict the punishment of *stoning*.

Thou fool] *Moreh*, probably from *hrm marah*, to *rebel*, a *rebel against God*, *apostate* from all good. This term implied, among the Jews, the highest enormity, and most aggravated guilt. Among the *Gentoo*s, such an expression was punished by cutting out the tongue, and thrusting a hot iron, of ten fingers breadth, into the mouth of the person who used it. *Code of Gentoo Laws*, chap. 15: sec. 2. p. 212.

Shall be in danger of hell fire.] *ενοχος εσται εις την γεενναν του πυρος*, *shall be liable to the hell of fire*. Our Lord here alludes to the *valley of the son of Hinnom*, *μνη yg Ghi hinom*. This place was near Jerusalem, and had been formerly used for those abominable sacrifices, in which the idolatrous Jews had caused their children to pass through the fire to Molech. A particular place in this valley was called *Tophet*, from *tpt tophet*, the *fire stove*, in which some supposed they burnt their children alive to the above idol. See ^{<122310>}**2 Kings 23:10**; ^{<142818>}**2 Chronicles 28:3**; ^{<240731>}**Jeremiah 7:31, 32**. From the circumstances of this valley having been the scene of those *infernal sacrifices*, the Jews, in our Saviour's time, used the word for *hell*, *the place of the damned*. See the word applied in this sense by the *Targum*, on ^{<181212>}**Ruth 2:12**; ^{<193112>}**Psalms 140:12**; ^{<101324>}**Genesis 3:24; 15:17**. It is very probable that our Lord means no more here than this: if a man charge another with apostasy from the Jewish religion, or rebellion against God, and cannot prove his charge, then he is exposed to that punishment (*burning alive*) which the other must have suffered, if the

charge had been substantiated. There are *three* kinds of offences here, which exceed each other in their *degrees* of guilt. 1st. *Anger* against a man, accompanied with some injurious act. 2dly. *Contempt*, expressed by the opprobrious epithet *raka*, or *shallow brains*. 3dly. *Hatred* and *mortal enmity*, expressed by the term *moreh*, or *apostate*, where such apostasy could not be proved. Now, proportioned to these *three* offences were *three* different degrees of punishment, each exceeding the other in its severity, as the offenses exceeded each other in their different degrees of guilt. 1st. The *judgment*, the council of *twenty-three*, which could inflict the punishment of *strangling*. 2dly. The *Sanhedrin*, or great council, which could inflict the punishment of *stoning*. And 3dly. The being *burnt alive* in the valley of the son of Hinnom. This appears to be the meaning of our Lord.

Now, if the above offences were to be so severely punished, which did not immediately affect the life of another, how much sorer must the punishment of *murder* be! ^{«1021»} **Matthew 5:21**. And as there could not be a greater punishment inflicted than *death*, in the above terrific forms, and this was to be inflicted for minor crimes; then the punishment of murder must not only have death here, but a hell of fire in the eternal world, attached to it. It seems that these different degrees of guilt, and the punishment attached to each, had not been properly distinguished among the Jews. Our Lord here calls their attention back to them, and gives them to understand, that in the coming world there are different degrees of punishment prepared for different degrees of vice; and that not only the outward act of iniquity should be judged and punished by the Lord, but that *injurious words*, and *evil passions*, should all meet their just recompense and reward. Murder is the most punishable of all crimes, according to the *written law*, in respect both of our neighbours and civil society. But he who sees the heart, and judges it by the *eternal law*, punishes as much a *word* or a *desire*, if the *hatred* whence they proceed be complete and perfected. Dr. Lightfoot has some curious observations on this passage in the preface to his *Harmony of the Evangelists*. See his works, vol. ii., and the conclusion of this chapter.

Verse 23. **Therefore if thou bring thy gift]** Evil must be nipped in the bud. An unkind thought of another may be the *foundation* of that which leads to actual *murder*. A Christian, properly speaking, cannot be an enemy to any man; nor is he to consider any man his enemy, without the fullest evidence: for surmises to the prejudice of another can never rest in the bosom of him who has the love of God in his heart, for to him all men are

brethren. He sees all men as children of God, and members of Christ, or at least capable of becoming such. If a tender forgiving spirit was required, even in a *Jew*, when he approached God's altar with a bullock or a lamb, how much more necessary is this in a man who professes to be a follower of the *Lamb of God*; especially when he receives the symbols of that Sacrifice which was offered for the life of the world, in what is commonly called the sacrament of the Lord's supper!

Verse 24. Leave there thy gift before the altar] This is as much as to say, "Do not attempt to bring any offering to God while thou art in a spirit of enmity against any person; or hast any difference with thy neighbour, which thou hast not used thy diligence to get adjusted." It is our duty and interest, both to bring our gift, and offer it too; but God will not accept of any act of religious worship from us, while any enmity subsists in our hearts towards any soul of man; or while any subsists in our neighbour's heart towards us, which we have not used the proper means to remove. A religion, the very essence of which is *love*, cannot suffer at its altars a heart that is revengeful and uncharitable, or which does not use its utmost endeavours to revive love in the heart of another. The original word, **δωρον**, which we translate *gift*, is used by the rabbins in Hebrew letters **דורון** *doron*, which signifies not only a *gift*, but a *sacrifice* offered to God. See several proofs in *Schoettgen*.

Then come and offer thy gift.] *Then*, when either thy brother is reconciled to thee, or thou hast done all in thy power to effect this reconciliation. My own obstinacy and uncharitableness must render me utterly unfit to receive any good from God's hands, or to worship him in an acceptable manner; but the wickedness of another can be no hinderance to me, when I have endeavoured earnestly to get it removed, though without effect.

Verse 25. Agree with thine adversary quickly] *Adversary*, **αντιδικος**, properly a *plaintiff* in law—a perfect law term. Our Lord enforces the exhortation given in the preceding verses, from the consideration of what was deemed prudent in ordinary law-suits. In such cases, men should make up matters with the utmost speed, as running through the whole course of a law-suit must not only be vexatious, but be attended with great expense; and in the end, though the *loser* may be ruined, yet the *gainer* has nothing. A good use of this very prudential advice of our Lord is this: Thou art a sinner; God hath a controversy with thee. There is but a step between thee

and death. Now is the accepted time. Thou art invited to return to God by Christ Jesus. Come *immediately* at his call, and he will save thy soul. Delay not! Eternity is at hand; and if thou die in thy sins, where God is thou shalt never come.

Those who make the *adversary*, God; the *judge*, Christ; the *officer*, Death; and the *prison*, Hell, abuse the passage, and highly dishonour God.

Verse 26. The uttermost farthing.] *ksdranthn*. The rabbins have this Greek word corrupted into *scnwdrq* *kordiontes*, and *qyrwnwq*, *kontrik*, and say, that two *twcwprp* *prutoth* make a *kontarik*, which is exactly the same with those words in ^{<4112D>}**Mark 12:42**, *λεπτα δυο, ο εστι κοδραντης*, *two mites, which are one farthing*. Hence it appears that the *λεπτον* *lepton* was the same as the *prutah*. The weight of the *prutah* was half a barley-corn, and it was the smallest coin among the Jews, as the *kodrantes*, or farthing, was the smallest coin among the Romans. If the matter issue in *law*, strict justice will be done, and your creditor be allowed the *fulness of his just claim*; but if, while you are *on the way*, going to the magistrate, you come to a *friendly agreement* with him, he will relax in his claims, take a *part* for the *whole*, and the composition be, in the end, both to *his* and *your* profit.

This text has been considered a proper foundation on which to build not only the doctrine of a *purgatory*, but also that of *universal restoration*. But the most unwarrantable violence must be used before it can be pressed into the service of either of the above *antisciptural* doctrines. At the most, the text can only be considered as a *metaphorical* representation of the procedure of the great Judge; and let it ever be remembered, that by the general consent of all (except the basely interested) no *metaphor* is ever to be *produced* in proof of any doctrine. In the things that concern our eternal salvation, we need the most *pointed* and *express evidence* on which to establish the faith of our souls.

Verse 27. Ye have heard that it was said by them of old] By *the ancients*, *τοις αρχαιοις*, is omitted by nearly a *hundred* MSS., and some of them of the very greatest antiquity and authority; also by the *Coptic*, *Ethiopic*, *Armenian*, *Gothic*, and *Sclavonian* versions; by *four* copies of the old *Itala*; and by *Origen*, *Cyril*, *Theophylact*, *Euthymius*, and *Hilary*. On this authority *Wetstein* and *Griesbach* have left it out of the text.

Verse 28. Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her] **ἐπιθυμῶσα**
αὐτήν, *earnestly to covet her*. The verb, **ἐπιθυμῶ**, is undoubtedly used
here by our Lord, in the sense of *coveting* through the influence of *impure*
desire. The word is used in precisely the same sense, on the same subject,
by *Herodotus*, book the first, near the end. I will give the passage, but I
dare not translate it. To the learned reader it will justify my translation, and
the unlearned must take my word. **τῆς ἐπιθυμῆσει γυναικὸς**
μασσαγέτης ἀνὴρ, μισγεται ἀδελῶς, *Raphelius*, on this verse, says,
ἐπιθυμῶν *hoc loco, est turpi cupiditate mulieris potiundæ flagrare*. In all
these cases, our blessed Lord points out the *spirituality* of the law; which
was a matter to which the Jews paid very little attention. Indeed it is the
property of a Pharisee to abstain only from the outward crime. Men are
very often *less* inquisitive to know how far the will of God extends, that
they may please him in performing it, than they are to know how far they
may satisfy their lusts without destroying their bodies and souls, utterly, by
an open violation of his law.

Hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.] It is the
earnest wish or desire of the soul, which, in a variety of cases, constitutes
the *good* or *evil* of an *act*. If a man earnestly wish to commit an evil, but
cannot, because God puts *time*, *place*, and *opportunity* out of his power,
he is fully chargeable with the iniquity of the act, by that God who searches
and judges the heart. So, if a man earnestly wish to do some kindness,
which it is out of his power to perform, the *act* is considered as *his*;
because God, in this case, as in that above, takes the *will* for the *deed*. If
voluntary and deliberate *looks* and *desires* make *adulterers* and
adulteresses, how many persons are there whose whole life is one
continued crime! whose *eyes being full of adultery, they cannot cease*
from sin, ^{<610214>} **2 Peter 2:14**. Many would abhor to commit one external act
before the eyes of men, in a temple of stone; and yet they are not afraid to
commit a multitude of such acts in the temple of their hearts, and in the
sight of God!

Verse 29. - 30. Pluck it out-cut it off] We must shut our senses against
dangerous objects, to avoid the occasions of sin, and deprive ourselves of
all that is most dear and profitable to us, in order to save our souls, when
we find that these dear and profitable things, however innocent in
themselves, cause us to sin against God.

It is profitable for thee that one of thy members] Men often part with some members of the body, at the discretion of a surgeon, that they may preserve the trunk, and die a little later; and yet they will not deprive themselves of a look, a touch, a small pleasure, which endanger the eternal death of the soul. It is not enough to *shut* the eye, or *stop* the hand; the one must be plucked out, and the other cut off. Neither is this enough, we must *cast them* both from us. Not one moment's truce with an evil passion, or a sinful appetite. If you indulge them, they will gain strength, and you shall be ruined. The rabbins have a saying similar to this: "It is better for thee to be scorched with a little fire in this world, than to be burned with a devouring fire in the world to come."

Verse 31. Whosoever shall put away his wife] The Jewish doctors gave great license in the matter of divorce. Among them, a man might divorce his wife if she displeased him even in the dressing of his victuals!

Rabbi Akiba said, "If any man saw a woman handsomer than his own wife, he might put his wife away; because it is said in the law, *If she find not favour in his eyes.*" ^{<15240>} **Deuteronomy 24:1.**

Josephus, the celebrated Jewish historian, *in his Life*, tells us, with the utmost coolness and indifference, "About this time I put away my wife, *who had borne me three children*, not being pleased with her manners."

These two cases are sufficient to show to what a scandalous and criminal excess this matter was carried among the Jews. However, it was allowed by the school of *Shammai*, that no man was to put away his wife unless for adultery. The school of *Hillel* gave much greater license.

A writing of divorcement] The following is the common form of such a writing. See *Maimonides* and *Lightfoot*.

"On the day of the week A. in the month B. in the year C. from the beginning of the world, according to the common computation in the province of D., I, N. the son of N. by whatever name I am called, of the city E. with entire consent of mind, and without any compulsion, have divorced, dismissed, and expelled thee-thee, I say, M. the daughter of M. by whatever name thou art called, of the city E. who wast heretofore my wife: but now I have dismissed thee-thee, I say, M. the daughter of M. by whatever name thou art called, of the city E. so as to be free, and at thine own disposal, to marry whomsoever thou pleasest, without hinderance from any

one, from this day for ever. Thou art therefore free for any man. Let this be thy bill of divorce from me, a writing of separation and expulsion, according to the law of Moses and Israel.

REUBEN, son of Jacob, Witness.

ELIEZAR, son of Gilead, Witness.”

God permitted this evil to prevent a greater; and, perhaps, to typify his repudiating the Jews, who were his first spouse.

Verse 32. Saving for the cause of fornication] **λογου πορνειας**, *on account of whoredom*. As *fornication* signifies no more than the unlawful connection of *unmarried* persons, it cannot be used here with propriety, when speaking of those who are *married*. I have therefore translated **λογου πορνειας**, *on account of whoredom*. It does not appear that there is any other case in which Jesus Christ admits of divorce. A real Christian ought rather to beg of God the grace to bear patiently and quietly the imperfections of his wife, than to think of the means of being parted from her. “But divorce was allowed by Moses;” yes, for the hardness of their hearts it was *permitted*: but what was permitted to an uncircumcised heart among the Jews, should not serve for a rule to a heart in which the love of God has been shed abroad by the Holy Spirit. Those who form a matrimonial connection in the fear and love of God, and under his direction, will never need a *divorce*. But those who marry as *passion* or *money* lead the way, may be justly considered *adulterers* and *adulteresses* as long as they live.

Verse 33. Thou shalt not forswear thyself] They dishonour the great God, and break this commandment, who use frequent oaths and imprecations, even in reference to things that are true; and those who make vows and promises, which they either cannot perform, or do not design to fulfil, are not less criminal. *Swearing* in civil matters is become so frequent, that the *dread* and *obligation* of an oath are utterly lost in it. In certain places, where oaths are frequently administered, people have been known to kiss their *thumb* or *pen*, instead of the book, thinking thereby to avoid the sin of *perjury*; but this is a shocking imposition on their own souls. See Clarke’s notes on “^{4:26}Deuteronomy 4:26”; “^{6:13}Deuteronomy 6:13”.

Perform unto the Lord thine oaths] The morality of the Jews on this point was truly execrable: they maintained, that a man might swear with his

lips, and annul it in the same moment in his heart. Rab. Akiba is quoted as an example of this kind of swearing. See *Schoettgen*.

Verse 34. - 35. Neither by heaven, &c.] It was a custom among the Scythians, when they wished to bind themselves in the most solemn manner, to swear by the king's throne; and if the king was at any time sick, they believed it was occasioned by some one's having taken the oath falsely. *Herod.* l. iv.

Who is there among the traders and people of this world who obey this law? A common swearer is constantly perjuring himself: such a person should never be trusted. When we make any promise contrary to the command of God, taking, as a pledge of our sincerity, either GOD, or something belonging to him, we engage that which is not ours, without the Master's consent. God manifests his glory in *heaven*, as upon his *throne*; he imprints the footsteps of his perfections upon the *earth*, his *footstool*; and shows that his holiness and his grace reign in his temple as the place of his residence. Let it be our constant care to seek and honour God in all his works.

Verse 36. Neither shalt thou swear by thy head] For these plain reasons: 1st. God commands thee not to do it. 2dly. Thou hast nothing which is *thy own*, and thou shouldst not pledge another's property. 3dly. It never did, and never can, answer any good purpose. And 4thly. Being a breach of the law of God, it is the way to everlasting misery.

Verse 37. Let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay] That is, a positive *affirmation*, or *negation*, according to your knowledge of the matter concerning which you are called to testify. Do not equivocate; mean what you assert, and adhere to your assertion. Hear what a heathen says on this subject:-

εχθρος γαρ μοι κεινος ομως αιδαο πυλησιν,
οσ χετερον μεν κευθει ενι φρεσιν,αλλο δε βαζει.

Hom. II. ix. 312.

“He whose *words* agree not with his *private thoughts* is as detestable to me as the gates of hell.” See on Joshua 2: at the end.

See the subject of *swearing* particularly considered in the note at the conclusion of Deuteronomy 6.

Whatsoever is more than these] That is, more than a bare *affirmation* or *negation*, according to the requirements of Eternal Truth, cometh of evil; or, *is of the wicked one-εκ του πονηρου εστιν*, i.e. the devil, the father of *superfluities* and *lies*. One of Selden's MSS. and Gregory Nyssen, a commentator of the fourth century, have *εκ του διαβολου εστιν*, *is of the devil*.

That the Jews were notoriously guilty of common swearing, for which our Lord particularly reprehends them, and warns his disciples against, and that they swore by heaven, by earth, by Jerusalem, by their head, &c., the following extracts, made by Dr. Lightfoot from their own writings, amply testify:-

“It was customary and usual among them to swear by the creatures. ‘If any swear by heaven, by earth, by the sun, &c., although the mind of the swearer be, under these words, to swear by HIM who created them, yet this is not an oath. Or, if any swear by some of the prophets, or by some of the books of the Scripture, although the sense of the swearer be to swear by HIM that sent that prophet, or that gave that book, nevertheless, this is not an oath. MAIMONIDES.’

“*If any adjure another by heaven or earth, he is not guilty.* TALMUD.

“They swore by HEAVEN, *awh ^k μymvh hashsha mayim, ken hu*, ‘By heaven, so it is.’ BAB. BERAC.

“They swore by the TEMPLE. ‘When turtles and young pigeons were sometimes sold at Jerusalem for a penny of gold, Rabban Simeon ben Gamaliel said, *hwh ^w[mh* By this habitation (that is, by this TEMPLE) I will not rest this night, unless they be sold for a penny of silver.’ CHERITUTH, cap. i.

“R. Zechariah ben Ketsab said, *hwh ^w[mh* ‘By this TEMPLE, the hand of the woman departed not out of my hand.’-R. Jochanan said, *al kyh* ‘By the TEMPLE, it is in our hand, &c.’ KETUBOTH and BAB. KIDUSHIN.

“*Bava ben Buta* swore by the TEMPLE in the end of the tract *Cherithuth*, and *Rabban Simeon ben Gamaliel* in the beginning,

I arvyk ghnm hzw-And so was the custom in Israel.-Note this, so was the custom. JUCAS. fol. 56.

“They swore by the city *Jerusalem*. R. Judah saith, ‘He that saith, By JERUSALEM, saith nothing, unless with an intent purpose he shall vow towards Jerusalem.’ Where also, after two lines coming between those forms of swearing and vowing, are added, I kyhb I kyhl I kyh μl vwryl μl vwryl μl vwry ‘Jerusalem, For Jerusalem, By Jerusalem.-The Temple, For the temple, By the temple.-The Altar, For the altar, By the altar.-The Lamb, For the Lamb, By the Lamb.-The Chambers of the Temple, For the chambers of the temple, By the chambers of the temple.-The Word, For the Word, By the Word.-The Sacrifices on Fire, For the sacrifices on fire, By the sacrifices on fire.-The Dishes, For the dishes, By the dishes.-By all these things, that I will do this to you.’ TOSAPHT. ad. NEDARIM.

“They swore by their own HEADS. ‘One is bound to swear to his neighbour, and he saith, Ēvar ytk yl dyr Vow (or swear) to me by the life of thy head, &c. SANHEDR. cap. 3.

“One of the holiest of their precepts relative to swearing was this: ‘Be not much in oaths, although one should swear concerning things that are true; for in much swearing it is impossible not to profane.’ Tract. DEMAI.”-See *Lightfoot’s Works*, vol. ii. p. 149.

They did not pretend to forbid ALL common swearing, but only what they term MUCH. A Jew might swear, but he must not be too abundant in the practice. Against such permission, our Lord opposes his *Swear NOT AT ALL!* He who uses any oath, except what he is solemnly called by the magistrate to make, so far from being a *Christian*, he does not deserve the reputation, either of *decency* or *common sense*. In some of our old elementary books for children, we have this good maxim: “Never swear: for he that swears will lie; and he that lies will steal; and, if so, what bad things will he not do!” READING MADE EASY.

Verse 38. An eye for an eye] Our Lord refers here to the law of retaliation mentioned See Clarke “⁽¹²¹³⁾Exodus 21:24”, (see the note there, and See Clarke on “⁽¹³²³⁾Leviticus 24:20”), which obliged the offender to suffer

the *same injury* he had *committed*. The *Greeks* and *Romans* had the same law. So strictly was it attended to at *Athens*, that if a man put out the eye of another who had but *one*, the offender was condemned to lose *both* his eyes, as the loss of one would not be an *equivalent* misfortune. It seems that the Jews had made this law (the execution of which belonged to the civil magistrate) a ground for authorizing private resentments, and all the excesses committed by a vindictive spirit. Revenge was often carried to the utmost extremity, and more evil returned than what had been received. This is often the case among those who are called Christians.

Verse 39. Resist not evil] Or, *the evil person*. So, I am fully persuaded, **τω πονηρω** ought to be translated. Our Lord's meaning is, "Do not repel one outrage by another." He that does so makes himself precisely what the other is, a *wicked person*.

Turn to him the other also] That is, rather than *avenge* thyself, be ready to suffer patiently a repetition of the same injury. But these exhortations belong to those principally who are persecuted for righteousness' sake. Let such leave the judgment of their cause to Him for whose sake they suffer. The Jews always thought that every outrage should be resented; and thus the spirit of hatred and strife was fostered.

Verse 40. And if any man will sue thee at the law] Every where our blessed Lord shows the utmost disapprobation of such litigations as tended to destroy brotherly kindness and charity. It is evident he would have his followers to suffer rather the loss of all their property than to have recourse to such modes of redress, at so great a risk. Having the mind averse from contentions, and preferring peace and concord to temporal advantages, is most solemnly recommended to all Christians. We are great gainers when we lose only our money, or other property, and risk not the loss of our souls, by losing the love of God and man.

Coat] **χιτωνα**, *upper garment*.-Cloke, **ιματιον**, *under garment*. What we call *strait coat*, and *great coat*.-See on **☞ Luke 6:29**.

Verse 41. Shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain.] **αγγαρευσει**. This word is said to be derived from the *Persians*, among whom the king's *messengers*, or *posts*, were called **αγγαποι**, or *angari*. This definition is given both by *Hesychius* and *Suidas*.

The Persian messengers had the royal authority for *pressing horses, ships, and even men*, to assist them in the business on which they were employed. These *angari* are now termed *chappars*, and serve to carry despatches between the court and the provinces. When a *chappar* sets out, the master of the horse furnishes him with a single horse; and, when that is weary, he dismounts the first man he meets, and takes his horse. There is no pardon for a traveller that refuses to let a *chappar* have his horse, nor for any other who should deny him the best horse in his stable. See Sir J. Chardin's and Hanway's Travels. For pressing post horses, &c., the Persian term is [Persian] *Sukhreh geriften*. I find no Persian word exactly of the sound and signification of *αγγαρος*; but the Arabic [Arabic] *agharet* signifies *spurring a horse, attacking, plundering, &c.* The Greek word itself is preserved among the rabbins in Hebrew characters, *ayrgna angaria*, and it has precisely the same meaning: *viz.* to be compelled by violence to do any particular service, especially of the public kind, by the king's authority. *Lightfoot* gives several instances of this in his *Horæ Talmudicæ*.

We are here exhorted to patience and forgiveness:

First, When we receive in our persons all sorts of insults and affronts, ^{<4053>}**Matthew 5:39**.

Secondly, When we are despoiled of our goods, ^{<4054>}**Matthew 5:40**.

Thirdly, When our bodies are forced to undergo all kinds of toils, vexations, and torments, ^{<4054>}**Matthew 5:41**. The way to improve the injustice of man to our own advantage, is to exercise under it meekness, gentleness, and long-suffering, without which disposition of mind, no man can either be happy here or hereafter; for he that avenges himself must lose the mind of Christ, and thus suffer an injury ten thousand times greater than he can ever receive from man. *Revenge*, at such an expense, is *dear* indeed.

Verse 42. Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow] To *give* and *lend* freely to all who are in need, is a general precept from which we are only excused by our inability to perform it. Men are more or less obliged to it as they are more or less able, as the want is more or less pressing, as they are more or less burthened with common poor, or with necessitous relatives. In all these matters, both *prudence* and *charity* must be consulted. That God, who makes use of the beggar's hand to ask

our charity, is the same from whom we ourselves beg our daily bread: and dare we refuse HIM! Let us show at least mildness and compassion, when we can do no more; and if we cannot or will not relieve a poor man, let us never give him an ill word nor an ill look. If we do not *relieve* him, we have no right to *insult* him.

To *give* and to *lend*, are two duties of charity which Christ joins together, and which he sets on equal footing. A rich man is one of God's stewards: God has given him money for the poor, and he cannot deny it without an act of *injustice*. But no man, from what is called a principle of charity or generosity, should give that in *alms* which belongs to his creditors. *Generosity* is godlike; but *justice* has ever, both in *law* and *Gospel*, the *first* claim.

A *loan* is often more beneficial than an absolute *gift*: *first*, because it flatters less the vanity of him who lends; *secondly*, it spares more the shame of him who is in real want; and, *thirdly*, it gives less encouragement to the idleness of him who may not be very honest. However, no advantage should be taken of the necessities of the *borrower*: he who does so is, at least, *half* a murderer. The *lending* which our Lord here inculcates is that which requires no more than the restoration of the principal in a convenient time: otherwise to live upon *trust* is the sure way to pay *double*.

Verse 43. Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy.]

Instead of **πλησιον** *neighbour*, the Codex Grævii, a MS. of the eleventh century, reads **φιλων** *friend*. Thou shalt love thy friend, and hate thine enemy. This was certainly the meaning which the Jews put on it: for neighbour, with them, implied those of the Jewish race, and all others were, considered by them as *natural enemies*. Besides, it is evident that **πλησιον**, among the Hellenistic Jews, meant *friend* merely: Christ uses it precisely in this sense in **Luke 10:36**, in answer to the question asked by a certain lawyer, **Matthew 5:29**. Who of the three was neighbour (**πλησιον** friend) to him who fell among the thieves? He who showed him mercy; i.e. he who acted the *friendly* part. In Hebrew, [ר *rea*, signifies *friend*, which word is translated **πλησιον** by the LXX. in more than one hundred places. Among the Greeks it was a very comprehensive term, and signified *every* man, not even an *enemy* excepted, as *Raphelius*, on this verse, has shown from *Polybius*. The Jews thought themselves authorized to kill any Jew who apostatized; and, though they could not do injury to the Gentiles, in whose country they sojourned, yet they were bound to

suffer them to perish, if they saw them in danger of death. Hear their own words: “A Jew sees a Gentile fall into the sea, let him by no means lift him out; for it is written, *Thou shalt not rise up against the blood of thy neighbour*:-but this is not thy *neighbour*.” Maimon. This shows that by neighbour they understood a *Jew*; one who was of the same blood and religion with themselves.

Verse 44. Love your enemies] This is the most sublime piece of morality ever given to man. Has it appeared *unreasonable* and *absurd* to some? It has. And why? Because it is *natural* to man to avenge himself, and plague those who plague him; and he will ever find abundant excuse for his conduct, in the repeated evils he receives from others; for men are naturally hostile to each other. Jesus Christ design’s to make men *happy*. Now he is necessarily *miserable* who *hates* another. Our Lord prohibits that only which, from its nature, is opposed to man’s happiness. This is therefore one of the most *reasonable* precepts in the universe. But who can obey it? None but he who has the mind of Christ. But I have it not. Seek it from God; it is that *kingdom of heaven* which Christ came to establish upon earth. See on ~~418B~~ **Matthew 3:2**. This one precept is a sufficient proof of the holiness of the Gospel, and of the truth of the Christian religion. Every false religion *flatters* man, and *accommodates* itself to his *pride* and his *passions*. None but God could have imposed a yoke so contrary to *self-love*; and nothing but the supreme eternal love can enable men to practise a precept so insupportable to corrupt nature. Sentiments like this are found among Asiatic writers, and in *select cases* were strongly applied; but as a *general command* this was never given by them, or any other people. It is not an *absolute command* in any of the books which they consider to be *Divinely inspired*. Sir William Jones lays by far too much stress on the casual introduction of such sentiments as this in the Asiatic writers. See his *WORKS*, vol. i. p. 168, where the sentiment is connected with circumstances both extravagant and unnatural; and thus it is nullified by the pretended recommendation.

Bless them that curse you] εὐλογεῖτε, *give them good words* for their bad words. See Clarke’s note on ~~4018B~~ **Genesis 2:3**”.

Do good to them that hate you] Give your enemy every proof that you love him. We must not love in *tongue*, but in *deed* and in *truth*.

Pray for them which despitefully use you] ἐπηρεάζοντων from ἐπι *against*, and ἀρης *Mars*, the heathen god of war. Those who are making

continual war upon you, and constantly *harassing* and *calumniating* you. *Pray for them*-This is another exquisitely reasonable precept. I cannot change that wicked man's heart; and while it is unchanged he will continue to harass me: God alone can change it: then I must implore him to do that which will at once secure the poor man's salvation, and contribute so much to my own peace.

And persecute you] **διωκοντων**, those who *press hard on* and *pursue* you with hatred and malice accompanied with *repeated* acts of *enmity*.

In this verse our Lord shows us that a man may be our enemy in *three* different ways.

First, in his *heart*, by *hatred*.

Secondly, in his *words* by *cursing* or using direful imprecations (**καταρωμενους**) against us.

Thirdly, in his actions, by continually *harassing* and *abusing* us.

He shows us also how we are to behave to those.

The *hatred* of the *first* we are to meet with *love*.

The *cursings* or *evil words* of the *second*, we are to meet with *good words* and *blessings*.

And the *repeated injurious acts* of the *third*, we are to meet with *continual prayer* to God for the man's salvation.

Verse 45. That ye may be the children of your Father] Instead of **υιοι** children, some MSS., the latter *Persic* version, and several of the primitive fathers, read **ομοιοι**, that ye may be *like to*, or *resemble*, your Father who is in heaven. This is certainly our Lord's meaning. As a man's child is called *his*, because a partaker of his own nature, so a holy person is said to be a child of God, because he is a partaker of the Divine nature.

He maketh his sun to rise on the evil] "There is nothing greater than to *imitate* God in doing good to our enemies. All the creatures of God pronounce the sentence of condemnation on the revengeful: and this sentence is written by the *rays* of the *sun*, and with the *drops* of *rain*, and indeed by all the natural good things, the use of which God freely gives to his enemies." If God had not loved us while we were his enemies, we could

never have become his *children*: and we shall cease to be such, as soon as we cease to imitate him.

Verse 46. For if ye love them which love you] He who loves only his *friends*, does nothing for God's sake. He who loves for the sake of *pleasure* or *interest*, pays himself. God has no enemy which he hates but *sin*; we should have no other.

The publicans] That is, *tax-gatherers*, **τελωναι**, from **τελος** a *tax*, and **ωνεομαι** *I buy* or *farm*. A *farmer* or *collector* of the *taxes* or *public revenues*. Of these there were two classes; the *superior*, who were Romans of the equestrian order; and the *inferior*, those mentioned in the Gospels, who it appears were mostly *Jews*.

This class of men was detestable among the Romans, the Greeks, and the Jews, for their intolerable rapacity and avarice. They were abhorred in an especial manner by the Jews, to whom the Roman government was odious: these, assisting in collecting the Roman tribute, were considered as betrayers of the liberties of their country, and abettors of those who enslaved it. They were something like the *tythe-farmers* of certain college-livings in some counties of England, as Lancashire, &c.-a principal cause of the public burthens and discontent. One quotation, of the many produced by *Kypke*, will amply show in what detestation they were held among the Greeks. *Theocritus* being asked, Which of the wild beasts were the most cruel? answered, **εν μεν τοις ορεσιν απκτοι και λεοντες` εν δε ταις πολεσιν, τελωναι και συκοφανται**. *Bears and lions, in the mountains*; and *TAX-GATHERERS and calumniators, in cities*.

Verse 47. And if ye salute your brethren only] Instead of **αδελφους** *brethren*, upwards of one hundred MSS., and several of them of great authority and antiquity, have **φιλους** *friends*. The *Armenian Slavonic*, and *Gothic* versions, with the later *Syriac*, and some of the *primitive fathers*, agree in this reading. I scarcely know which to prefer; as *brother* is more conformable to the Jewish mode of address, it should be retained in the text: the other reading, however, tends to confirm that of the *Codex Grævii* on ^{405B} **Matthew 5:43**.

On the subject of giving and receiving *salutations* in Asiatic countries, Mr. *Harmer*, *Observat.* vol. ii. p. 327, &c., edit. 1808, has collected much valuable information: the following extract will be sufficient to elucidate our Lord's meaning.

“Dr. Doddridge supposes that the *salutation* our Lord refers to, ~~<0184>~~ **Matthew 5:47**, *If ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so?* means *embracing*, though it is a different word. I would observe, that it is made use of in the Septuagint to express that action of endearment; and which is made use of by an apocryphal writer, (Ecclus. 30:19,) whereas, the word we translate *salute* is of a much more general nature: this, I apprehend, arose from his being struck with the thought, that it could never be necessary to caution his disciples, not to restrain the civilities of a common salutation to those of their own religious party. *Juvenal*, when he satirizes the Jews of the apostolic age for their religious opinions, and represents them as unfriendly, and even malevolent, to other people, Sat. xiv., and when he mentions their refusing to show travellers the way, *Non monstrare vias, &c.*, or to point out to them where they might find water to drink when thirsty with journeying, takes no notice of their not saluting those of another nation; yet there is no reason to believe, from these words of CHRIST, that many of them at least would not, and that even a Jewish publican received no salutations from one of his own nation, excepting brother publicans.

“Nor shall we wonder at this, or think it requisite to suppose the word we translate *salute* (*ασπαζομαι*) and which certainly, sometimes at least, signifies nothing more than making use of some friendly words upon meeting with people, must here signify something more particular, since we find some of the present inhabitants of the east seem to want this admonition of our Lord. ‘When the Arabs salute one another,’ according to Niebuhr, ‘it is generally in these terms, *Salam aleikum, Peace be with you*; in speaking which words they lay the right hand on the heart. The answer is, *Aleikum essalam, With you be peace*. Aged people are inclined to add to these words, *And the mercy and blessing of God*. The Mohammedans of Egypt and Syria never salute a Christian in this manner; they content themselves with saying to them, *Good day to you*; or, *Friend, how do you do?* The Arabs of Yemen, who seldom see any Christians, are not so zealous but that sometimes they will give them the *Salam aleikum*.’

“Presently after he says: ‘For a long time I thought the Mohammedan custom, of saluting Christians in a different manner

from that made use of to those of their own profession, was an effect of their pride and religious bigotry. I saluted them sometimes with the *Salam aleikum*, and I had often only the common answer. At length I observed in *Natolia*, that the Christians themselves might probably be the cause that Mohammedans did not make the same return to their civilities that they did to those of their own religion. For the Greek merchants, with whom I travelled in that country, did not seem pleased with my saluting Mohammedans in the Mohammedan manner. And when they were not known to be Christians, by those Turks whom they met with in their journeying, (it being allowed Christian travellers in these provinces to wear a white turban, Christians in common being obliged to wear the sash of their turbans *white* striped with *blue*, that banditti might take them at a distance for Turks, and people of courage,) they never answered those that addressed them with the compliment of *Salam aleikum*. One would not, perhaps, suspect that similar customs obtain in our times, among Europeans: but I find that the Roman Catholics of some provinces of Germany never address the Protestants that live among them with the compliment JESUS CHRIST *be praised*; and, when such a thing happens by mistake, the Protestants do not return it after the manner in use among Catholics, *For ever and ever. Amen!*'

“After this, the words of our Lord in the close of the fifth of Matthew want no farther commentary. The Jews would not address the usual compliment of *Peace be to you*, to either *heathens* or *publicans*; the publicans of the Jewish nation would use it to their countrymen that were publicans, but not to heathens; though the more rigid Jews would not do it to *them*, any more than to *heathens*: our Lord required his disciples to lay aside the moroseness of Jews, and express more extensive benevolence in their salutations. There seems to be nothing of *embracing* thought of in this case, though that, doubtless, was practised anciently among *relations*, and intimate friends, as it is among modern Asiatics.”

If not to *salute* be a heathenish indifference, to hide hatred under *outward civilities* is a diabolic treachery. To pretend much *love* and *affection* for those for whom we have *neither*-to use towards them complimentary phrases, to which we affix no meaning, but that they mean, nothing, is

highly offensive in the sight of that God by whom actions are weighed and words judged.

Do not-the publicans] **τελωναι**, -but **εθνικοι** *heathens*, is adopted by Griesbach, instead of **τελωναι**, on the authority of *Codd. Vatican. & Bezae*, and several others; together with the *Coptic, Syriac* later, and *Syriac Jerusalem*; two *Arabic, Persic, Slavonic*; all the *Itala* but one; *Vulgate, Saxon*, and several of the *primitive fathers*.

Verse 48. Be ye therefore perfect-as your Father] God himself is the grand law, sole giver, and only pattern of the *perfection* which he recommends to his children. The words are very emphatic, **εσεσθε ουν υμεις τελειοι**, *Ye shall be therefore perfect-ye shall be filled with the spirit of that God whose name is Mercy, and whose nature is love. God has many imitators of his power, independence, justice, &c., but few of his love, condescension, and kindness. He calls himself LOVE, to teach us that in this consists that perfection, the attainment of which he has made both our duty and privilege: for these words of our Lord include both a command and a promise.*

“Can we be fully saved from sin in this world?” is an important question, to which this text gives a satisfactory answer: “*Ye shall be perfect, as your Father, who is in heaven, is perfect.*” -As in his infinite nature there is no sin, nothing but goodness and love, so in your finite nature there shall dwell *no sin*, for the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus shall make you free from the law of *sin and death*, ~~ROM~~ **Romans 8:2**. God shall live in, fill, and rule your hearts; and, in what He *fills and influences*, neither Satan nor sin can have any part. If men, slighting their own mercies, cry out, *This is impossible!* -whom does this arguing reprove-God, who, on this ground, has given a command, the fulfilment of which is *impossible*. “But who can bring a clean out of an unclean thing?” God Almighty-and, however inveterate the disease of sin may be, the grace of the Lord Jesus can *fully cure it*; and who will say, that he who laid down his life for our souls will not use his *power* completely to effect that salvation which he has died to procure. “But where is the person thus saved?” Wherever *he* is found who loves God with all his heart, soul, mind, and strength, and his neighbour as himself; and, for the honour of *Christianity* and its **AUTHOR**, may we not hope there are many such in the Church of God, not known indeed by any profession of this kind which they make, but by a surer testimony, that of uniformly *holy tempers, piety to God, and beneficence to man?*

Dr. Lightfoot is not perfectly satisfied with the usual mode of interpreting the 22nd verse of this chapter. I subjoin the substance of what he says. Having given a general exposition of the word *brother*, which the Jews understood as signifying none but an Israelite-*ενοχος*, which we translate *is in danger of*, and which he shows the Jews used to signify, is *exposed to, merits, or is guilty of*-and the word *gehenna, hell-fire*, which he explains as I have done above, he comes to the three offences, and their sentences.

The FIRST is *causeless anger*, which he thinks too plain to require explanation; but into the two following he enters in considerable detail:-

“The SECOND. Whosoever shall say to his brother, ‘*Racha*,’ a nickname, or scornful title usual, which they disdainfully put one upon another, and very commonly; and therefore our Saviour has mentioned this word, the rather because it was of so common use among them. Take these few examples:-

“A certain man sought to betake himself to repentance (and *restitution*.) His wife said to him, ‘*Rekah*, if thou make restitution, even thy *girdle* about thee is not thine own, &c.’ *Tanchum*, fol. 5.

“Rabbi Jochanan was teaching concerning the building of Jerusalem with sapphires and diamonds, &c. One of his scholars laughed him to scorn. But afterwards, being convinced of the truth of the thing, he saith to him, ‘Rabbi, do thou expound, for it is fit for thee to expound: as thou saidst, so have I seen it.’ he saith to him, ‘*Rekah*, hadst thou not seen, thou wouldst not have believed, &c.’ *Midras Tillin*, fol. 38, col. 4.

“To what is the thing like? To a king of flesh and blood, who took to wife a king’s daughter: he saith to her, ‘Wait and fill me a cup;’ but she would not: whereupon he was angry, and put her away; she went, and was married to a sordid fellow; and he saith to her, ‘Wait, and fill me a cup;’ she said unto him, ‘*Rekah*, I am a king’s daughter, &c.’ *Idem in Psalm 137*.

“A Gentile saith to an Israelite, ‘I have a choice dish for thee to eat of.’ He saith, ‘What is it?’ He answers, ‘Swine’s flesh.’ he saith to him, ‘*Rekah*, even what you kill of *clean beasts* is forbidden us, much more this.’ *Tanchum*, fol. 18, col. 4.

“The THIRD offence is to say to a brother, ‘Thou fool,’ which, how to distinguish from *racha*, which signifies *an empty fellow*, were some difficulty, but that *Solomon* is a good dictionary here for us, who takes the term continually here for a wicked wretch and reprobate, and in opposition to spiritual wisdom: so that in the first clause is condemned *causeless anger*; in the second, *scornful taunting and reproaching of a brother*; and, in the last, *calling him a reprobate and wicked, or uncharitably censuring his spiritual and eternal estate*. And this last does more especially hit the scribes and Pharisees, who arrogated to themselves only to be called מַיְמַרְכֵּי חוֹסָמִים *chocamim*, wise men, but of all others they had this scornful and uncharitable opinion, ‘*This people, that knoweth not the law, is cursed,*’ ~~Exod.~~ **John 7:49**.

“And now for the penalties denounced upon these offences, let us look upon them, taking notice of these two traditions of the Jews, which our Saviour seems to face, and to contradict.

“1st. That they accounted the command, *Thou shalt not kill*, to aim only at actual murder. So that in their collecting the six hundred and thirteen precepts out of the law, they understand that command to mean but this: ‘*That one should not kill an Israelite,*’ and accordingly they allotted this only violation of it to judgments; against this wild gloss and practice, he speaks in the first clause: Ye have heard it said, *Thou shalt not kill*, and he that killeth, or committeth actual murder, is liable to judgment, and ye extend the violation of that command no farther; but I say to you, that causeless anger against thy brother is a violation of that command, and even that maketh a man liable to judgment.

2nd. They allotted that murder only to be judged by the council, or *Sanhedrin*, that was committed by a man in *propria persona*: let them speak their own sense, &c. *Talm. in Sanhedrin, per. 9*.

“Any one that kills his neighbour with his hand, as if he strike him with a sword, or with a stone that kills him, or strangle him till he die, or burn him in the fire, seeing that he kills him any how in his own person, lo! such a one must be put to death by the Sanhedrin; but he that hires another to kill his neighbour, or that sends his servants, and they kill him, or that violently thrusts him before a

lion, or the like, and the beast kills him-any one of these is a *shedder of blood*, and the guilt of shedding of blood is upon him, and he is liable to death by the hand of *Heaven*, but he is not to be put to death by the *Sanhedrin*. And whence is the proof that it must be thus! Because it is said, *He that sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed*. This is he that slays a man *himself*, and not by the hand of another. *Your blood of your lives will I require*. This is he that slays himself. *At the hand of every beast will I require it*. This is he that delivers up his neighbour before a beast to be rent in pieces. *At the hand of man, even at the hand of every man's brother, will I require the life of man*. This is he that *hires others* to kill his neighbour: In this interpretation, *requiring* is spoken of all the three; *behold*, their judgment is delivered over to Heaven (*or God*.) And all these man-slayers and the like, who are not liable to death by the Sanhedrin, if the king of Israel will slay them by the judgment of the kingdom, and the law of nations, he may, &c.' *Maym. ubi supr. per. 2.*

“You may observe in these wretched traditions a twofold killing, and a twofold judgment: a man's killing another in his own person, and with his own hand, and such a one liable to the judgment of the Sanhedrin, to be put to death by them, as a murderer; and a man that killed another by proxy, not with his own hand, not hiring another to kill him, or turning a beast or serpent upon him to kill him. This man is not to be judged and executed by the *Sanhedrin*, but, referred and reserved only to the judgment of God. So that we see plainly, from hence, in what sense the word *judgment* is used in the latter end of the preceding verse, and the first clause of this, namely, not for the judgment of any one of the *Sanhedrins*, as it is commonly understood, but for the *judgment of God*. In the former verse, *Christ* speaks their sense, and in the first clause of this, his own, in application to it. Ye have heard it said, that any man that kills is liable to the judgment of God; but I say unto you, that he that is but angry with his brother without a cause is liable to the judgment of God. You have heard it said, that he only that commits murder with his own hand is liable to the council, or *Sanhedrin*, as a murderer; but I say unto you, that he that but calls his brother *racha*, as common a word as ye make it, and a thing of nothing, he is liable to be judged by the *Sanhedrin*.

“Lastly, he that saith to his brother, *Thou fool*, wicked one, or cast-away, *shall be in danger of hell-fire*, **ενοχος εις θεεζζας πυρος**. There are two observable things in the words. The first is the change of case from what was before; there it was said **τη κρισει τω συνεδριω**, but here, **εις γεενναν**. It is but an emphatical raising of the sense, to make it the more feeling and to speak home. He that saith to his brother, *Raka*, shall be in danger of the council; but he that says, *Thou fool*, shall be in danger of a penalty even to hell-fire. And thus our Saviour equals the sin and penalty in a very just parable. In just anger, with God’s just anger and judgment; public reproach, with public correction by the council; and censuring for a child of hell, to the fire of hell.

“2nd. It is not said **εις πυρ γεεννης**, *To the fire of hell*, but **εις γεεννας πυρος**, *To a hell of fire*; in which expression he sets the emphasis still higher. And, besides the reference to the *valley of Hinnom*, he seems to refer to that penalty used by the *Sanhedrin* of burning—the most bitter death that they used to put men to; the manner of which was thus: They set the malefactor in a dunghill up to the knees; and they put a towel about his neck, and one pulled one way, and another the opposite, till, by thus strangling him, they forced him to open his mouth. Then they poured boiling lead into his mouth, which went down into his belly, and so burnt his bowels. *Talm. in Sanhedrin. per. 7.*

“Now, having spoken in the clause before, of being judged by the *Sanhedrin*, whose most terrible penalty was this burning, he doth in this clause raise the penalty higher; namely, of burning in hell; not with a little scalding lead, but even with a *hell of fire*.” It is possible that our Lord might have reference to such customs as these.

ST. MATTHEW

CHAPTER 6.

Of alms-giving, 1-5. Of prayer, 6-8. The Lord's prayer, or model according to which Christians should pray, 9-13. Of forgiveness, 14, 15. Of fasting, 16, 17. Of laying up treasures, 18-21. Of the single eye, 22, 23. The impossibility of serving two masters, 24. Of contentment and confidence in the Divine providence, 25-32. Directions about seeking the kingdom of God, 33, 34.

NOTES ON CHAP. 6

Verse 1. That ye do not your alms] δικαιοσυνην υμων μη ποιειν, *perform not your acts of righteousness*-such as *alms-giving, fasting, and prayer*, mentioned immediately after. Instead of δικαιοσυνην, *righteousness, or acts of righteousness*, the reading in the text, that which has been commonly received is ελεημοσυνην, *alms*. But the first reading has been inserted in several editions, and is supported by the *Codd. Vatican.* and *Bezae*, some others, and several versions, all the *Itala* except one, and the *Vulgate*. The Latin fathers have *justitiam*, a word of the same meaning. Mr. Gregory has amply proved, **hqdx** *tsidekeh, righteousness*, was a common word for *alms* among the Jews. *Works*, 4to. p. 58, 1671. R. D. Kimchi says that **hqdx** *tsidekeh*, ^{<23914>} **Isaiah 59:14**, means *alms-giving*; and the phrase **hqdx** [^]tn *natan tsidekah*, is used by the Jews to signify the *giving of alms*. The following passages from Dr. Lightfoot show that it was thus commonly used among the Jewish writers:-

“It is questioned,” says he, “whether *Matthew* writ ελεημοσυνην, *alms*, or δικαιοσυνην, *righteousness*. I answer:-

“I. That, our Saviour certainly said **hqdx** *tsidekah, righteousness*, (or, in Syriac **atqdz** *zidkatha*,) I make no doubt at all; but, that that word could not be otherwise understood by the common people than of *alms*, there is as little doubt to be made. For although the word **hqdx** *tsidekah*, according to the idiom of the Old Testament, signifies nothing else than *righteousness*; yet now, when our Saviour spoke these words, it signified nothing so much as *alms*.

“II. *Christ* used also the same word **atqdz zidkatha**, *righteousness*, in time three verses next following, and *Matthew* used the word **ελεημοσυνην**, *alms*; but by what right, I beseech you, should he call it **δικαιοσυνην**, *righteousness*, in the first verse, and **ελεημοσυνην**, *alms*, in the following; when *Christ* every where used one and the same word? *Matthew* might not change in *Greek*, where our Saviour had not changed in *Syriac*: therefore we must say that the Lord *Jesus* used the word **hqdx tsidekeh** or **atqdz zidkatha**, in these four first verses; but that, speaking in the dialect of common people, he was understood by the common people to speak of *alms*. Now they called *alms* by the name of *righteousness*, for the fathers of the traditions taught, and the common people believed, that *alms* contributed very much to justification. Hear the *Jewish* chair in this matter-*For one farthing given to a poor man in alms, a man is made partaker of the beatific vision*: where it renders these words, ^{<191715>} **Psalm 17:15**, *I shall behold thy face in righteousness, after this manner, I shall behold thy face*, BECAUSE of ALMS. Bava. Bathra.

“This money goeth for alms, that my sons may live, and that I may obtain the world to come. Bab. Rosh. Hashshanah.

“A man’s table now expiates by alms, as heretofore the altar did by sacrifice. Beracoth.

“If you afford alms out of your purse, God will keep you from all damage and harm. Hieros. Peah.

“MONOBAZES the king bestowed his goods liberally upon the poor, and had these words spoken to him by his kinsmen and friends-‘Your ancestors increased both their own riches, and those that were left them by their fathers; but you waste both your own and those of your ancestors.’ To whom he answered-‘My fathers laid up their wealth on earth: I lay up mine in heaven. As it is written, Truth shall flourish out of the earth, but Righteousness shall look down from heaven. My fathers laid up treasures that bear no fruit; but I lay up such as bear fruit. As it is said, It shall be well with the just, for they shall eat the fruit of their own works. My fathers treasured up, when power was in their hands; but I where it is not. As it is said, Justice and judgment is the habitation of his

throne. My fathers heaped up for others; I for myself. As it is said, And this shall be to thee for righteousness. They scraped together for this world. I for the world to come. As it is said, Righteousness shall deliver from death.' Ibid. These things are also recited in the Babylonian Talmud.

“You see plainly in what sense he understands *righteousness*, namely, in the sense of *alms*: and that sense not so much framed in his own imagination, as in that of the whole nation, and which the royal catachumen had imbibed from the Pharisees his teachers.

“Behold the *justifying* and saving virtue of *alms*, from the very work done according to the doctrine of the Pharisaical chair! And hence, the opinion of this efficacy of alms so far prevailed with the deceived people, that they pointed out *alms* by no other name (confined within one single word) than **hqdx** *tsidekah*, *righteousness*. Perhaps those words of our Saviour are spoken in derision of this doctrine. *Yea, give those things which ye have in alms, and behold all things shall be clean to you,* ^{<2114>} **Luke 11:41**. With good reason indeed exhorting them to give alms; but yet withal striking at the covetousness of the Pharisees, and confuting their vain opinion of being clean by the washing of their hands, from their own opinion of the efficacy of *alms*. As if he had said, “Ye assert that alms *justifies* and *saves*, and therefore ye call it by the name of righteousness; why therefore do ye affect *cleanliness* by the washing of hands; and not rather by the performance of *charity*?” LIGHTFOOT’S Works, vol. ii. p. 153.

Before men] Our Lord does not forbid public alms-giving, fasting, and prayer, but simply censures those *vain* and *hypocritical* persons who do these things publicly that they *may be seen of men*, and receive from them the *reputation of saints*, &c.

Verse 2. Therefore when thou doest thine alms] In the first verse the exhortation is general: *Take YE heed*. In this verse the address is pointed-and THOU-man-woman-who readest-hearest.

Do not sound a trumpet] It is very likely that this was literally practised among the Pharisees, who seemed to live on the public esteem, and were excessively self-righteous and vain. Having something to distribute by way of alms, it is very probable they caused this to be published by blowing a

trumpet or *horn*, under pretence of collecting the poor; though with no other design than to gratify their own ambition. There is a custom in the east not much unlike this. “The *derveeshes* carry *horns* with them, which they frequently *blow*, when any thing is *given to them, in honor of the donor*. It is not impossible that some of the poor Jews who begged alms might be furnished like the Persian *derveeshes*, who are a sort of religious beggars, and that these hypocrites might be disposed to confine their alms-giving to those that they knew would pay them this honour.”
HARMER’S Observat. vol. i. p. 474.

It must be granted, that in the Jewish writings there is no such practice referred to as that which I have supposed above, viz. blowing a trumpet to gather the poor, or the poor blowing a horn when relieved. Hence some learned men have thought that the word $\Gamma\text{P}\omega\text{V}$ *shopher*, a *trumpet*, refers to the hole in the public alms chest, into which the money was dropped which was allotted for the service of the poor. Such holes, because they were wide at one end and grew gradually narrow towards the other, were actually termed $\tau\text{W}\rho\text{P}\omega\text{V}$ *shopheroth*, trumpets, by the rabbins; of this *Schoettgen* furnishes several examples. An ostentatious man, who wished to attract the notice of those around him, would throw in his money with some force into these trumpet-resembling holes, and thus he might be said $\Gamma\text{P}\omega\text{V}$ $\sigma\alpha\lambda\pi\iota\zeta\epsilon\iota\upsilon$, to *sound the trumpet*. The Jerusalem Gemara, tract *Shekalim*, describes these $\tau\text{W}\rho\text{P}\omega\text{V}$ *shopheroth* thus—*These trumpet holes were crooked, narrow above and wide below, in order to prevent fraud*. As our Lord only uses the words, $\mu\eta$ $\sigma\alpha\lambda\pi\iota\sigma\eta\varsigma$, it may be tantamount to our term *jingle*. Do not make a public ostentatious *jingle* of that money which you give to public charities. Pride and hypocrisy are the things here reprehended. The Pharisees, no doubt, felt the weight of the reproof. Still the words may be taken in their literal meaning, as we know that the *Moslimans*, who nearly resemble the ancient Pharisees in the ostentation, bigotry, and cruelty of their character, are accustomed, in their festival of *Muhurram*, to erect *stages* in the public streets, and, by the *sound of a trumpet*, call the *poor* together to receive alms of rice, and other kinds of food. See WARD.

Works of charity and mercy should be done as much in private as is consistent with the advancement of the glory of God, and the effectual relief of the poor.

In the synagogues and in the streets] That such chests or boxes, for receiving the alms of well-disposed people, were placed in the synagogues, we may readily believe; but what were the *streets*? *Schoettgen* supposes that courts or avenues in the temple and in the synagogues may be intended-places where the people were accustomed to walk, for air, amusement, &c., for it is not to be supposed that such chests were fixed in the public streets.

They have their reward.] That is, the honour and esteem of men which they sought. God is under no obligation to them-they did nothing with an eye to his glory, and from HIM they can expect no recompense. They had their recompense in this life; and could expect none in the world to come.

Verse 3. Let not thy left hand know] In many cases, works of charity must be hidden from even our nearest relatives, who, if they knew, would hinder us from doing what God has given us power and inclination to perform. We must go even farther; and conceal them as far as is possible from ourselves, by not thinking of them, or eyeing them with complacency. They are given to GOD, and should be hidden in HIM.

Verse 4. Which seeth in secret] We should ever remember that the eye of the Lord is upon us, and that he sees not only the *act*, but also every motive that led to it.

Shall reward thee openly.] Will give thee the fullest proofs of his acceptance of thy work of faith, and labour of love, by increasing that substance which, *for his sake*, thou sharest with the poor; and will *manifest* his approbation in thy own heart, by the witness of his Spirit.

Verse 5. And when thou prayest] *οταν προσευχη. προσευχη*, *prayer*, is compounded of *προς* *with*, and *ευχη* a *vow*, because to pray right, a man *binds* himself to God, as by a *vow*, to live to his glory, if he will grant him his grace, &c. *ευχομαι* signifies *to pour out prayers* or *vows*, from *ευ* *well*, and *χεω*, *I pour out*; probably alluding to the *offerings* or *libations* which were *poured out* before, or on the altar. A proper idea of prayer is, *a pouring out of the soul unto God*, as a *free-will offering*, solemnly and eternally dedicated to him, accompanied with the most *earnest desire* that it may know, love, and serve him alone. He that comes thus to God will ever be heard and blessed. Prayer is the language of *dependence*; he who prays not, is endeavouring to live *independently* of God: this was the *first* curse, and continues to be the great curse of mankind. In the beginning,

Satan said, Eat this fruit; ye shall then be as God; i.e. ye shall be *independent*: the man hearkened to his voice, sin entered into the world, and notwithstanding the full manifestation of the deception, the ruinous system is still pursued; man will, if possible, live independently of God; hence he either prays not at all, or uses the *language* without the *spirit* of prayer. The following verses contain so fine a view, and so just a definition, of prayer, that I think the pious reader will be glad to find them here.

WHAT IS PRAYER?

*Prayer is the soul's sincere desire,
Unuttered or expressed,
The motion of a hidden fire
That trembles in the breast:*

*Prayer is the burden of a sigh,
The falling of a tear,
The upward gleaming of an eye,
When none but God is near.*

*Prayer is the simplest form of speech
That infant lips can try;
Prayer, the sublimest strains that reach
The Majesty on high:*

*Prayer is the Christian's vital breath,
The Christian's native air,
His watch-word at the gates of death,
He enters heaven by prayer.*

*Prayer is the contrite sinner's voice,
Returning from his ways,
While angels in their songs rejoice,
And say, Behold he prays!*

*The saints in prayer appear as one,
In word, in deed, in mind,
When with the Father and the Son
Their fellowship they find.*

*Nor prayer is made on earth alone:
The Holy Spirit pleads;
And Jesus, on th' eternal throne,
For sinners intercedes.*

**“O Thou, by whom we come to God!
The Life, the Truth, the Way,
The path of prayer thyself hast trod,
Lord, teach us how to pray!”**
MONTGOMERY.

Thou shalt not be as the hypocrites] **υποκριται**. From **υπο** *under*, and **κρινομαι** *to be judged, thought*: properly a stage-player, who acts under a mask, personating a character different from his own; a *counterfeit*, a *dissembler*; one who would be *thought* to be different from what he really is. A person who wishes to be taken for a follower of God, but who has nothing of religion except the *outside*.

Love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets] The Jewish phylacterical prayers were long, and the canonical hours obliged them to repeat these prayers wherever they happened to be; and the Pharisees, who were full of vain glory, contrived to be overtaken in the streets by the canonical hour, that they might be seen by the people, and applauded for their great and conscientious piety. See *Lightfoot*. As they had no piety but that which was *outward*, they endeavoured to let it fully appear, that they might make the most of it among the people. It would not have answered their end to *kneel* before God, for then they might have been *unnoticed* by men; and consequently have lost that reward which they had in view: *viz.* the esteem and applause of the multitude. This *hypocritical* pretension to devotion is common among the Asiatics. Both *Hindoos* and *Mohammedans* love to pray in the most *public* places, at the *landing places of rivers*, in the *public streets*, on the *roofs of the covered boats*, without the least endeavour to conceal their outside devotion, that they may be seen of men.

Verse 6. But thou, when thou prayest] This is a very impressive and emphatic address. But THOU! whosoever thou art, Jew, Pharisee, Christian-enter into thy closet. Prayer is the most secret intercourse of the soul with God, and as it were the conversation of one heart with another. The world is too profane and treacherous to be of the secret. We must *shut the door* against it: endeavour to forget it, with all the affairs which busy and amuse it. Prayer requires retirement, at least of the heart; for this may be fitly termed the *closet* in the house of God, which house the body of every real Christian is, ^{<41816>}**1 Corinthians 3:16**. To this closet we ought to retire even in public prayer, and in the midst of company.

Reward thee openly.] What goodness is there equal to this of God to give, not only *what* we ask, and *more* than we ask, but to reward even *prayer* itself! How great advantage is it to serve a prince who places prayers in the number of services, and reckons to his subjects' account, even their trust and confidence in begging all things of him!

Verse 7. Use not vain repetitions] μη βαττολογησητε, Suidas explains this word well: “πολυλογία, *much speaking*, from one Battus, who made very prolix hymns, in which the same idea frequently recurred.” “A frequent repetition of awful and striking words may often be the result of earnestness and fervour. See ^{<700>}Daniel 9:3-20; but great length of prayer, which will of course involve much sameness and idle repetition, naturally creates fatigue and carelessness in the worshipper, and seems to suppose ignorance or inattention in the Deity; a fault against which our Lord more particularly wishes to secure them.” See Clarke on ^{<400>}Matthew 6:8”. This judicious note is from the late Mr. Gilbert Wakefield, who illustrates it with the following quotation from the Heautontimorumenos of Terence:-

Ohe! jam decine Deos, uxor, gratulando **OBTUNDERE,**
Tuam esse inventam gnatam: nisi illos ex TUO INGENIO judicas,
Ut nil credas INTELLIGERE, nisi idem DICTUM SIT CENTIES.

“Pray thee, wife, cease from STUNNING the gods with thanksgivings, because thy child is in safety; unless thou judgest of *them* from *thyself*, that they cannot UNDERSTAND a thing, unless they are told of it a HUNDRED TIMES.” *Heaut.* ver. 880.

Prayer requires more of the *heart* than of the *tongue*. The eloquence of prayer consists in the fervency of desire, and the simplicity of faith. The abundance of fine thoughts, studied and vehement motions, and the *order* and *politeness* of the expressions, are things which compose a mere *human* harangue, not an humble and Christian prayer. Our trust and confidence ought to proceed from that which God is *able to do in us*, and not from that which we can *say to him*. It is abominable, says the HEDAYAH, that a person offering up prayers to God, should say, “I beseech thee, by the glory of thy heavens!” or, “by the splendour of thy throne!” for a style of this nature would lead to suspect that the Almighty derived glory from the heavens; whereas the heavens are *created*, but God with all his attributes is eternal and inimitable. HEDAYAH, vol. iv. p. 121.

This is the sentiment of a Mohammedan; and yet for this vain repetition the Mohammedans are peculiarly remarkable; they often use such words as the following:-

[-----Arabic-----]
 [-----Arabic-----]
 [-----Arabic-----]
 [-----Arabic-----]

O God, O God, O God, O God!-O Lord, O Lord, O Lord, O Lord!-O living, O immortal, O living, O immortal, O living, O immortal, O living, O immortal!-O Creator of the heavens and the earth!-O thou who art endowed with majesty and authority! O wonderful, &c. I have extracted the above from a form of prayer used by *Tippo Sahib*, which I met with in a book of devotion in which there were several prayers written with his own hand, and signed with his own name.

Of this vain repetition in civil matters, among the Jews, many instances might be given, and not a few examples might be found among Christians. The *heathens* abounded with them: see several quoted by Lightfoot.-*Let the parricide be dragged! We beseech thee, Augustus, let the parricide be dragged! This is the thing we ask, let the parricide be dragged! Hear us, Cæsar; let the false accusers be cast to the lion! Hear us, Cæsar, let the false accusers be condemned to the lion! Hear us, Cæsar, &c.* It was a maxim among the Jews, that “he who *multiplies prayer*, must be heard.” This is correct, if it only imply perseverance in supplication; but if it be used to signify the multiplying of words, or even forms of prayer, it will necessarily produce the evil which our Lord reprehends: *Be not as the heathen-use not vain repetition*, &c. Even the Christian Churches in India have copied this vain repetition work; and in it the Roman Catholic, the Armenian, and the Greek Churches strive to excel.

As the heathen] The *Vatican MS.* reads *υποκριται*, like the *hypocrites*. Unmeaning words, useless repetitions, and complimentary phrases in prayer, are in general the result of *heathenism*, *hypocrisy*, or *ignorance*.

Verse 8. Your Father knoweth what things ye have need of] Prayer is not designed to *inform* God, but to give *man* a sight of his misery; to humble his heart, to excite his desire, to inflame his faith, to animate his hope, to raise his soul from earth to heaven, and to put him in mind that THERE is his *Father*, his *country*, and *inheritance*.

In the preceding verses we may see three faults, which our Lord commands us to avoid in prayer:-

1st. HYPOCRISY. *Be not as the hypocrites.* ^{<0015>} **Matthew 6:5.**

2ndly. DISSIPATION. *Enter into thy closet.* ^{<0016>} **Matthew 6:6.**

3rdly. MUCH SPEAKING, OR UNMEANING REPETITION, *Be not like the heathens.* ^{<0017>} **Matthew 6:7.**

Verse 9. After this manner therefore pray ye] Forms of prayer were frequent among the Jews; and every public teacher gave one to his disciples. Some forms were drawn out to a considerable length, and from these *abridgments* were made: to the latter sort the following prayer properly belongs, and consequently, besides its own very important use, it is a *plan* for a more extended devotion. What satisfaction must it be to learn from God himself, with *what words*, and in what *manner*, he would have us pray to him, so as not to pray in vain! A king, who draws up the petition which he allows to be presented to himself, has doubtless the fullest determination to grant the request. We do not sufficiently consider the value of this prayer; the respect and attention which it requires; the preference to be given to it; its fulness and perfection: the frequent use we should make of it; and the spirit which we should bring with it. "Lord, teach us how to pray!" is a prayer necessary *to* prayer; for unless we are divinely instructed in the *manner*, and influenced by the spirit of true devotion, even the prayer taught us by Jesus Christ may be repeated without profit to our souls.

Our Father] It was a maxim of the Jews, that a man should not pray alone, but join with the Church; by which they particularly meant that he should, whether alone or with the synagogue, use the *plural* number as comprehending all the followers of God. Hence, they say, Let none pray the *short prayer*, i.e. as the gloss expounds it, the prayer in the *singular*, but in the *plural* number. See *Lightfoot* on this place.

This prayer was evidently made in a peculiar manner for the *children of God*. And hence we are taught to say, not *MY Father*, but *OUR Father*. The heart, says one, of a child of God, is a brotherly heart, in respect of all other Christians: it asks nothing but in the spirit of *unity, fellowship, and Christian charity*; desiring *that* for its brethren which it desires for itself.

The word *Father*, placed here at the beginning of this prayer, includes two grand ideas, which should serve as a foundation to all our petitions: 1st. That tender and respectful love which we should feel for God, such as that which children feel for their fathers. 2dly. That strong confidence in God's love to us, such as fathers have for their children. Thus all the petitions in this prayer stand in strictest reference to the word *Father*; the first three referring to the *love we have for God*; and the three last, to that *confidence* which we have in the love *he bears to us*.

The relation we stand in to this first and best of beings dictates to us *reverence* for his person, *zeal* for his honour, *obedience* to his will, *submission* to his dispensations and chastisements, and *resemblance* to his nature.

Which art in heaven] The phrase μὴν ἄβραμ *abinu sheboshemayim*, our Father who art in heaven, was very common among the ancient Jews; and was used by them precisely in the same sense as it is used here by our Lord.

This phrase in the Scriptures seems used to express:

1st. His OMNIPRESENCE. *The heaven of heavens cannot contain thee.* ^{<11087>} **1 Kings 8:27**: that is, Thou fillest immensity.

2dly. His MAJESTY and DOMINION over his creatures. *Art thou not God in heaven, and rulest thou not over all the kingdoms of the heathen?* ^{<4306>} **2 Chronicles 20:6**.

3dly. His POWER and MIGHT. *Art thou not God in heaven, and in thy hand is there not power and might, so that no creature is able to withstand thee!* ^{<4306>} **2 Chronicles 20:6**. *Our God is in heaven, and hath done whatsoever he pleased.* ^{<9878>} **Psalms 115:3**.

4thly. His OMNISCIENCE. *The Lord's throne is in heaven, his eyes behold, his eye-lids try the children of men.* ^{<91104>} **Psalms 11:4**. *The Lord looketh down from heaven, he beholdeth all the sons of men.* ^{<93313>} **Psalms 33:13-15**.

5thly. His infinite PURITY and HOLINESS. *Look down from thy holy habitation, &c.* ^{<13615>} **Deuteronomy 26:15**. *Thou art the high and lofty One, who inhabiteth eternity, whose name is holy.* ^{<23715>} **Isaiah 57:15**.

Hallowed] *αγιασθητω. αγιαζω`* from a negative, and *γη*, *the earth*, a thing *separated from the earth*, or from *earthly purposes and employments*. As the word *sanctified*, or *hallowed*, in Scripture, is frequently used for the *consecration* of a thing or person to a holy use or office, as the *Levites, first-born, tabernacle, temple*, and their utensils, which were all *set apart* from every earthly, common, or profane use, and employed wholly in the service of God, so the Divine Majesty may be said to be sanctified by us, in analogy to those things, viz. when, we separate him from, and in our conceptions and desires exalt him above, *earth and all things*.

Thy name.] That is, GOD *himself*, with all the *attributes* of his Divine nature-his power, wisdom, justice, mercy, &c.

We hallow God's name,

1st. With our *lips*, when all our conversation is holy, and we speak of those things which are meet to minister grace to the hearers.

2dly. In our *thoughts*, when we suppress every rising evil, and have our tempers regulated by his grace and Spirit.

3dly. In our *lives*, when we begin, continue, and end our works to his glory. If we have an eye to God in all we perform, then every act of our common employment will be an act of religious worship.

4thly. In our *families*, when we endeavour to bring up our *children* in the discipline and admonition of the Lord; instructing also our *servants* in the way of righteousness.

5thly. In a particular *calling* or *business*, when we *separate* the falsity, deception, and lying, commonly practised, from it; buying and selling as in the sight of the holy and just God.

Verse 10. Thy kingdom come.] The ancient Jews scrupled not to say: *He prays not at all, in whose prayers there is no mention of the kingdom of God*. Hence, they were accustomed to say, "Let him cause his kingdom to reign, and his redemption to flourish: and let the Messiah speedily come and deliver his people."

The universal sway of the sceptre of Christ:-God has promised that the kingdom of Christ shall be exalted above all kingdoms. ²⁰⁷¹⁴**Daniel 7:14-27.** That it shall overcome all others, and be at last the universal empire.

~~2307~~ **Isaiah 9:7.** Connect this with the explanation given of this phrase,
~~4012~~ **Matthew 3:2.**

Thy will be done] This petition is properly added to the preceding; for when the kingdom of righteousness, peace, and joy, in the Holy Spirit, is established in the heart, there is then an ample provision made for the fulfilment of the Divine *will*.

The *will of God* is infinitely good, wise, and holy; to have it fulfilled in and among men, is to have infinite *goodness, wisdom, and holiness* diffused throughout the universe; and earth made the counterpart of heaven.

As it is in heaven.] The Jews maintained, that they were the angels of God upon earth, as these pure spirits were angels of God in heaven; hence they said, “As the angels sanctify the Divine name in heaven, so the Israelites sanctify the Divine name, upon earth.” See *Schoettgen*.

Observe, 1st. The salvation of the soul is the result of *two wills* conjoined: the *will of God*, and the *will of man*. If God will not the salvation of man, he cannot be saved: If, man will not the salvation God has prepared for him, he cannot be delivered from his sins. 2dly. This petition certainly points out a deliverance from all sin; for nothing that is *unholy* can consist with the Divine *will*, and if this be fulfilled in man, surely sin shall be banished from his soul. 3dly. This is farther evident from these words, *as it is in heaven*; i.e. as the *angels* do it: viz. with all *zeal, diligence, love, delight, and perseverance*. 4thly. Does not the petition plainly imply, we may live without sinning against God? Surely the holy angels never mingle iniquity with their loving obedience; and as our Lord teaches us to pray, that we do his will *here* as they do it in heaven, can it be thought he would put a petition in our mouths, the fulfilment of which was impossible? 5thly. This certainly destroys the assertion: “*There is no such state of purification, to be attained here, in which it may be said, the soul is redeemed from sinful passions and desires;*” for it is on EARTH that we are commanded to pray that this *will*, which is our sanctification, may be done. 6thly. Our souls can never be truly happy, till our WILLS be entirely subjected to, and become one with, the will of God. 7thly. How can any person offer this petition to his Maker, who thinks of nothing *less* than the performance of the *will of God*, and of nothing *more* than doing his *own*?

Some see the mystery of the Trinity in the three preceding petitions. The first being, addressed to the *Father*, as the source of all holiness. The

second, to the *Son*, who establishes the kingdom of God upon earth. The third, to the *Holy Spirit*, who by his energy works in men to *will* and to perform.

To offer these three petitions with success at the throne of God, three graces, essential to our salvation, must be brought into exercise; and, indeed, the petitions themselves necessarily suppose them. FAITH, *Our Father*-for he that cometh to God, must believe that he is.

HOPE, *Thy kingdom come*-For this grace has for its object good things to come.

LOVE, *Thy will be done*-For love is the *incentive* to and *principle* of all obedience to God, and beneficence to man.

Verse 11. Give us this day our daily bread] The word **επιουσιαν** has greatly perplexed critics and commentators. I find upwards of thirty different explanations of it. It is found in no Greek writer before the evangelists, and *Origen* says expressly, *that it was formed by them*, **αλλ' εοικε πεπλασθαι υπο των ευαγγελιστων**. The interpretation of *Theophylact*, one of the best of the Greek fathers, has ever appeared to me to be the most correct, **αρτος επι τη ουσια και αυστασει ημων αυταρκης**, *Bread, sufficient for our substance and support*, i.e. That quantity of food which is necessary to support our health and strength, by being changed into the *substance* of our bodies. Its composition is of **επι** and **ουσια**, *proper* or *sufficient for support*. Mr. Wakefield thinks it probable, that the word was originally written **επι ουσιαν**, which coalesced by degrees, till they became the **επιουσιον** of the MSS. There is probably an allusion here to the custom of travellers in the east, who were wont to reserve a part of the food given them the preceding evening to serve for their breakfast or dinner the next day. But as this was not sufficient for the whole day, they were therefore obliged to depend on the providence of God for the additional supply. In ^{<2152>}**Luke 15:12, 13**, **ουσια** signifies, what a person has to live on; and nothing can be more natural than to understand the compound **επιουσιος**, of that additional supply which the traveller needs, to complete the provision necessary for a day's eating, over and above what he had then in his possession. See *Harmer*.

The word is so very peculiar and expressive, and seems to have been made on purpose by the evangelists, that more than mere *bodily* nourishment

seems to be intended by it. Indeed, many of the primitive fathers understood it as comprehending that daily supply of *grace* which the soul requires to keep it in health and vigour: He who uses the petition would do well to keep both in view. Observe 1. God is the author and dispenser of all temporal as well as spiritual good. 2. We have merited no kind of good from his hand, and therefore must receive it as a *free gift*: *Give us*, &c. 3. We must depend on him *daily* for support; we are not permitted to ask any thing for to-morrow: give us *to-day*. 4. That petition of the ancient Jews is excellent: "Lord, the necessities of thy people Israel are many, and their knowledge small, so that they know not how to disclose their necessities: Let it be thy good pleasure to give to every man, what sufficeth for food!" Thus they expressed their dependence, and left it to God to determine what was best and most suitable. We must ask only that which is *essential* to our support, God having promised neither *luxuries* nor *superfluities*.

Verse 12. And forgive us our debts] Sin is represented here under the notion of a *debt*, and as our sins are *many*, they are called here *debts*. God made man that he might live to his glory, and gave him a law to walk by; and if, when he does any thing that tends not to glorify God, he contracts a debt with Divine Justice, how much more is he debtor when he breaks the law by actual transgression! It has been justly observed, "All the attributes of God are reasons of obedience to man; those attributes are infinite; every sin is an act of ingratitude or rebellion against all these attributes; therefore sin is infinitely sinful."

Forgive us.-Man has nothing to *pay*: if his debts are not *forgiven*, they must stand charged against him for ever, as he is absolutely *insolvent*. Forgiveness, therefore, must come from the free mercy of God in Christ: and how strange is it we cannot have the *old* debt cancelled, without (by that very means) contracting a *new* one, as great as the old! but the *credit* is transferred from *Justice* to *Mercy*. While *sinner*s we are in debt to infinite *Justice*; when *pardoned*, in debt to endless *Mercy*: and as a continuance in a state of grace necessarily implies a continual communication of mercy, so the debt goes on increasing *ad infinitum*. Strange economy in the Divine procedure, which by rendering a man an infinite debtor, keeps him eternally dependent on his Creator! How good is God! And what does this state of dependence imply? A union with, and participation of, the fountain of eternal goodness and felicity!

As we forgive our debtors.] It was a maxim among the ancient Jews, that no man should lie down in his bed, without forgiving those who had offended him. That man condemns himself to suffer eternal punishment, who makes use of this prayer with *revenge* and *hatred* in his heart. He who will not attend to a *condition* so advantageous to himself (remitting a *hundred pence* to his debtor, that his own creditor may remit him 10,000 *talents*) is a madman, who, to oblige his neighbour to suffer an hour, is himself determined to suffer everlastingly! This condition of forgiving our neighbour, though it cannot possibly *merit* any thing, yet it is that condition without which God will pardon no man. See ^{<4064>}**Matthew 6:14, 15.**

Verse 13. And lead us not into temptation] That is, *bring us not in to sore trial*. **πειρασμον**, which may be here rendered *sore trial*, comes from **πειρω**, *to pierce through*, as with a *spear*, or *spit*, used so by some of the best Greek writers. Several of the primitive fathers understood it something in this way; and have therefore added *quam ferre non possimus*, “which we cannot bear.” The word not only implies violent assaults from *Satan*, but also sorely afflictive circumstances, none of which we have, as yet, grace or fortitude sufficient to bear. *Bring us not in*, or *lead us not in*. This is a mere Hebraism: God is said to *do* a thing which he only *permits* or *suffers* to be done.

The process of temptation is often as follows: 1st. A simple *evil thought*. 2ndly. A strong *imagination*, or impression made on the imagination, by the thing to which we are tempted. 3dly. *Delight* in viewing it. 4thly. *Consent* of the will to perform it. Thus lust is conceived, sin is finished, and death brought forth. ^{<5015>}**James 1:15.** See also on ^{<4040>}**Matthew 4:1.** A man may be tempted without entering *into* the temptation: *entering into it* implies giving way, closing in with, and embracing it.

But deliver us from evil] **απο του πονηρου**, *from the wicked one*. Satan is expressly called **ο πονηρος**, the *wicked one*. ^{<4039>}**Matthew 13:19, 38**, compare with ^{<4045>}**Mark 4:15**; ^{<4082>}**Luke 8:12.** This epithet of Satan comes from **πονος**, *labour, sorrow, misery*, because of the *drudgery* which is found in the way of sin, the *sorrow* that accompanies the commission of it, and the *misery* which is entailed upon it, and in which it ends.

It is said in the MISHNA, Tit. *Beracoth*, that Rabbi Judah was wont to pray thus: “Let it be thy good pleasure to deliver us from impudent men, and from impudence: from an evil man and an evil chance; from an evil

affection, an evil companion, and an evil neighbour: from Satan the destroyer, from a hard judgment, and a hard adversary.” See *Lightfoot*.

Deliver us] **ρυσαι ημας**-a very expressive word-*break our chains*, and *loose our bands-s snatch, pluck us* from the evil, and its calamitous issue.

For thine is the kingdom, &c.] The whole of this doxology is rejected by *Wetstein*, *Griesbach*, and the most eminent critics. The authorities on which it is rejected may be seen in *Griesbach* and, *Wetstein*, particularly in the second edition of *Griesbach*’s Testament, who is fully of opinion *that it never made a part of the sacred text*. It is *variously* written in several MSS., and omitted by most of the fathers, both Greek and Latin. As the doxology is at least very ancient, and was in use among the Jews, as well as all the other petitions of this excellent prayer, it should not, in my opinion, be left out of the text, merely because some MSS. have omitted it, and it has been variously written in others. See various forms of this doxology, taken from the ancient Jewish writers, in *Lightfoot* and *Schoettgen*.

By the *kingdom*, we may understand that mentioned ^{<4060>}**Matthew 6:10**, and explained ^{<408D>}**Matthew 3:2**.

By *power*, that energy by which the kingdom is governed and maintained.

By *glory*, the honour that shall redound to God in consequence of the maintenance of the kingdom of grace, in the salvation of men.

For ever and ever.] **εις τους αιωνας**, *to the for evers*. Well expressed by our common translation-*ever* in our ancient use of the word taking in the whole duration of *time*; the second *ever*, the whole of *eternity*. May thy name have the glory both in this world, and in that which is to come! The original word **αιων** comes from **αι** *always*, and **ων** *being*, or *existence*. This is Aristotle’s definition of it. **See Clarke’s note on “^{<02133>}Genesis 21:33”**. There is no word in any language which more forcibly points out the grand characteristic of eternity-that *which always exists*. It is often used to signify a *limited* time, the *end* of which is not known; but this use of it is only an *accommodated* one; and it is the grammatical and proper sense of it which must be resorted to in any controversy concerning the word. We sometimes use the phrase *for evermore*: i.e. for ever and more, which signifies the whole of *time*, and the *more* or interminable duration beyond it. **See Clarke’s note on “^{<40246>}Matthew 25:46”**.

Amen.] This word is Hebrew, $\hat{m}a$, and signifies *faithful* or *true*. Some suppose the word is formed from the initial letters of $\hat{m}an \hat{E}l m ynwda$ *adoni melech neetnan*, *My Lord, the faithful King*. The word itself implies a confident resting of the soul in God, with the fullest assurance that all these petitions shall be fulfilled to every one who prays according to the directions given before by our blessed Lord.

The very learned Mr. Gregory has shown that our Lord *collected* this prayer out of the Jewish *Euchologies*, and gives us the whole form as follows:-

“Our Father who art in heaven, be gracious unto us! O Lord our God, hallowed be thy name, and let the remembrance of Thee be glorified in heaven above, and in the earth here below! Let thy kingdom reign over us now, and for ever! The holy men of old said, remit and forgive unto all men whatsoever they have done against me! And lead us not into the hands of temptation, but deliver us from the evil thing! For thine is the kingdom, and thou shalt reign in glory for ever and for evermore.” *Gregory’s Works*, 4to. 1671, p. 162. See this proved at large in the collections of *Lightfoot* and *Schoettgenius*.

Verse 14. If ye forgive men] He who shows mercy to men receives mercy from God. For a king to forgive his subjects a hundred millions of treasons against his person and authority, on this one condition, that they wilt henceforth live peaceably with him and with each other, is what we shall never see; and yet this is but the *shadow* of that which Christ promises on his Father’s part to all true penitents. A man can have little regard for his salvation, who refuses to have it on such advantageous terms. See *Quesnel*.

Verse 15. But if ye forgive not] He who does not awake at the sound of so loud a voice, is not *asleep* but *dead*. A *vindictive* man excludes himself from all hope of eternal life, and himself seals his own damnation.

Trespases] $\pi\alpha\rho\alpha\pi\tau\omega\mu\alpha\tau\alpha$, from $\pi\alpha\rho\alpha$ and $\pi\iota\pi\tau\omega$, *to fall off*. What a remarkable difference there is between this word and $\omicron\phi\epsilon\iota\lambda\eta\mu\alpha\tau\alpha$, *debts*, in ^{<10612>}**Matthew 6:12!** Men’s sins against *us* are only their *stumbings*, or *fallings off* from the duties they owe us; but our’s are *debts* to God’s justice, which we can never discharge. It can be no great difficulty to forgive those, especially when we consider that in many respects we have

failed as much, in certain duties which we owed to *others*, as they have done in those which they owed *us*. “But I have given him no provocation.” Perhaps thou art angry, and art not a proper judge in the matter; but, however it may be, it is thy interest to forgive, if thou expectest forgiveness from God. On this important subject I will subjoin an extract from Mason’s Self-knowledge, page 248, 1755.

“*Athenodorus*, the philosopher by reason of his old age, begged leave to retire from the court of *Augustus*, which the emperor granted. In his compliments of leave, he said, ‘Remember, Cæsar, whenever thou art angry, that thou say or do nothing before thou hast distinctly repeated to thyself the twenty-four letters of the alphabet.’ On which Cæsar caught him by the hand, and said, ‘I have need of thy presence still:’ and kept him a year longer. This was excellent advice from a *heathen*; but a *Christian* may prescribe to himself a wiser rule. When thou art angry, answer not till thou hast repeated the *fifth* petition of our Lord’s prayer—*Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors*: and our Lord’s comment upon it—*For if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your heavenly father forgive your trespasses.*”

PRAYER to God is considered among the *Mohammedans* in a very important point of view. It is declared by the *Mosliman* doctors to be the *corner stone of RELIGION, and the pillar of FAITH*. It is not, say they, a thing of mere *form*, but requires that the heart and understanding should accompany it, without which they pronounce it to be of no avail. They direct prayer to be performed *five* times in the *twenty-four* hours. 1. Between *day-break* and *sun-rise*; 2. Immediately after *noon*; 3. Immediately before *sun-set*; 4. In the *evening* before dark; and 5. Before the *first watch* of the *night*.

They hold the following points to be essentially requisite to the *efficacy* of prayer:—1. That the person be free from every species of defilement. 2. That all sumptuous and gaudy apparel be laid aside. 3. That the attention accompany the act, and be not suffered to wander to any other object. 4. That the prayer be performed with the face toward the temple of MECCA. HEDAYAH. Prel. Dis. pp. 53, 54.

There are few points here but the follower of Christ may seriously consider and profitably practise.

Verse 16. When ye fast] A fast is termed by the Greeks *νηστις*, from *νη* *not*, and *εσθειν* *to eat*; hence fast means, a *total abstinence from food for a certain time*. Abstaining from *flesh*, and living on *fish, vegetables, &c.*, is no fast, or may be rather considered a burlesque on fasting. Many pretend to take the true definition of a fast from ^{<2807>}**Isaiah 58:3**, and say that it means *a fast from sin*. This is a mistake; there is no such term in the Bible as *fasting from sin*; the very idea is ridiculous and absurd, as if *sin* were a part of our *daily food*. In the *fast* mentioned by the prophet, the people were to divide their bread with the hungry, ^{<2807>}**Isaiah 58:7**; but could they *eat* their bread, and *give* it too? No man should *save* by a *fast*: he should give all the food he might have eaten to the poor. He who *saves* a day's expense by a fast, commits an abomination before the Lord. See Clarke's note on ^{<4015>}**Matthew 9:15**".

As the hypocrites-of a sad countenance] *σκυθρωποι*, either from *σκυθρος* *sour, crabbed*, and *ωψ* the *countenance*; or from *σκυθης* a *Scythian, a morose, gloomy, austere phiz*, like that of a *Scythian* or *Tartar*. A hypocrite has always a difficult part to act: when he wishes to appear as a penitent, not having any godly sorrow at heart, he is obliged to counterfeit it the best way he can, by a gloomy and austere look.

Verse 17. Anoint thine head and wash thy face] These were forbidden in the Jewish canon on days of fasting and humiliation; and hypocrites availed themselves of this ordinance, that they might appear to fast. Our Lord, therefore, cautions us against this: as if he had said, *Affect* nothing-dress in thy ordinary manner, and let the whole of thy deportment prove that thou desirest to recommend my *soul* to God, and not thy *face* to *men*. That factitious mourning, which consists in putting on black clothes, crapes, &c., is utterly inconsistent with the *simplicity* of the Gospel of Christ; and if practised in reference to spiritual matters, is certainly forbidden here: but sin is so common, and so boldly persisted in, that not even a *crape* is put on, as an evidence of deploring its influence, or of sorrow for having committed it.

Verse 18. Thy father which seeth in secret] Let us not be afraid that our hearts can be concealed from God; but let us fear lest he perceive them to be more desirous of the praise of men than they are of that glory which comes from Him.

Openly.] εν τω φανερω. These words are omitted by nine MSS. in uncial letters; and by more than *one hundred* others, by most of the versions, and by several of the primitive *fathers*. As it is supported by no adequate authority, Bengel, Wetstein, Griesbach, and others, have left it out of the text.

Verse 19. Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth] What blindness is it for a man to lay up that as a *treasure* which must necessarily perish! A heart designed for God and eternity is terribly degraded by being fixed on those things which are subject to corruption. “But may we not lay up treasure innocently?” Yes. 1st. If you can do it without setting your heart on it, which is *almost* impossible: and 2dly. If there be neither *widows* nor *orphans*, destitute nor distressed persons in the place where you live. “But there is a portion which belongs to my children; shall I distribute *that* among the poor?” If it belongs to your children, it is not *yours*, and therefore you have no right to dispose of it. “But I have a certain sum in stock, &c.; shall I take that and divide it among the poor?” By no means; for, by doing so, you would put it out of your power to do good after the present division: keep your *principal*, and devote, if you possibly can spare it, the *product* to the poor; and thus you shall have the *continual* ability to do good. In the mean time take care not to shut up your bowels of compassion against a brother in distress; if you do, the love of God cannot dwell in you.

Rust] Or *canker*, βρωσις, from βρωσκω, *I eat, consume*. This word cannot be properly applied to *rust*, but to any thing that *consumes* or *cankers* clothes or metals. There is a saying exactly similar to this in the Institutes of MENU: speaking of the presents made to Brahmins, he says, “It is a gem which neither thieves nor foes take away, and which never perishes.” *Chapter of Government, Institute 83.*

Where thieves do not break through] διορυσσοῦσι, literally *dig through*, i.e. the wall, in order to get into the house. This was not a difficult matter, as the house was generally made of *mud* and *straw*, kneaded together like the *cobb* houses in Cornwall, and other places. See Clarke on “⁴¹⁰⁷⁷Matthew 7:27”.

Verse 20. Lay up-treasures in heaven] “The only way to render perishing goods *eternal*, to secure stately furniture from *moths*, and the richest metals from *canker*, and precious stones from *thieves*, is to transmit them

to heaven by acts of charity. This is a kind of *bill of exchange* which cannot fail of *acceptance*, but through our own fault.” *Quesnel*.

It is certain we have not the smallest portion of temporal good, but what we have received from the unmerited bounty of God: and if we give back to him all we have received, yet still there is no *merit* that can fairly attach to the act, as the goods *were* the Lord’s; for I am not to suppose that I can purchase any thing from a man *by his own property*. On this ground the doctrine of human merit is one of the most absurd that ever was published among men, or credited by sinners. Yet he who supposes he can purchase heaven by giving that meat which was left at his own table, and that of his servants; or by giving a garment which he could no longer in decency wear, must have a base ignorant soul, and a very mean opinion of the heaven he hopes for. But shall not such works as these be rewarded? Yes, yes, God will take care to give you all that your *refuse victuals and old clothes* are *worth*. Yet he, who through love to God and man, divides his bread with the hungry, and covers the naked with a garment, shall not lose his reward; a reward which the mercy of God appoints, but to which, in strict justice, he can lay no claim.

Verse 21. Where your treasure is] If God be the treasure of our souls, our hearts, i.e. our affections and desires will be placed on things *above*. An earthly minded man proves that his treasure is *below*; a heavenly minded man shows that his treasure is *above*.

Verse 22. The light of the body is the eye] That is, the eye is to the body what the sun is to the universe in the day time, or a lamp or candle to a house at night.

If-thine eye be single] *απλούς*, *simple, uncompounded*; i.e. so perfect in its structure as to see objects *distinctly* and *clearly*, and not confusedly, or in different places to what they are, as is often the case in certain disorders of the eye; *one* object appearing *two* or *more* or else in a different situation, and of a different colour to what it really is. This state of the eye is termed, ^{<1023>}**Matthew 6:23**, *πονηρός* *evil*, i.e. *diseased* or *defective*. An *evil eye* was a phrase in use, among the ancient Jews, to denote an *envious, covetous* man or disposition; a man who repined at his neighbour’s prosperity, loved his own money, and would do nothing in the way of charity for God’s sake. Our blessed Lord, however, extends and sublimates this meaning, and uses the *sound eye* as a metaphor to point out that *simplicity of intention*, and *purity of affection* with which men should

pursue the supreme good. *We cannot draw more than one straight line between two indivisible points.* We aim at happiness: it is found only in one thing, the *indivisible* and *eternal* GOD. If the *line of simple intention* be drawn straight to him, and the soul walk by it, with *purity of affection*, the whole man shall be *light in the Lord*; the rays of that excellent glory shall *irradiate* the mind, and through the whole spirit shall the Divine nature be transfused. But if a person who enjoyed this heavenly treasure permit his *simplicity* of intention to *deviate* from heavenly to earthly good; and his *purity of affection* to be contaminated by worldly ambition, secular profits, and animal gratifications; then, *the light which was in him becomes darkness*, i.e. his spiritual discernment departs, and his union with God is destroyed: all is only a *palpable obscure*; and, like a man who has totally lost his sight, he walks without *direction, certainty, or comfort*. This state is most forcibly intimated in our Lord's exclamation, *How great a darkness!* Who can adequately describe the misery and wretchedness of that soul which has lost its union with the fountain of all good, and, in losing this, has lost the *possibility* of happiness till the *simple eye* be once more given, and the *straight line* once more drawn.

Verse 24. No man can serve two masters] The master of our heart may be fitly termed the *love* that reigns in it. We serve that only which we love supremely. A man cannot be in perfect indifference betwixt two objects which are incompatible: he is inclined to despise and hate whatever he does not love supremely, when the *necessity* of a *choice* presents itself.

He will hate the one and love the other.] The word *hate* has the same sense here as it has in many places of Scripture; it merely signifies to love *less*—so Jacob loved Rachel, but *hated* Leah; i.e. he loved Leah much less than he loved Rachel. God himself uses it precisely in the same sense: Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I *hated*; i.e. I have loved the posterity of Esau less than I have loved the posterity of Jacob: which means no more than that God, in the course of his providence, gave to the Jews greater earthly privileges than he gave to the Edomites, and chose to make them the progenitors of the Messiah, though they ultimately, through their own obstinacy, derived no more benefit from this privilege than the Edomites did. How strange is it, that with such evidence before their eyes, men will apply this *loving* and *hating* to degrees of inclusion and exclusion, in which neither the justice nor mercy of God are honoured!

Ye cannot serve God and mammon.] $\hat{w}mm$ *mamon* is used for *money* in the *Targum* of *Onkelos*, $\langle 0182 \rangle$ **Exodus 18:21**; and in that of *Jonathan*, $\langle 0159 \rangle$ **Judges 5:19**; $\langle 0083 \rangle$ **1 Samuel 8:3**. The Syriac word anwmm *mamona* is used in the same sense, $\langle 0213 \rangle$ **Exodus 21:30**. Dr. Castel deduces these words from the Hebrew $\hat{m}a$ *aman*, to *trust, confide*; because men are apt to trust in riches. *Mammon* may therefore be considered any thing a man *confides* in. Augustine observes, “that *mammon*, in the *Punic* or *Carthaginian* language, signified gain.” *Lucrum Punicè mammon dicitur*. The word plainly denotes *riches*, $\langle 0213 \rangle$ **Luke 16:9, 11**, in which latter verse mention is made not only of the *deceitful mammon*, ($\tau\omega$ $\alpha\delta\iota\kappa\omega$.) but also of the *true* ($\tau\omicron$ $\alpha\lambda\eta\theta\iota\nu\omicron\nu$.) St. Luke’s phrase, $\mu\alpha\mu\omega\nu\omicron$ $\alpha\delta\iota\kappa\iota\alpha\varsigma$, very exactly answers to the Chaldee rqvd $\hat{w}mm$ *mamon dishekar*, which is often used in the *Targums*. See more in *Wetstein* and *Parkhurst*.

Some suppose there was an *idol* of this name, and Kircher mentions such a one in his *OEdip. Egyptiacus*. See *Castel*.

Our blessed Lord shows here the utter impossibility of loving the world and loving God at the same time; or, in other words, that a *man of the world* cannot be a truly religious character. He who gives his heart to the world robs God of it, and, in *snatching* at the *shadow* of earthly good, loses substantial and eternal blessedness. How dangerous is it to set our hearts upon riches, seeing it is so easy to make them our God!

Verse 25. Therefore] $\delta\iota\alpha$ $\tau\omicron\upsilon\tau\omicron$, on *this account*; viz., that ye may not serve *mammon*, but have unshaken confidence in God, *I say unto you*, -

Take no thought] Be not anxiously careful, $\mu\eta$ $\mu\epsilon\rho\iota\mu\nu\alpha\tau\epsilon$; this is the proper meaning of the word. $\mu\epsilon\rho\iota\mu\nu\alpha$ *anxious solicitude*, from $\mu\epsilon\rho\iota\zeta\epsilon\iota\nu$ $\tau\omicron\nu$ $\nu\omicron\upsilon\nu$ *dividing or distracting the mind*. My old MS. Bible renders it, *be not busy to your life*. Prudent care is never forbidden by our Lord, but only that *anxious distracting* solicitude, which, by *dividing* the mind, and *drawing it different ways*, renders it utterly incapable of attending to any solemn or important concern. To be anxiously careful concerning the means of subsistence is to lose all satisfaction and comfort in the things which God gives, and to act as a mere infidel. On the other hand, to rely so much upon providence as not to use the very powers and faculties with which the Divine Being has endowed us, is to tempt God. If we labour without placing our confidence in our labour, but expect all from the blessing of God, we obey his will, co-operate with his providence, set the

springs of it a-going on our behalf, and thus imitate Christ and his followers by a *sedate care* and an *industrious confidence*.

In this and the following verses, our Lord lays down several reasons why men should not disquiet themselves about the wants of life, or concerning the future.

The *first* is, the experience of greater benefits already received. *Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?* Can he who gave us our body, and breathed into it the breath of life, before we could ask them from him, refuse us that which is necessary to preserve both, and when we ask it in humble confidence?

The clause *what ye must eat*, is omitted by two MSS., most of the ancient versions, and by many of the primitive fathers. *Griesbach* has left it in the text with a note of doubtfulness. It occurs again in ^{<406B>}**Matthew 6:31**, and there is no variation in any of the MSS. in that place. Instead of, *Is not the life more than, &c.*, we should read, *Of more value*; so the word **πλειον** is used in ^{<40215>}**Numbers 22:15**, and by the best Greek writers; and in the same sense it is used in ^{<41236>}**Matthew 21:36**. See the note there.

Verse 26. Behold the fowls of the air] The *second* reason why we should not be anxiously concerned about the future, is the example of the smaller animals, which the providence of God feeds without their own labour; though he be not their father. We never knew an earthly father take care of his *fowls*, and neglect his *children*; and shall we fear this from our heavenly Father? God forbid! That man is utterly unworthy to have God for his father, who depends less upon his goodness, wisdom, and power, than upon a crop of corn, which may be spoiled either in the field or in the barn. If our great Creator have made us capable of knowing, loving, and enjoying himself eternally, what may we not expect from him, after so great a gift?

They sow not, neither do they reap] There is a saying among the rabbins almost similar to this-“Hast thou ever seen a beast or a fowl that had a workshop? yet they are fed without labour and without anxiety. They were created for the service of man, and man was created that he might serve his Creator. Man also would have been supported without labour and anxiety, had he not corrupted his ways. Hast thou ever seen a *lion* carrying burthens, a *stag* gathering summer fruits, a *fox* selling merchandise, or a *wolf* selling oil, that they might thus gain their support? And yet they are

fed without care or labour. Arguing therefore from the less to the greater, if *they* which were created that they might serve *me*, are nourished without labour and anxiety, how much more *I*, who have been created that I might serve my Maker! What therefore is the cause, why I should be obliged to labour in order to get my daily bread? Answer, SIN." This is a curious and important extract, and is highly worthy of the reader's attention. See *Schoettgen*.

Verse 27. Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature?] The *third* reason against these carking cares is the unprofitableness of human solicitude, unless God vouchsafe to bless it. What can our *uneasiness* do but render us still more unworthy of the Divine care? The passage from distrust to apostasy is very short and easy; and a man is not far from murmuring against Providence, who is dissatisfied with its conduct. We should depend as fully upon God for the *preservation* of his *gifts* as for the *gifts* themselves.

Cubit unto his stature?] I think *ηλικιαν* should be rendered *age* here, and so our translators have rendered the word in ^{<4021>}**John 9:21**, *αυτος ηλικιαν εχει* *he is of age*. A very learned writer observes, that no difficulty can arise from applying *πηχυον* a *cubit*, a measure of *extension*, to *time*, and the *age* of man: as *place* and *time* are both *quantities*, and capable of *increase* and *diminution*, and, as no *fixed material* standard can be employed in the *mensuration* of the *fleeting* particles of *time*, it was *natural* and *necessary*, in the construction of language, to apply parallel terms to the discrimination of *time* and *place*. Accordingly, we find the same words indifferently used to denote *time* and *place* in every known tongue. Lord, let me know the MEASURE of my days! Thou hast made my days HAND-BREADTHS, ^{<1905>}**Psalm 39:5**. Many examples might be adduced from the *Greek* and *Roman* writers. Besides, it is evident that the phrase of adding one cubit is proverbial, denoting something minute; and is therefore applicable to the *smallest possible portion of time*; but, in a *literal* acceptance, the *addition* of a *cubit* to the *stature*, would be a *great* and *extraordinary* accession of *height*. See *Wakefield*.

Verse 28. And why take ye thought for raiment?] Or, *why are ye anxiously careful about raiment?* The *fourth* reason against such inquietudes is the example of inanimate creatures: The *herbs* and *flowers* of the field have their being, nourishment, exquisite flavours, and beautiful hues from God himself. They are not only without anxious care, but also

without care or thought of every kind. Your being, its excellence and usefulness, do not depend on your anxious concern: they spring as truly from the beneficence and continual superintendence of God, as the flowers of the field do; and were you brought into such a situation, as to be as utterly incapable of contributing to your own preservation and support as the *lilies* of the field are to theirs, your heavenly Father could augment your substance, and preserve your being, when for his glory and your own advantage.

Consider] Diligently consider this, *καταμαθετε*, *lay it earnestly to heart*, and let your confidence be unshaken in the God of infinite bounty and love.

Verse 29. Solomon in all his glory] Some suppose that as the *robes of state* worn by the *eastern* kings were usually *white*, as were those of the *nobles* among the Jews, that therefore the *lily* was chosen for the comparison.

Verse 30. If God so clothe the grass of the field] Christ confounds both the luxury of the *rich* in their superfluities, and the distrust of the *poor* as to the necessities of life. Let man, who is made for God and eternity, learn from a flower of the field how low the care of Providence stoops. All our inquietudes and distrusts proceed from lack of faith: *that* supplies all wants. The poor are not really such, but because they are destitute of faith.

To-morrow is cast into the oven] The inhabitants of the east, to this day, make use of *dry straw*, *withered herbs*, and *stubble*, to heat their *ovens*. Some have translated the original word *κλιβανον*, *a still*, and intimate that our Lord alludes to the *distillation of herbs* for medicinal purposes; but this is certainly contrary to the scope of our Lord's argument, which runs thus: If God covers with so much *glory* things of no farther value than to serve the *meanest* uses, will he not take care of his *servants*, who are so precious in his sight, and designed for such *important services* in the world? See *Harmer's Observations*.

Verse 31. What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? &c.] These three inquiries engross the whole attention of those who are living without God in the world. The belly and back of a worldling are his compound god; and these he worships in the lust of the flesh, in the lust of the eye, and in the pride of life.

Verse 32. For after all these things do the Gentiles seek] The *fifth* reason against solicitude about the future is-that to concern ourselves about these wants with anxiety, as if there was no such thing as a providence in the world; with great affection towards earthly enjoyments, as if we expected no other; and without *praying* to God or consulting his will, as if we could do any thing without him: this is to imitate the worst kind of *heathens*, who live without hope, and without God in the world.

Seek] επιζητει from επι, intensive, and ζητεω, *I seek, to seek intensely, earnestly, again and again*: the true characteristic of the worldly man; his soul is never satisfied-*give! give!* is the ceaseless language of his earth-born heart.

Your heavenly Father knoweth, &c.] The *sixth* reason against this anxiety about the future is-because God, our heavenly Father, is infinite in wisdom, and knows all our wants. It is the property of a *wise* and *tender* father to provide *necessaries*, and not *superfluities*, for his children. Not to expect the former is an offence to his *goodness*; to expect the latter is injurious to his *wisdom*.

Verse 33. But seek ye first the kingdom of God] See Clarke on “~~4087~~ Matthew 3:7”.

His righteousness] That holiness of heart and purity of life which God requires of those who profess to be subjects of that spiritual kingdom mentioned above. See Clarke on “~~4081~~ Matthew 5:20”.

The *seventh* reason against these worldly cares and fears is-because the business of our salvation ought to engross us entirely: hither all our desires, cares, and inquiries ought to tend. *Grace* is the way to *glory*-holiness the way to happiness. If men be not righteous, there is no heaven to be had: if they be, they shall have heaven and earth too; for godliness has the promise of both lives. ~~5008~~ **1 Timothy 6:3.**

All these things shall be added unto you.] The very blunt note of old Mr. *Trapp*, on this passage, is worthy of serious attention. All things shall be added. “They shall be cast in as an overplus, or as small advantages to the main bargain; as paper and pack-thread are given where we buy spice and fruit, or an inch of measure to an ell of cloth.” This was a very common saying among the Jews: “Seek that, to which other things are necessarily connected.” “A king said to his particular friend, ‘Ask what thou wilt, and I

will give it unto thee.’ He thought within himself, ‘If I ask to be made a general I shall readily obtain it. I will ask something to which all these things shall be added:’ he therefore said, ‘Give me thy daughter to wife.’ This he did knowing that all the dignities of the kingdom should be added unto this gift.” See in *Schoettgen*.

To this verse, probably, belong the following words, quoted often by *Clement, Origen, and Eusebius, as the words of Christ: αἰτεῖτε τὰ μεγάλα, καὶ τὰ μικρὰ ὑμῖν προστεθήσεται ἔτι καὶ αἰτεῖτε τὰ ἐπουρανια, καὶ τὰ ἐπιγεια προστεθήσεται ὑμῖν.* “Ask great things, and little things shall be added unto you; ask heavenly things, and earthly things shall be added unto you.”

Verse 34. Take therefore no thought] That is, *Be not therefore anxiously careful.*

The *eighth* and last reason, against this preposterous conduct, is—that *carrying care* is not only useless in itself, but renders us miserable beforehand. The future falls under the cognizance of God alone: we encroach, therefore, upon his rights, when we would fain foresee all that may happen to us, and secure ourselves from it by our cares. How much good is omitted, how many evils caused, how many duties neglected, how many innocent persons deserted, how many good works destroyed, how many truths suppressed, and how many acts of injustice authorized by those *timorous* forecasts of *what may happen*; and those *faithless* apprehensions concerning the *future*! Let us do *now* what God requires of us, and trust the consequences to him. The *future* time which God would have us foresee and provide for is that of judgment and eternity: and it is about this *alone* that we are careless!

Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof] *ἄρκετον τῆ ἡμέρᾳ ἡ κακία αὐτῆς,* *Sufficient for each day is its own calamity.* Each day has its *peculiar* trials: we should meet them with confidence in God. As we should live but a day at a time, so we should take care to suffer no more evils in one day than are necessarily attached to it. He who neglects the *present* for the *future* is acting opposite to the order of God, his own interest, and to every dictate of sound wisdom. Let us live for *eternity*, and we shall secure all that is valuable in *time*.

There are many valuable reflections in the *Abbé Quesnel’s* work, on this chapter; and from it several of the preceding have been derived.

ST. MATTHEW

CHAPTER 7.

Our Lord warns men against rash judgment and uncharitable censures, 1-5. Shows that holy things must not be profaned, 6; gives encouragement to fervent persevering prayer, 7-11. Shows how men should deal with each other, 12. Exhorts the people to enter in at the strait gate, 13, 14; to beware of false teachers, who are to be known by their fruits, 15-20. Shows that no man shall be saved by his mere profession of Christianity, however specious, 22, 23. The parable of the wise man who built his house upon a rock, 24, 25. Of the foolish man who built his house, without a foundation, on the sand, 26, 27. Christ concludes his sermon, and the people are astonished at his doctrine, 28, 29.

NOTES ON CHAP. 7.

Verse 1. Judge not, that ye be not judged.] These exhortations are pointed against rash, harsh, and uncharitable judgments, the *thinking evil*, where no evil seems, and speaking of it accordingly. The Jews were highly criminal here, and yet had very excellent maxims against it, as may be seen in *Schoettgen*. This is one of the most important exhortations in the whole of this excellent sermon. By a secret and criminal disposition of nature, man endeavours to elevate himself above others, and, to do it more effectually, depresses them. His jealous and envious heart wishes that there may be no good quality found but in himself, that he alone may be esteemed. Such is the state of every unconverted man; and it is from this criminal disposition, that *evil surmises, rash judgments, precipitate decisions*, and all other unjust procedures against our neighbour, flow.

Verse 2. For with what judgment] He who is *severe* on *others* will naturally excite their *severity* against *himself*. The censures and calumnies which we have suffered are probably the just reward of those which we have dealt out to others.

Verse 3. And why beholdest thou the mote] *καρφος* might be translated the *splinter*: for *splinter* bears some analogy to *beam*, but *mote* does not. I should prefer this word (which has been adopted by some learned men) on the authority of *Hesychius*, who is a *host* in such matters; *καρφος, κεραια ξυλου λεπτη*, *Karphos* is a thin piece of wood, a splinter. It often happens that the faults which we consider as of the first enormity in others

are, to our own iniquities, as a *chip* is, when compared to a large *beam*. On one side, self-love blinds us to ourselves; and, on the other, envy and malice give us piercing eyes in respect of others. When we shall have as much zeal to correct ourselves, as we have inclination to reprove and correct others, we shall know our own defects better than now we know those of our neighbour. There is a caution very similar to this of our Lord given by a heathen:-

*Cum tua praevideas oculis mala lippus inunctis:
Cur in amicorum vitiis tam cernis acutum,
Quam aut aquila, aut serpens Epidaurius?
Hor. Sat. lib. 1. sat. 3. l. 25-27.*

“When you can so readily overlook your own *wickedness*, why are you more clear-sighted than the eagle or serpent of Epidaurus, in spying out the *failings* of your friends?”

But the saying was very common among the Jews, as may be seen in *Lightfoot*.

Verse 4. Or how wilt thou say] That man is utterly unfit to show the way of life to others who is himself walking in the way of death.

Verse 5. Thou hypocrite] A hypocrite, who professes to be what he is not, (viz. a true Christian,) is obliged, for the support of the character he has assumed, to imitate all the dispositions and actions of a Christian; consequently he must reprove sin, and endeavour to show an uncommon affection for the glory of God. Our Lord unmasks this vile pretender to saintship, and shows him that his hidden hypocrisy, covered with the garb of external sanctity, is more abominable in the sight of God than the openly professed and practised iniquity of the profligate.

In after times, the Jews made a very bad use of this saying: “I wonder,” said Rabbi Zarphon, “whether there be any in this age that will suffer reproof? If one say to another, *Cast out the mote out of thine eye*, he is immediately ready to answer, *Cast out the beam that is in thine own eye.*” This proverbial mode of speech the Gloss interprets thus: “Cast out? μυσq *kisim*, the *mote*, that is, the *little sin*, that is in thy hand: to which he answered, Cast out the *great sin* that is in thine. So they could not reprove, because all were sinners.” See *Lightfoot*.

Verse 6. Give not that which is holy] το αγιον, *the holy or sacred thing*; i.e. any thing, especially, of the *sacrificial* kind, which had been consecrated to God. The members of this sentence should be transposed thus:-

*Give not that which is holy unto the dogs,
Lest they turn again and rend you:
Neither cast ye your pearls before swine,
Lest they trample them under their feet.*

The propriety of this transposition is self-evident. There are many such transpositions as these, both in *sacred* and *profane* writers. The following is very remarkable:-

*“I am black but comely;
“As the tents of Kedar, as the curtains of Solomon.”*

That is,

*“I am black as the tents of Kedar,
“Comely as the curtains of Solomon.”*

See many proofs of this sort of writing in Mr. WAKEFIELD'S *Commentary*.

As a general meaning of this passage, we may just say: “The sacrament of the Lord's supper, and other holy ordinances which are only instituted for the genuine followers of Christ, are not to be dispensed to those who are continually returning like the *snarling ill-natured dog* to their easily predominant sins of rash judgment, *barking at* and *tearing* the characters of others by *evil speaking*, *back biting* and *slandering*; nor to him who, like the *swine*, is frequently returning to *wallow* in the *mud* of *sensual gratifications* and *impurities*.”

Verse 7. Ask-see-knock] These three words include the ideas of *want*, *loss*, and *earnestness*. *Ask*: turn, beggar at, the door of mercy; thou art *destitute* of all spiritual good, and it is God alone who can give it to thee; and thou hast no claim but what his *mercy* has given thee on *itself*.

Seek: Thou hast *lost* thy God, thy paradise, thy soul.-Look about thee-leave no stone unturned there is no peace, no final salvation for thee till thou get thy soul restored to the favour and image of God.

Knock: Be in *earnest*-be *importunate*: Eternity is at hand! and, if thou die in thy sins, where God is thou shalt never come.

Ask with confidence and humility.

Seek with care and application.

Knock with earnestness and perseverance.

Verse 8. For every one that asketh receiveth] Prayer is always heard after one manner or other. No soul can pray in vain that prays as directed above. The truth and faithfulness of the Lord Jesus are pledged for its success.-Ye SHALL receive-ye SHALL find-it SHALL be opened. These words are as strongly binding on the side of God, as *thou shalt do no murder* is on the side of man. Bring Christ's *word*, and Christ's *sacrifice* with thee, and not one of Heaven's blessings can be denied thee. **See Clarke on “^{<2110>}Luke 11:9”**.

Verse 9. Or what man is there-whom if his son] Men are exhorted to come unto God, with the persuasion that he is a most gracious and compassionate Parent, who *possesses* all heavenly and earthly *good*, *knows* what is necessary for each of his creatures, and is infinitely *ready* to communicate that which they need most.

Will he give him a stone?] Will he not readily give him bread if he have it? This was a proverb in other countries; a benefit grudgingly given by an avaricious man is called by *Seneca*, *panem lapidosum*, stony bread. Hence that saying in Plautus: *Altera manu, fert lapidem, panem ostentat altera*.-In one hand he brings a stone, and stretches out bread in the other.

Verse 11. If ye, then, being evil] *πονηροὶ ὄντες*, who are radically and diabolically depraved, yet feel yourselves led, by natural affection, to give those things to your children which are necessary to support their lives, how much more will your Father who is in heaven, whose nature is infinite goodness, mercy, and grace, *give good things*-his grace and Spirit (*πνεῦμα ἁγίου*, the Holy Ghost, ^{<2113>}**Luke 11:13**,) to them who ask him? What a picture is here given of the goodness of God! Reader, ask thy soul, could this heavenly Father *reprobate* to *unconditional* eternal damnation any creature he has made? He who can believe that he has, may believe any thing: but still GOD IS LOVE.

Verse 12. Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men] This is a most sublime precept, and highly worthy of the grandeur and beneficence of the *just* God who gave it. The general meaning of it is this: “Guided by *justice* and *mercy*, do unto all men as you would have them to do to you,

were your circumstances and theirs reversed.” Yet this saying may be misunderstood. “If the prisoner should ask the judge, ‘whether he would be content to be hanged, were he in *his* case,’ he would answer, ‘No.’ Then, says the prisoner, *do as you would be done to.*—Neither of them must *do as private* men; but the judge must do by him as they have publicly *agreed*: that is, both judge and prisoner have consented to a law, that if either of them steal he shall be hanged.”—*Selden*. None but he whose heart is filled with love to God and all mankind can keep this precept, either in its *spirit* or *letter*. Self-love will feel itself sadly cramped when brought within the limits of this precept; but God hath spoken it: it is the spirit and design of *the law and the prophets*; the sum of all that is laid down in the Sacred Writings, relative to men’s conduct toward each other. It seems as if God had written it upon the hearts of all men, for sayings of this kind may be found among all nations, Jewish, Christian, and Heathen. See many examples in *Wetstein’s* notes.

Verse 13. Enter ye in at the strait gate] Our Saviour seems to allude here to the distinction between the public and private ways mentioned by the Jewish lawyers. The public roads were allowed to be sixteen cubits broad, the private ways only *four*. The words in the original are very emphatic: Enter in (to the kingdom of heaven) through THIS strait gate, **δια της στενης πυλης**, i.e. of *doing to every one as you would he should do unto you*; for this alone seems to be the *strait gate* which our Lord alludes to.

For wide is the gate] *And very broad*, **ευρυχωρος**, from **ευρυς**, *broad*, and **χωρος**, *a place*, a spacious roomy place, that leadeth forward, **απαγουσα**, into THAT destruction, **εις την απωλειαν**, meaning eternal misery; intimating, that it is much more congenial, to the revengeful, covetous heart of fallen man, to take every advantage of another, and to enrich himself at his expense, rather than to walk according to the rule laid down before, by our blessed Lord, and that acting contrary to it is the way to everlasting misery. With those who say it means repentance, and forsaking sin, I can have no controversy. That is certainly a *gate*, and a *strait* one too, through which every sinner must turn to God, in order to find salvation. But the doing to every one as we would they should do unto us, is a gate extremely *strait*, and very difficult, to every unregenerate mind.

Verse 14. Because strait is the gate] Instead of **οτι** *because*, I should prefer **τι** *how*, which reading is supported by a great majority of the best MSS., *versions*, and *fathers*. How *strait is that gate!* This mode of expression more forcibly points out the difficulty of the way to the kingdom. How strange is it that men should be unwilling to give up their worldly interests to secure their everlasting salvation! And yet no interest need be abandoned, but that which is produced by *injustice* and *unkindness*. Reason, as well as God, says, such people should be excluded from a place of blessedness. He who shows no *mercy* (and much more he who shows no *justice*) shall have judgment without mercy. ^{<5023>}**James 2:13.**

Few there be that find it.] The strait gate, **στενη πυλη**, signifies literally what we call a *wicket*, i.e. a little door in a large gate. Gate, among the Jews, signifies, metaphorically, the entrance, introduction, or means of acquiring any thing. So they talk of the gate of repentance, the gate of prayers, and the gate of tears. When God, say they, shut the gate of paradise against Adam, He opened to him the gate of repentance. The way to the kingdom of God is made sufficiently manifest—the completest assistance is promised in the way, and the greatest encouragement to persevere to the end is held out in the everlasting Gospel. But men are so wedded to their own passions, and so determined to follow the imaginations of their own hearts, that still it may be said: There are *few* who *find* the way to heaven; fewer yet who *abide* any time in it; fewer still who *walk* in it; and fewest of all who *persevere* unto the end. Nothing renders this way either *narrow* or *difficult* to any person, but *sin*. Let all the world leave their sins, and all the world may walk *abreast* in this good way.

Verse 15. Beware of false prophets] By false prophets we are to understand *teachers* of erroneous doctrines, who come professing a commission from God, but whose aim is not to bring the heavenly treasure to the people, but rather to rob them of their earthly good. Teachers who preach for *hire*, having no motive to enter into the ministry but to get a *living*, as it is ominously called by some, however they may bear the garb and appearance of the innocent useful sheep, the true pastors commissioned by the Lord Jesus, or to whatever name, class or party they may belong, are, in the sight of the heart-searching God, no other than *ravenous wolves*, whose design is to feed themselves with the fat, and clothe themselves with the fleece, and thus *ruin*, instead of *save*, the flock.

Verse 16. Ye shall know them by their fruits.] Fruits, in the Scripture and Jewish phraseology, are taken for *works* of any kind. “A man’s works,” says one, “are the *tongue* of his *heart*, and tell honestly whether he is inwardly corrupt or pure.” By these works you may *distinguish* (ἐπιγνώσεσθε) these ravenous wolves from true pastors. The judgment formed of a man by his *general* conduct is a safe one: if the judgment be not favourable to the person, that is *his* fault, as you have your opinion of him from his works, i.e. *the confession of his own heart*.

Verse 17. So every good tree] As the *thorn* can only produce *thorns*, not *grapes*; and the *thistle*, not *figs*, but *prickles*; so an *unregenerate heart* will produce fruits of *degeneracy*. As we perfectly know that a *good tree* will not produce *bad* fruit, and the *bad tree* will not, cannot produce *good* fruit, so we know that the *profession of godliness*, while the *life* is *ungodly*, is imposture, hypocrisy, and deceit. A man cannot be a *saint* and a *sinner* at the same time. Let us remember, that as the *good tree* means a *good heart*, and the *good fruit*, a *holy life*, and that *every heart* is naturally *vicious*; so there is none but God who can pluck up the vicious tree, create a good heart, plant, cultivate, water, and make it continually fruitful in righteousness and true holiness.

Verse 18. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit] *Love* to God and man is the root of the good tree; and from this principle all its fruit is found. To teach, as some have done, that a state of salvation may be consistent with the *greatest crimes*, (such as *murder* and *adultery* in David,) or that the righteous necessarily sin in all their best works, is really to make *the good tree bring forth bad fruit*, and to give the lie to the Author of eternal truth.

Verse 19. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit] What a terrible sentence is this against Christless pastors, and Christless hearers! Every tree that produceth not *good fruit*, ἐκκοπτεται, is to be now cut down; the *act of excision* is now taking place: the curse of the Lord is even *now* on the head and the heart of every *false teacher*, and *impenitent hearer*.

Verse 20. Wherefore by their fruits, &c.] This truth is often repeated, because our eternal interests depend so much upon it. Not to have *good fruit* is to have *evil*: there can be no innocent sterility in the invisible tree of the heart. He that brings forth *no* fruit, and he that brings forth *bad* fruit, are both only fit for the *fire*.

Verse 21. Not every one] ου πας, a *Hebraism*, say some, for *no person*. It is a *Græcism* and a *Latinism* too: ου παντων θεων, *not ALL of the gods*, i.e. *not ANY of the gods*, HOM. *Odys.* Z. 240. So *TERENCE Sine omni periculo*, without ALL danger, i.e. without ANY danger. And *JUVENAL: Sine omni labe*, without ALL imperfection, i.e. without ANY. See more in Mr. *Wakefield*. The sense of this verse seems to be this: No person, by merely acknowledging my authority, believing in the Divinity of my nature, professing faith in the perfection of my righteousness, and infinite merit of my atonement, *shall enter into the kingdom of heaven*-shall have any part with God in glory; but *he who doeth the will of my Father*-he who gets the bad tree rooted up, the good tree planted, and continues to bring forth fruit to the glory and praise of God. There is a good saying among the rabbins on this subject. “A man should be as *vigorous* as a *panther*, as *swift* as an *eagle*, as *fleet* as a *stag*, and as *strong* as a *lion*, to do the will of his Creator.”

Verse 22. Many will say to me in that day] εκεινη τη ημερα, *in that very day*, viz. the day of judgment-*have we not prophesied*, taught, publicly preached, *in thy name*; acknowledging thee to be the only Saviour, and proclaiming thee as such to others; *cast out demons*, impure spirits, who had taken possession of the bodies of men; *done many miracles*, being assisted by supernatural agency to invert even the course of nature, and thus prove the truth of the doctrine we preached?

Verse 23. Will I profess] ομολογησω, *I will fully and plainly tell them, I never knew you*-I never approved of you; for so the word is used in many places, both in the Old and New Testaments. You held the truth in unrighteousness, while you preached my pure and holy doctrine; and for the sake of my own truth, and through my love to the souls of men, I blessed your preaching; but yourselves I could never esteem, because you were destitute of the spirit of my Gospel, unholy in your hearts, and unrighteous in your conduct. Alas! alas! how many *preachers* are there who appear *prophets* in their pulpits; how many *writers*, and other evangelical workmen, the miracles of whose labour, learning, and doctrine, we admire, who are *nothing*, and worse than nothing, before God, because they perform not *his will*, but their *own*? What an awful consideration, that a man of eminent gifts, whose talents are a source of public utility, should be only as a *way-mark* or *finger-post* in the way to eternal bliss, pointing out the road to others, without walking in it himself!

Depart from me] What a terrible word! What a dreadful separation! Depart from ME! from the very Jesus whom you have proclaimed in *union* with whom alone eternal life is to be found. For, united to Christ, all is *heaven*; separated from him, all is *hell*.

Verse 24. Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine] That is, the excellent doctrines laid down before in this and the two preceding chapters. There are several parables or similitudes like to this in the rabbins. I shall quote but the two following:-

Rabbi *Eleasar* said, “The man whose knowledge exceeds his works, to whom is he like? He is like a tree which had many branches, and only a few roots; and, when the stormy winds came, it was plucked up and eradicated. But he whose good works are greater than his knowledge, to what is he like? He is like a tree which had few branches, and many roots; so that all the winds of heaven could not move it from its place.” *Pirke Aboth*.

Elisha, the son of *Abuja*, said, “The man who studies much in the law, and maintains good works, is like to a man who built a house, laying *stones* at the foundation, and building *brick* upon them; and, though many waters come against it, they cannot move it from its place. But the man who studies much in the law, and does not maintain good words, is like to a man who, in building his house, put *brick* at the foundation, and laid *stones* upon them, so that even gentle waters shall overthrow that house.” *Aboth Rab. Nath*.

Probably our Lord had this or some parable in his eye: but how amazingly improved in passing through his hands! In our Lord’s parable there is dignity, majesty, and point, which we seek for in vain in the Jewish archetype.

I will liken him unto a wise man] To a prudent man-*ανδρι φρονιμω*, to a *prudent* man, a man of sense and understanding, who, foreseeing the evil hideth himself, who proposes to himself the *best end*, and makes use of the *proper means* to accomplish it. True *wisdom* consists in getting the building of our salvation completed: to this end we must build on the *Rock*, CHRIST JESUS, and make the building *firm*, by keeping close to the maxims of his Gospel, and having our tempers and lives conformed to its *word* and *spirit*; and when, in order to this, we lean on nothing but the grace of Christ, we then build upon a *solid rock*.

Verse 25. And the rain descended-floods came-winds blew] In Judea, and in all countries in the neighbourhood of the tropics, the *rain* sometimes falls in great *torrents*, producing rivers, which sweep away the soil from the rocky hills; and the houses, which are built of brick only dried in the sun, of which there are whole villages in the east, literally *melt* away before those rains, and the land-floods occasioned by them. There are *three* general kinds of trials to which the followers of God are exposed; and to which, some think, our Lord alludes here: *First*, those of temporal *afflictions*, coming in the course of Divine *Providence*: these may be likened to the torrents of *rain*. *Secondly*, those which come from the *passions* of men, and which may be likened to the *impetuous rivers*. *Thirdly*, those which come from *Satan* and his *angels*, and which, like *tempestuous whirlwinds*, threaten to carry every thing before them. He alone, whose soul is built on the *Rock of ages*, stands all these shocks; and not only *stands* in, but *profits* by them.

Verse 26. And every one that heareth-and doeth them not] Was there ever a stricter system of morality delivered by God to man, than in this sermon? He who reads or hears it, and does not look to God to conform his soul and life to it, and notwithstanding is hoping to enter into the kingdom of heaven, is like the *fool* who *built* his house on the *sand*. When the *rain*, the *rivers*, and the *winds* come, his building must fall, and his soul be crushed into the nethermost pit by its ruins. *Talking* about Christ, his righteousness, merits, and atonement, while the person is not *conformed* to his *word* and *spirit*, is no other than solemn self-deception.

Let it be observed, that it is not the man who *hears* or *believes* these sayings of Christ, whose building shall stand, when the earth and its works are burnt up; but the man who **DOES** them.

Many suppose that the law of Moses is abolished, merely because it is *too strict*, and *impossible to be observed*; and that the Gospel was brought in to *liberate* us from *its obligations*; but let all such know, that in the whole of the old covenant nothing can be found so exceedingly *strict* and *holy* as this sermon, which Christ lays down as the *rule* by which we are to walk. "Then, the fulfilling of these precepts is the purchase of glory." No, it is the **WAY** *only* to that glory which has already been *purchased* by the blood of the Lamb. To him that believes, all things are possible.

Verse 27. And the rain descended, and the floods came, &c.] A fine illustration of this may be seen in the case of the fishermen in *Bengal*, who,

in the dry season, build their huts on the *beds of sand* from which the rivers had retired: but when the rain sets in suddenly; as it often does, accompanied with violent northwest winds, and the waters pour down in *torrents* from the mountains; in one night, multitudes of these buildings are swept away, and the place where they stood is on the next morning undiscoverable.

Verse 28. The people were astonished] οἱ ὄχλοι, *the multitudes*; for vast crowds attended the ministry of this most popular and faithful of all preachers. They *were astonished at his doctrine*. They heard the law defined in such a manner as they had never thought of before; and this sacred system of morality urged home on their consciences with such clearness and *authority* as they had never felt under the teaching of their *scribes* and *Pharisees*. Here is the grand difference between the teaching of *scribes* and *Pharisees*, the *self-created* or *men-made* ministers, and those whom GOD *sends*. The first may preach what is called very good and very sound doctrine; but it comes with no *authority* from God to the souls of the people: therefore, the unholy is unholy still; because preaching can only be effectual to the conversion of men, when the unction of the Holy Spirit is in it; and as these are not sent by the Lord, therefore they shall not profit the people at all. ~~24732~~ **Jeremiah 23:32.**

From one of the royal household of George III., I have received the following anecdote:-The late Bishop F. of Salisbury having procured a young man of promising abilities to preach before the king, and the young man having, to his lordship's apprehension, acquitted himself well, the Bishop, in conversation with the king afterwards, wishing to get the king's opinion, took the liberty to say, "Does not your majesty think that the young man who had the honour to preach before your majesty, is likely to make a good clergyman, and has this morning delivered a very good sermon?" To which the king, in his *blunt* manner, hastily replied, "*It might have been a good sermon, my lord, for aught I know; but I consider no sermon good that has nothing of Christ in it!*"

Verse 29. Having authority] They felt a commanding power and authority in his word, i.e. his doctrine. His statements were perspicuous; his exhortations persuasive; his doctrine sound and rational; and his arguments irresistible. These they never felt in the trifling teachings of their most celebrated doctors, who consumed their own time, and that of their disciples and hearers, with frivolous cases of conscience, ridiculous

distinctions, and puerile *splittings* of controversial *hairs*-questions not calculated to minister grace to the hearers.

Several excellent MSS. and almost all the ancient versions read, **καὶ οἱ φαρισαῖοι**, *and the Pharisees*. He taught them as one having authority, like the most eminent and distinguished teacher, *and not as the scribes and Pharisees*, who had no part of that unction which he in its plenitude possessed. Thus ends a sermon the most strict, pure, holy, profound, and sublime, ever delivered to man; and yet so amazingly simple is the whole that almost a child may apprehend it! Lord! write all these thy sayings upon our hearts, we beseech thee! Amen.

ST. MATTHEW

CHAPTER 8.

Great multitudes follow Christ, 1. He heals a leper, 2-4. Heals the centurion's servant, 5-13. Heals Peter's wife's mother, 14, 15; and several other diseased persons, 16, 17. Departs from that place, 18. Two persons offer to be his disciples, 19-22. He and his disciples are overtaken with a tempest, which he miraculously stills, 23-27. He cures demoniacs, and the demons which went out enter into a herd of swine, which, rushing into the sea, perish, 28-32. The swine-herds announce the miracle to the Gergesenes, who request Christ to depart from their country, 33, 34.

NOTES ON CHAP. 8.

Verse 1. From the mountain] That mountain on which he had delivered the preceding inimitable sermon.

Great multitudes followed him.] Having been deeply impressed with the glorious doctrines which they had just heard.

Verse 2. And, behold, there came a leper] The leprosy **λεπρα**, from **λεπις**, a scale, was an inveterate cutaneous disease, appearing in dry, thin, white scurfy scales or scabs, either on the whole body, or on some part of it, usually attended with violent itching, and often with great pain. The eastern leprosy was a distemper of the most loathsome kind, highly contagious, so as to infect garments, (^{<B1347>}**Leviticus 13:47**, &c.), and houses, (^{<B1434>}**Leviticus 14:34**, &c.) and was deemed incurable by any human means. Among the Jews, GOD alone was applied to for its removal; and the cure was ever attributed to his sovereign power.

The various symptoms of this dreadful disorder, which was a striking emblem of *sin*, may be seen in Lev. 13:, 14:, where also may be read the legal ordinances concerning it; which, as on the one hand, they set forth how *odious* sin is to God, so, on the other, they represent the cleansing of our *pollutions* by the *sacrifice* and *resurrection* of Christ, by the *sprinkling* and application of his blood, and by the sanctifying and *healing influences* of the *Holy Spirit*.

The Greek name **λεπρα**, seems to have been given to this distemper, on account of the *thin, white* SCALES (**λεπιδες**) with which the bodies of

the leprous were sometimes so covered as to give them the appearance of snow, ^{<0006>}**Exodus 4:6;** ^{<0120>}**Numbers 12:10;** ^{<167>}**2 Kings 5:27.**

Herodotus, lib. 1, mentions this disorder as existing, in his time, among the *Persians*. He calls it λευκη, the *white scab*; and says, that those who were affected with it were prohibited from mingling with the other citizens; and so dreadful was this malady esteemed among them that they considered it a punishment on the person, from their great god, the *sun*, for some evil committed against him. Dr. *Mead* mentions a remarkable case of this kind which came under his own observation. “A countryman whose whole body was so miserably seized with it that his *skin was shining as covered with flakes of snow*, and as the furfuraceous or bran-like *scales* were daily rubbed off, the flesh appeared *quick or raw* underneath.” See the doctor’s *Medica Sacra*, chap. 2. It was probably on account of its tendency to produce this disorder, in that warm climate, that God forbade the use of *swine’s flesh* to the Jews. Feeding on this crude aliment, in union with the intemperate use of *ardent spirits*, is, in all likelihood, the grand cause of the *scurvy*, which is so common in the British nations, and which would probably assume the form and virulence of a *leprosy*, were our climate as hot as that of Judea. See **Clarke’s notes on “^{<0006>}Exodus 4:6”**, and on Lev. 13: and 14.

Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.] As this leper may be considered as a fit emblem of the corruption of man by sin; so may his cure, of the redemption of the soul by Christ. A sinner, truly penitent, seeks God with a respectful faith; approaches him in the spirit of adoration; humbles himself under his mighty hand, acknowledging the greatness of his fall, and the vileness of his sin; his prayer, like that of the leper, should be humble, plain, and full of confidence in that God who *can do* all things, and of dependence upon his *will* or mercy, from which all good must be derived. It is peculiar to God that he need only *will* what he intends to perform. His power is his will. The *ability* of God to do what is necessary to be done, and his *willingness* to make his creatures happy, should be deeply considered by all those who approach him in prayer. The leper had no doubt of the former, but he was far from being equally satisfied in respect of the latter.

Verse 3. Jesus put forth his hand-I will; be thou clean.] The most sovereign authority is assumed in this speech of our blessed Lord-I WILL: there is here no supplication of any power *superior* to his own; and the

event proved to the fullest conviction, and by the clearest demonstration, that his authority was absolute, and his power unlimited. *Be thou cleansed, καθαρισθητι*; a single word is enough.

And immediately his leprosy was cleansed.] What an astonishing sight! A man whose whole body was covered over with the most loathsome disease, cleansed from it in a moment of time! Was it possible for any soul to resist the *evidence* of this fact? This action of Christ is a representation of that *invisible hand* which makes itself *felt* by the most *insensible heart*; of that *internal word* which makes itself *heard* by the most *deaf*; and of that *supreme will* which *works* every thing according to its *own counsel*.

Verse 4. Jesus saith-See thou tell no man] Had our Lord, at this early period, fully manifested himself *as the Messiah*, the people in all likelihood would have proclaimed him King; this, however, refused by him, must have excited the hatred of the Jewish rulers, and the jealousy of the Roman government; and, speaking after the manner of men, his farther preachings and miracles must have been impeded. This alone seems to be the reason why he said to the leper, *See thou tell no man*.

Show thyself to the priest] This was to conform to the law instituted in this case, ^{<B140>}**Leviticus 14:1**, &c.

Offer the gift] This gift was *two living, clean birds, some cedar wood, with scarlet and hyssop*, ^{<B140>}**Leviticus 14:4**, which were to be brought for his cleansing; and, *when clean, two he lambs, one ewe lamb, three tenth deals of flour, and one log of oil*, ^{<B140>}**Leviticus 14:10**; but if the person was *poor*, then he was to bring *one lamb, one tenth deal of flour, one log of oil and two turtle doves, or young pigeons*, ^{<B141>}**Leviticus 14:21, 22**. See the notes on Lev. 14.

Now all this was to be done *for a testimony to them*; to prove that this leper, who was doubtless well known in the land, had been thoroughly cleansed; and thus, *in this private way*, to give full proof to the *priesthood* that Jesus was the true Messiah. The Jewish rabbins allowed that curing the lepers should be a *characteristic* of the Messiah; (see Bishop Chandler's Vindication;) therefore the obstinacy of the priests, &c., in rejecting Christ, was utterly inexcusable.

Verse 5. Capernaum] See Clarke on "^{<4013>}**Matthew 4:13**".

A centurion] εκατονταρχος. A Roman military officer who had the command of *one hundred men*.

Verse 6. Lord] Rather, *Sir*, for so the word κυριε should always be translated when a *Roman* is the speaker.

Lieth at home] βεβληται, *lieth all along*; intimating that the disease had reduced him to a state of the utmost impotence, through the grievous torments with which it was accompanied.

Sick of the palsy] Or *paralytic*. See Clarke on “^{<00B3>}Matthew 4:24”. This centurion did not act as many masters do when their servants are afflicted, have them immediately removed to an *infirmary*, often to a *work-house*; or sent home to friends or relatives, who probably either care nothing for them, or are unable to afford them any of the comforts of life. In case of a contagious disorder, it may be necessary to remove an infected person to such places as are best calculated to cure the distemper, and prevent the spread of the contagion. But, in all common cases, the servant should be considered as a child, and receive the same friendly attention. If, by a hasty, unkind, and unnecessary removal, the servant die, are not the master and mistress murderers before God?

Verse 7. I will come and heal him.] εγω ελοθων θεραπευσω αυτον, *I am coming, and will heal him*. This saying is worthy of observation. Jesus did not positively say, *I will come and heal him*; this could not have been strictly true, because our Lord healed him without going to the house: and the issue shows that the words ought to be taken in the most literal sense: thus understood, they contained a promise which it seems none of them distinctly comprehended. Foreseeing the exercise of the centurion’s faith, he promises that while he is coming, ere he arrives at the house, he will heal him, and this was literally done, ^{<00B3>}Matthew 8:13. There is much beauty in this passage.

Verse 8. But speak the word only] Or instead of ειπε λογον read ειπε λογω, speak *by word or command*. This reading is supported by the most extensive evidence from MSS., versions, and fathers. See here the pattern of that living faith and genuine humility which ought always to accompany the prayer of a sinner: Jesus can *will away* the *palsy*, and *speak away* the most *grievous torments*. The *first* degree of humility is to acknowledge the necessity of God’s mercy, and our own inability to help ourselves: the *second*, to confess the freeness of his grace, and our own utter

unworthiness. Ignorance, unbelief, and presumption will ever retard our spiritual cure.

Verse 9. For I am a man under authority] That is, *under the authority of others*. This verse has given considerable embarrassment to commentators and critics. I believe the paraphrase given above to be the true meaning of the evangelist. To make this matter more plain, let it be observed, that the Roman *foot* was divided into three grand parts, *Hastati*, *Principes*, and *Triarii*. Each of these grand divisions was composed of thirty *manipuli* or *companies*; and every *manipulus* made two *centuries* or companies of *one hundred men*. Every *manipulus* had two *centurions*; but these were very far from being *equal* in rank and honour, though possessing the very same office. The *Triarii* and *Principes* were esteemed the most honourable, and had their *centurions* elected first; and these first elected *centurions* took precedency of the *centurions* of the *Hastati*, who were elected last. The *centurion* in the text was probably one of this last order; he was under the authority of either the *Principes* or *Triarii*, and had none *under* him but the hundred men whom he commanded, and who appear to have been in a state of the most loving subjection to him. The argument of the centurion seems to run thus. If I, who am a person subject to the control of others, yet have some so completely subject to myself, that I can say to one, Come, and he cometh, to another, Go, and he goeth, and *to my slave* (τω δουλω μου) Do this, and he doeth it; how much more then canst *thou* accomplish whatsoever thou wilt, being under no control, and having all things under thy command: He makes a proper use of his authority, who, by it, raises his mind to the contemplation of the sovereign power of God, taking occasion from it to humble himself before Him who has all power in heaven and earth, and to expect all good from him.

There are two beautiful passages in *Arrian* that tend much to illustrate this speech of the centurion. καταταγεις αγαμεμνων, λεγει μοι, πορευου προς τον αχιλλεα, και αποσπασον την βρισηιδα, πορευομαι. ερχου, ερχομαι. “He who personates Agamemnon says to me, Go to Achilles, and bring hither Briseis: I go. He says, Come hither: I come.” Dissert. l. i. c. 25. p. 97. οταν ο θεος ειπη τοις φυτοις ανθειν, ανθει. οταν ειπη βλαστανειν, βλαστανει. οταν εκφερειν τον καρπον, εκφερει. οταν πεπαινειν, πεπαινει. οταν παλιν αποβαλλειν, και φυλλορροειν, και αυτα εις αυτα συνειλουμενα εφ ησυχιας μενειν, και αναπαυεσθαι, μενει και αναπαυεται. “When God commands the

plants to blossom, they bear blossoms. When he commands them to bear seed, they bear seed. When he commands them to bring forth fruit, they put forth their fruits. When he commands them to ripen, they grow ripe. When he commands them to fade, and shed their leaves, and remain inactive, involved in themselves, they thus remain, and are inactive.” Cap. 14. p. 62. See *Raphelius*.

This mode of speech fully marks supreme and uncontrolled power, and that power put forth by a sovereign will to effect any purpose of justice or mercy. *And God said, let there be light, and there was light*, is a similar expression.

Verse 10. I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.] That is, I have not found so great an instance of confidence and faith in my power, even among the *Jews*, as this *Roman*, a Gentile, has shown himself to possess.

From ~~<407>~~**Luke 7:5**, where it is said of this centurion, “he loved our nation, and has built us a synagogue,” we may infer that this man was like the centurion mentioned ~~<4400>~~**Acts 10:1**; a devout Gentile, a *proselyte of the gate*, one who believed in the God of Israel, without conforming to the Jewish *ritual* or receiving *circumcision*. Though the military life is one of the most improper nurses for the Christian religion, yet in all nations there have been found several instances of genuine humility, and faith in God, even in soldiers; and perhaps never more, in the British *military*, than at present, A. D. 1831.

Verse 11. Many shall come from the east and west] Men of every *description*, of all *countries*, and of all *professions*; and shall *sit down*, that is, *to meat*, for this is the proper meaning of *ανακλιθησονται*, intimating the *recumbent* posture used by the easterns at their *meals*. The rabbins represent the blessedness of the kingdom of God under the notion of a banquet. See several proofs of this in Schoettgenius. This was spoken to soften the unreasonable prejudices of the Jews, which they entertained against the Gentiles, and to prepare them to receive their brethren of mankind into religious fellowship with themselves, under the Christian dispensation.

With Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob] In the closest communion with the most eminent followers of God. But if we desire to inherit the promises, we must be *followers* of them who through faith and patience

enjoy them. Let us therefore imitate *Abraham* in his *faith*, *Isaac* in his *obedience* unto death, and *Jacob* in his *hope* and *expectation* of good things to come, amidst all the evils of this life, if we desire to reign with them.

Verse 12. Shall be cast out into outer darkness] As the enjoyment of that salvation which Jesus Christ calls the kingdom of heaven is here represented under the notion of a nuptial festival, at which the guests sat down in a *reclining posture*, with the master of the feast; so the state of those who were excluded from the banquet is represented as *deep darkness*; because the nuptial solemnities took place at *night*. Hence, at those suppers, the house of reception was filled with lights called **δαδεις, λαμπαδες, λυκνεια, φανοι**, *torches, lamps, candles, and lanthorns*, by *Athenæus* and *Plutarch*: so they who were admitted to the banquet had the benefit of the *light*; but they who were *shut out* were in *darkness*, called here *outer darkness*, i.e. the darkness on the *outside* of the house in which the guests were; which must appear more abundantly *gloomy*, when compared with the *profusion* of light within the guest-chamber. And because they who were *shut out* were not only exposed to *shame*, but also to *hunger* and *cold*; therefore it is added, *there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth*. As these feasts are often alluded to by the evangelists, I would observe, once for all:-that they who were invited to them entered by a *gate* designed to receive them; whence Christ, by whom we enter into the marriage feast, compares himself to a *gate*, ^{<4300>}**John 10:1, 2, 7, 9**. This *gate*, at the time the guests were to come, was made narrow, the *wicket* only being left open, and the porter standing there, that they who were not bidden to the marriage might not rush into it. Hence Christ exhorts the Jews to enter in at the strait gate, ^{<4071>}**Matthew 7:13**, &c. When all that were invited were once come, the door was presently shut, and was not to be opened to any who came *too late*, and stood knocking without; so after the *wise virgins* had entered with the bridegroom, the *gate was shut*, and was not opened to the *foolish virgins*, who stood knocking without, ^{<40251>}**Matthew 25:11**. And in this sense we are to understand the words of Christ, ^{<41324>}**Luke 13:24, 25**. Many shall seek to enter in, but shall not be able. Why? because *the master of the house hath risen up and shut to the door*; they would not come to him *when they might*, and now the day of probation is ended, and they must be judged according to the deeds done in the body. See *Whitby* on the place. How many of those who are called *Christians* suffer the kingdom, the graces, and the salvation which they had

in their hands, to be lost; *while* West-India negroes, American Indians, Hindoo polytheists, and atheistic Hottentots obtain salvation! An *eternity* of darkness, fears, and pains, for comparatively a moment of sensual gratification, how terrible the thought! What *outer darkness*, or **ΤΟ ΣΚΟΤΟΣ ΤΟ ΕΞΩΤΕΡΟΝ**, *that darkness, that which is outermost*, may refer to, in eternal damnation, is hard to say: what it *alludes* to I have already mentioned: but as the words **βρυγμος των οδοντων**, *gnashing or CHATTERING of teeth*, convey the idea, not only of extreme anguish, but of extreme cold; some have imagined that the punishment of the damned consists in sudden *transitions* from *extreme heat* to *extreme cold*; the extremes of both I have found to produce exactly the same sensation.

MILTON happily describes this in the following inimitable verses, which a man can scarcely read, even at *midsummer*, without *shivering*.

*Beyond this flood a frozen continent
 Lies dark and wild, heat with perpetual storms
 Of whirlwind and dire hail-----
 ----- the parching air
 Burns froze, and cold performs the effect of fire.
 Thither by harpy-footed furies haled,
 At certain revolutions all the damn'd
 Are brought; and feel by turns the bitter change
 Of fierce extremes, extremes by change more fierce,
 From beds of raging fire, to starve in ice,
 ----- and there to pine
 Immovable, infix'd, and frozen round
 Periods of time; thence hurried back to fire.
 Parad. Lost, book ii. line 586.*

There is a passage in the Vulgate, ^{<182419>} **Job 24:19**, that might have helped Milton to this idea. *Ad nimium calorem transeat ab aquis nivium*. “Let him pass to excessive heat, from waters of snow.” This reading, which is found only in this *form* in the Vulgate, is vastly expressive. Every body knows that *snow water* feels *colder* than *snow* itself, even when both are of the same temperature, viz. 32 , because the human body, when in contact with *snow water*, cools quicker than when in contact with snow. Another of our poets has given us a most terrible description of perdition on the same ground.

*The once pamper'd spirit
 To bathe in fiery floods, or to reside
 In thrilling regions of thick-ribbed ice;
 To be imprison'd in the viewless winds,
 And blown with restless violence round about
 This pendant world; or to be worse than worst
 Of those that lawless and incertain thoughts
 Imagine-----*

Similar to this is that dreadful description of the torments of the wicked given in the Institutes of Menu: “The wicked shall have a sensation of agony in *Tamisra*, or *utter darkness*, and in other seats of horror; in *Asipatrauana*, or the *sword-leaved forest*, and in different places of *binding fast*, and of *rending*: multifarious tortures await them: they shall be mangled by ravens and owls, and shall swallow cakes boiling hot, and shall walk over inflamed sands, and shall feel the pangs of being *baked* like the vessels of a potter: they shall assume the forms of beasts continually miserable, and suffer alternate afflictions from *extremities of cold and heat*; surrounded with terrors of various kinds. They shall have *old age* without *resource*; *diseases* attended with *anguish*; pangs of innumerable sorts, and, lastly, *unconquerable death*.”

Institutes of MENU, chap. 12. Inst. 75-80.

In the Zend Avesta, the place of wicked spirits is termed, “The *places of darkness*, the germs of the *thickest darkness*.” An uncommonly significant expression: Darkness has its *birth* there: there are its *seeds* and *buds*, there it *vegetates* everlastingly, and its eternal *fruit is-darkness!*

See Zend Avesta, vol. i. *Vendidad sadi, Fargard*. xviii. p. 412.

And is this, or, any thing as *bad* as this, HELL? Yes, and *worse* than the *worst* of all that has already been mentioned. Hear Christ himself. *There their worm dieth not, and the fire is NOT QUENCHED!* Great God! save the reader from this damnation!

Verse 13. As thou hast believed; so be it done] Let the mercy thou requestest be *equal* to the *faith* thou hast brought to receive it by. ACCORDING to *thy faith be it done unto thee*, is a general measure of God’s dealings with mankind. To get an increase of *faith* is to get an increase of every grace which constitutes the mind that was in Jesus, and prepares *fully* for the enjoyment of the kingdom of God. God is the *same*

in the present time which he was in ancient days; and miracles of *healing* may be wrought on our own bodies and souls, and on those of *others*, by the instrumentality of our faith. But, alas! *where* is faith to be found!

And his servant was healed in the selfsame hour.] *εν τη ωρα εκεινη*, in that very hour. Faith is never exercised in the power and goodness of God till it is needed; and, *when* it is exercised, God works the miracle of healing. Christ never says, Believe *now* for a salvation which thou *now* needest, and I will give it to thee in some *future* time. That salvation which is expected through *works* or *sufferings* must of necessity be *future*, as there must be time to *work* or *suffer* in; but the salvation which is by *faith* must be for the *present moment*, for this simple reason, IT IS BY FAITH, that God may be *manifested* and *honoured*; and not by *works* or by *sufferings*, lest any man should *boast*. To say that, though it is of faith, yet it may; and, must in many cases, be *delayed*, (though the person is coming in the most genuine humility, deepest contrition, and with the liveliest faith in the blood of the Lamb,) is to say that there is still something necessary to be *done*, either on the part of the *person*, or on the part of *God*, in order to procure it; neither of which positions has any truth in it.

Verse 14. Peter's house] That Peter lived at Capernaum, and that Christ lodged with him, is fully evident from this verse compared with ~~<01724>~~ **Matthew 17:24.**

Peter's-wife's mother] Learn hence, says Theophylact, that *marriage* is no hinderance to *virtue*, since the chief of the apostles had his wife. Marriage is one of the first of Divine institutions, and is a positive command of God. He says, the state of celibacy is not GOOD, ~~<00218>~~ **Genesis 2:18.** Those who pretend to say that the *single* state is more holy than the *other* slander their Maker, and say in effect, "We are too holy to keep the commandments of God."

Verse 15. He touched her hand] Can any thing on this side the unlimited power of God effect such a cure with only a touch? If the Scriptures had not spoken of the divinity of Christ, these proofs of his power must have demonstrated it to the common sense of every man whose *creed* had not previously blinded him.

Ministered unto them.] *αυτοις*, *them*, is the reading of most of the *printed* editions, but *αυτω*, *to him*, has the utmost evidence in its support from MSS., versions, and fathers. Serving Christ in his ordinances and in

his members is the best proof we can give to others of our being soundly restored to spiritual health.

Verse 16. When the even was come] The Jews kept their sabbath from evening to evening, according to the law, ^{
}**Leviticus 23:32**, *From evening to evening shall ye celebrate your sabbath*. And the rabbins say, *The sabbath doth not enter but when the sun is set*. Hence it was that the sick were not brought out to our Lord till after sun-set, because then the sabbath was ended.

Many that were possessed with devils] Dr. Lightfoot gives two sound reasons why Judea, in our Lord's time, abounded with *demoniacs*. First, Because they were then advanced to the very height of impiety. See what Josephus, their own historian, says of them: There was not (said he) a nation under heaven more wicked than they were. **See Clarke on "Ro 1:1"**. Secondly, Because they were then strongly addicted to *magic*, and so, as it were, invited evil spirits to be familiar with them. It seems strange to find men at this distance of time questioning the truth of that which neither scribes nor Pharisees then doubted; nor did they ever object against the pretensions of Christ and his apostles to cast them out. And, if the whole business of *demonism* had been only a *vulgar error*, (as *wise men now* tell us,) what a fine opportunity had the *wise men then*, to unmask the whole matter, and thus pour contempt on the pretensions of our blessed Lord and his followers, who held it to be one proof of their Divine mission, *that demons were subject to them!*

And healed all that were sick] Not a soul did the Lord Jesus ever reject, who came to him soliciting his aid. Need any sinner despair who comes to him, conscious of his spiritual malady, to be healed by his merciful hand?

Verse 17. Himself took our infirmities] The quotation is taken from ^{
}**Isaiah 53:4**, where the verb **acn nasa** signifies to *bear sin*, so as to *make atonement for it*. And the rabbins understand this place to speak of the sufferings of the Messiah for the sins of Israel; and say that all the diseases, all the griefs, and all the punishments due to Israel shall be borne by him. See *Synopsis Sohar*. Christ fulfils the prophecies in *all* respects, and is himself the completion and truth of them, as being the *lamb* and *victim* of God, which, *bears* and *takes away* the sin of the world. The text in Isaiah refers properly to the *taking away of sin*; and this in the evangelist, to the *removal of corporeal* afflictions: but, as the diseases of

the body are the emblems of the sin of the soul, Matthew, referring to the prediction of the prophet, considered the miraculous healing of the *body* as an emblem of the *soul's salvation* by Christ Jesus.

Verse 18. Unto the other side.] Viz. of the lake of *Genesareth*, whence he proceeded to the country of the *Gergesenes*, ~~4088~~ **Matthew 8:28.**

Verse 19. A certain scribe] Though *εις γραμματευς*, ONE *scribe*, may be considered as a Hebraism, yet it is probable that the *literal* construction of it was intended, to show that few of this class came to the Lord Jesus for instruction or salvation.

Master] Rather, *teacher*, *διδασκαλε* from *διδασκω*, *I teach*, which itself seems to be derived from *δεικω*, *I show*, and means the person who *shows* or *points out* a particular way or *science*.

I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest.] A man who is *not* illuminated by the Spirit of God thinks himself capable of *any thing*: he alone who is divinely taught knows he can do *nothing* but through Christ strengthening him. Every teacher among the Jews had disciples, and some especially that followed or accompanied them *wherever they went*, that they might have some person at hand with whom they might converse concerning the Divine law.

Verse 20. The foxes have holes, &c.] Reader! art thou a *poor man*? and dost thou fear God? Then, what comfort must thou derive from the thought, that thou so nearly resemblest the Lord Jesus! But how unlike is the *rich man*, who is the votary of pleasure and slave of sin, to this heavenly pattern!

Son of man] A Hebrew phrase, expressive of *humiliation* and *debasement*; and, on that account, applied emphatically to himself, by the meek and lowly Jesus. Besides, it seems here to be used to point out the incarnation of the Son of God, according to the predictions of the prophets, ~~5085~~ **Psalms 8:5;** ~~20713~~ **Daniel 7:13.** And as our Lord was now showing forth his eternal *Divinity* in the miracles he wrought, he seems studious to prove to them the certainty of his *incarnation*, because on this depended the atonement for sin. Indeed our Lord seems more intent on giving the proofs of his *humanity*, than of his *divinity*, the latter being necessarily manifested by the miracles which he was continually working.

Verse 21. Another of his disciples] This does not mean any of the *twelve*, but one of those who were constant hearers of our Lord's preaching; the name of *disciple* being common to all those who professed to believe in him, ~~1866~~ **John 6:66.** *Bury my father:* probably his father was old, and apparently near death; but it was a maxim among the Jews, that, if a man had any duty to perform to the *dead*, he was, for that time, free from the observance of any other precept or duty. The children of Adam are always in extremes; some will rush into the ministry of the Gospel *without a call*, others will delay long after they are called; the middle way is the only safe one: not to move a finger in the work till the call be given, and not to delay a moment after.

Verse 22. Let the dead bury their dead.] It was usual for the Jews to consider a man as *dead* who had departed from the precepts of the law; and, on this ground, every transgressor was reputed a *dead man*. Our Lord's saying, being in common use, had nothing difficult in it to a Jew. Natural death is the separation of the body and soul; spiritual death, the separation of God and the soul: men who live in sin are dead to God. Leave the *spiritually* dead to bury their *natural* dead. All the common offices of life may be performed by *any* person; to preach the glad tidings of the kingdom of God is granted but to a *few*, and to these only by an *especial call*; these should immediately abandon worldly concerns and employments, and give themselves wholly up to the work of the ministry.

Verse 24. Arose a great tempest in the sea] Probably excited by Satan, the prince of the power of the air, who, having got the author and all the preachers of the Gospel together in a small vessel, thought by drowning it, to defeat the purposes of God, and thus to prevent the salvation of a ruined world. What a noble opportunity must this have appeared to the enemy of the human race!

Verse 25. And his disciples] THE disciples. In the common printed editions, as well as in our translation, it is HIS disciples, but *αυτου*, *his*, is omitted by the very best MSS., and by *Bengel*, *Wetstein*, and *Griesbach*. This is a matter of very small importance, and need not be noticed; only every translator and commentator should aim, to the uttermost of his knowledge and power, to give every *particle* of the language of the inspired penman that can be expressed, and to insert no one word which he has reason to believe did not come by the inspiration of God.

Lord, save us: we perish.] One advantage of trials is to make us know our weakness, so as to oblige us to have recourse to God by faith in Christ. It is by *faith* alone that we may be said to *approach* him; by *love* we are *united* to him, and by *prayer* we *awake* him. All good *perishes* in us without Christ: without his grace, there is not so much as one moment in which we are not in danger of utter ruin. How proper, then, is this short prayer for us, and how familiar should it be to us! Taken in the extensive Christian sense it is exceedingly expressive: it comprehends all the *power* of our Lord's *might*, all the merit of his *atonement*, and all the *depth of our misery* and *danger*. See *Quesnel*.

Verse 26. Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?] *Faith* is ever *bold-incredulity* always *timid*. When faith fails in temptation, there is the utmost danger of shipwreck. *Lord, increase our faith!* is a necessary prayer for all who desire to be saved.

Then he arose and rebuked the winds, &c.] As the agitation of the sea was only the *effect* of the wind, it was necessary to remove the *cause* of the disturbance, that the *effect* might cease. Joshua did not say to the *earth*, *Earth, stand thou still*, because the earth is not the *cause* of its own motion: but, *Sun, stand thou still*, $\mu\omega\delta \nu\mu\nu$ *shemesh dom*, Sun, be silent, or restrain thy influence, which is a proper cause of the revolutions of all the planets. When the solar influence was by the miraculous power of God suspended, the standing still of the earth was a necessary consequence. Both Christ and Joshua spoke with the strictest philosophical precision. See the notes on ^{<61012>}**Joshua 10:12-14**.

There was a great calm.] One word of Christ can change the face of nature; one word of his can restore calm and peace to the most troubled and disconsolate soul. Prayer and faith, if sincere, shall be heard, though they may be weak. 1. That our imperfections may not hinder us from praying to God. 2. That we may be persuaded it is not our merits which make our prayers effectual. 3. That we may offer them up with great humility: and, 4. That we may be fully united to Christ, without which union there is no salvation.

There was at first a great agitation; then a great calm. Thus God ever proportions the *comfort* to the affliction.

Verse 27. The men marvelled] Every part of the creation (man excepted) hears and obeys the Creator's voice. Sinners have an ear for the world, the

devil, and the flesh: till this ear is shut, God's voice is not discerned; for when it is shut to its enemies it is open to its *friends*.

What manner of man is this] ποταπος εστιν ουτος, *How great is this person!* Here was God fully manifest; but it was in the *flesh*-there were the hidings of his power.

Verse 28. The country of the Gergesenes] This word is variously written in the MSS, and versions; *Gergasenes, Gerasenes, Gadarenes, Gergesions, and Gersedonians*, The three first are supported by the greater authorities. They might have all been names of the *same* place or district; but, if we depend on what *Origen* says, the people mentioned here could not have been the inhabitants of *Gerasa*, which, says he, is a city of Arabia, ουτε θαλασσαν, ουτε λιμνην πλησιον εχοντα, *which has neither sea nor lake nigh to it*. "Gadara was, according to *Josephus*, the metropolis of *Perea*, or the region beyond *Jordan*: both the city and villages belonging to it lay in the country of the *Gergasenes*; whence Christ going into the country of the *Gadarenes*, ^{<4160>}**Mark 5:1**, is said to go into the region of the *Gergasenes*, ^{<4088>}**Matthew 8:28.**" WHITBY.

Two possessed with devils] Persons possessed by evil demons. Mark and Luke mention only *one* demoniac, probably the fiercer of the *two*.

Coming out of the tombs] It is pretty evident that cupolas were generally builded over the graves among the Jews, and that these demoniacs had their dwellings under such: the evil spirits which were in them delighting more in these abodes of desolation and ruin, as being more congenial to their *fierce* and *diabolic* nature, and therefore would drive the possessed into them.

Verse 29. What have we to do with thee] The literal translation of τι ημιν και σοι, is, *What is it to us and to thee*; which perhaps might be understood to imply their disclaiming any design to interfere with the work of Christ, and that *he* should not therefore meddle with *them*; for it appears they exceedingly dreaded his power.

What have we to do with thee, is a Jewish phrase, which often occurs in the Old Testament, signifying an abrupt refusal of some request, or a wish not to be troubled with the company or importunity of others. Jehu said to the messenger who was sent by Joram to meet him, *What hast thou to do with peace?* David said, *What have I to do with you, ye sons of Zeruiah?*

Compare ~~<07112>~~ **Judges 11:12**; ~~<01610>~~ **2 Samuel 16:10**; ~~<12018>~~ **2 Kings 9:18**;
~~<15048>~~ **Ezra 4:3**; ~~<4034>~~ **John 2:4**. See Clarke's note on "~~<40124>~~ **Mark 1:24**".

Jesus, thou Son of God] Griesbach omits the word *Jesus*, on the authority of several MSS. of the greatest antiquity and respectability; besides some *versions*, and several of the *fathers*. I heartily concur with these MSS., &c., for this simple reason, among others, that the word *Jesus*, i.e. *Saviour*, was of too ominous an import to the Satanic interest to be used freely, in such a case, by any of his disciples or subalterns.

Art thou come hither to torment us before the time?] From this it appears that a greater degree of punishment awaited these demons than they at that time endured; and that they knew there was a time determined by the Divine Judge, when they should be sent into greater torments.

Verse 30. A herd of many swine] These were in all probability Jewish property, and kept and used in express violation of the law of God; and therefore their destruction, in the next verse, was no more than a proper manifestation of the *justice* of God.

Verse 31. Suffer us to go away] επιτρεψον ημιν απελθειν: this is the common reading; but αποστειλον ημας, *send us away*, appears more likely to be genuine. This latter reading Griesbach has adopted, on the authority of three ancient MSS., the *Coptic, Sahidic, Ethiopic, Syriac*, all the *Arabic, Saxon*, most of the *Itala*, and the *Vulgate*. *Send us away* seems to express more fully the absolute power Jesus Christ had over them—*permission* alone was not sufficient; the very *power* by which they were *to go away*, must come from Christ himself! How vain was the boast of Satan, ~~<4009>~~ **Matthew 4:9**, when we find he could not possess the body of one of the *vilest animals* that God has made, without immediate authority from the Most High! Since a demon cannot enter even into a *swine* without being *sent* by God himself, how little is the *power* or *malice* of any of them to be dreaded by those who have God for their portion and protector!

Verse 32. They went into the herd of swine] Instead of την αγελην των χοιρων, *the herd of swine*, Griesbach reads τους χοιρους, *the swine*, on the authority of many MSS. and versions.

The whole herd of swine] των χοιρων, *of swine*, is omitted by many MSS. and versions. See Griesbach, and See Clarke on "~~<4030>~~ **Luke 8:20**", &c.

Ran violently down a steep place, &c.] The *prayer* of these demons is heard and answered! Strange! But let it be noted, that God only hears demons and certain sinners when their prayer is the echo of his own justice. Here is an emblem of the final impenitence and ruin into which the *swinish sinners*, the habitually *unpure*, more commonly fall than other sinners. Christ permits the demons to do that in the *swine* which he did not permit them to do in the *possessed*, on purpose to show us what rage they would exercise on us if left to their liberty and malice. Many are the Divine favours which we do not consider, or know only in general. “But the owners of the swine lost their property.” Yes; and learn from this of how small value temporal riches, are in the estimation of God. He suffers them to be lost, sometimes to disengage us from them through *mercy*; sometimes out of *justice*, to punish us for having *acquired* or *preserved* them either by *covetousness* or *injustice*.

Verse 33. And they that kept them fled] Terrified at what had happened to the swine.

Verse 34. The whole city came out] Probably with the intention to destroy Jesus for having destroyed their swine; but, having seen him, they were awed by his presence; and only besought him to depart from their borders. Many rather chose to lose Jesus Christ than those temporal goods by which they gratify their passions at the expense of their souls. They love even their *swine* better than their *salvation*.

Certain *doctors* in both sciences, *divinity* and *physic*, gravely tell us that these demoniacs were only common *madmen*, and that the disease was supposed, by the superstitious Jews, to be occasioned by demons. But, with due deference to great characters, may not a plain man be permitted to ask, by what figure of speech can it be said that “two diseases *besought-went out-filled a herd of swine-rushed down a precipice?*” &c. What silly trifling is this! Some people’s creeds will neither permit God nor the devil to work; and, in several respects, hardly to exist. For he who denies Divine inspiration, will scarcely acknowledge diabolic influence. See Clarke’s note on “⁴⁰⁸¹⁶Matthew 8:16”, and See Clarke on “⁴⁰⁷²¹Luke 7:21”.

It is said, *The whole city came out to meet Jesus*. This means no more than all the inhabitants of that place, which, most probably, was no more than a small country village; or perhaps but a few houses. I have observed that the inhabitants of the Zetland Isles, in the North Seas, denominate any

collection of houses a *town*, even where there are but three or four: and thus I think that the Jews denominated their villages, often calling them *cities*.

ST. MATTHEW

CHAPTER 9.

Christ heals a paralytic person at Capernaum, 1-8. Calls Matthew, 9-10. Eats with publicans and sinners, at which the Pharisees are offended, and he vindicates his conduct, 11, 12. The disciples of John come to him and inquire about fasting, 14-17. A ruler requests him to heal his daughter, 18, 19. On his road to the ruler's house, he heals a diseased woman, 20-22. Arriving at the ruler's house, he restores the young woman to life, 23-26. Heals two blind men, 27-31. Casts out a dumb demon, 32-34. Preaches and works miracles in all the cities and villages, 35. Is greatly affected at the desolate and dark state of the Jewish people, 36. Exhorts his disciples to pray to God to send them proper instructors, 37, 38.

NOTES ON CHAP. 9.

Verse 1. He came into his own city] Viz. *Capernaum*, where he seems to have had his common residence at the house of Peter. See ~~<4043>~~ **Matthew 4:13**, and ~~<4084>~~ **Matthew 8:14**. This verse properly belongs to the preceding chapter.

Verse 2. Sick of the palsy] See ~~<4023>~~ **Matthew 4:24**.

Lying on a bed] κλινῆς, a *couch* or *sofa*, such as they *reclined* on at meals.

Seeing their faith] The faith of the paralytic person, and the faith of those who brought him; See Clarke on "~~<4004>~~ **Mark 2:4**".

Be of good cheer] θάρσει τεκνον, *Son, take courage!* Probably he began to *despond*, and Christ spoke thus to support his *faith*.

Thy sins be forgiven thee.] Moral evil has been the *cause* of all the natural evil in the world. Christ goes to the *source* of the malady, which is *sin*; and to that as the procuring cause we should refer in all our afflictions. It is probable that this paralytic person had, in the earnest desires of his heart, entreated the cure of his soul, leaving his body to the care of others, as the first miracle of healing is wrought on his soul. In a state of helplessness, when we seek above all things to please God, by giving him our hearts, he often inspires others with the care of our temporal necessities. It may be necessary to be observed, that it was a maxim among

the Jews that *no diseased person could be healed till all his sins were blotted out*. See *Nedarim*, fol. 41. Hence our Lord first forgives the sins, and then heals the body of the paralytic person. This appears to have been founded on ^{<19A3B>}**Psalm 103:3**. *Who forgiveth all thine iniquities, and healeth all thy diseases*. Here *pardon precedes health*. See also ^{<194IB>}**Psalm 41:3, 4**. It may be observed, also, that most people are more in earnest about their souls when in sickness than in health, and therefore are more earnest in prayer for salvation.

Verse 3. This man blasphemeth.] βλασφημεω comes either from βλαπτειν την φημην, *to hurt or blast the reputation or credit of another*, or from βαλλειν ταις φημαις, *to smite with reports*. Whenever it is used in reference to GOD, it simply signifies, *to speak impiously of his nature, or attributes, or works*. *Injurious speaking* is its proper translation when referred to *man*.

The *scribes* were the *literati* of that time; and their learning, because not used in dependence on God, rendered them proud, envious, and obstinate. Unsanctified knowledge has still the same effect: that light serves only to blind and lead men out of the way which is not joined with uprightness of heart. The most sacred truths often become an occasion of delusion, where men are under the government of their evil passions.

Verse 4. Jesus knowing (ιδων seeing) their thoughts] In telling them what the thoughts of their hearts were, (for they had expressed nothing publicly,) he gave them the fullest proof of his power to forgive sins; because God only can forgive sins, and God only can *search* and *know* the heart. Jesus pronounced the man's sins forgiven; and gave the scribes the fullest proof of his power to do so, by telling them what, *in the secret of their souls*, they *thought* on the subject.

God sounds the secrets of all hearts-no sin escapes his notice; how senseless then is the sinner to think he sins securely when unseen by men! Let us take heed to our hearts, as well as to our conduct, for God searches out and condemns all that does not spring from, and leads not to himself.

Verse 5. For whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and walk?] Both are *equally easy*, and *equally difficult*; for both require *unlimited* power to produce them. And every thing is equally easy to that power which is unlimited. A universe can be as easily produced by a single act of the Divine *will* as the smallest elementary part of matter.

The common punctuation of the above passage almost destroys the sense: the comma should be placed after *easier*, and *to say*, made the first part of the question.

Verse 6. But that ye may know, &c.] *External* miracles are the proofs of *internal ones*. Three miracles are wrought in this case. (I mean, by miracle, something *produced* or *known* that no power is capable of but that which is *omnipotent*, and no *knowledge* adequate to but that which is *omniscient*.) The miracles are these: 1st. The remission of the poor man's sins. 2d. The discernment of the secret thoughts of the scribes. 3d. The restoring of the paralytic, in an instant, to perfect soundness. Thus one miracle becomes the proof and establishment of another. Never was a clearer proof of omnipotent energy and mercy brought under the senses of man. Here is an absolutely perfect miracle wrought; and here are absolute incontestable proofs that the miracle *was* wrought; and the conclusion is the fullest demonstration of the Divinity of the ever-blessed Jesus.

Arise, take up thy bed] Being enabled to obey this command was the public proof that the man was made whole. Such a circumstance should not pass without improvement. A man gives proof of his conversion from sin to God who imitates this paralytic person. He who does not *rise* and *stand upright*, but either continues *grovelling* on the earth, or *falls back* as soon as he is *got up*, is not yet cured of his spiritual palsy. When we see a penitent enabled to rejoice in hope of God's glory, and to walk in the way of his commandments, he affords us all the proof which we can reasonably require, that his conversion is *real*: the proof sufficient to satisfy *himself* is the *witness of the Holy Spirit in his own heart*; but this is a matter of which those who are without cannot judge: they must form their opinion from his *conduct*, and judge of the *tree* by its *fruits*.

Verse 8. When the multitudes saw it, they marvelled] Instead of *θαυμασαν*, *wondered*, the Codex *Vatic.* and Cod. *Bezae*, with several other MSS. and versions, have *εφοβηθησαν*, *feared*. In the *Gothic*, and one copy of the *Itala*, both readings are conjoined, thus: *And the multitudes seeing it, wondered and feared, and glorified God. Wondered at the miracle; feared to offend against such power and goodness; and glorified God for the works of mercy which he had wrought.*

That which to the *doctors of the law*, the worldly-wise and prudent, is a matter of scandal, is to the humble an occasion of glorifying the Most High. Divine things make a deeper impression on the hearts of the simple

multitude than on those of the doctors, who, puffed up with a sense of their own wisdom, refuse to receive the truth *as it is in Jesus*. The conversion of one rebellious soul is a greater miracle, and more to be admired than all that can be wrought on inanimate creatures. He who sees a sinner converted from the error of his way sees a miracle wrought by eternal power and goodness. May such miracles be *multiplied*!

Verse 9. Named Matthew] Generally supposed to be the same who wrote this history of our blessed Lord. *Mathai* signifies a *gift* in Syriac; probably so named by his parents as implying a *gift from God*.

The receipt of custom] The custom-house, *τελωνιον*-the place where the taxes levied by the *Romans* of the *Jews*, were collected.

Follow me.] That is, become my disciple.

And he arose, and followed him.] How blessed it is to be obedient to the first call of Christ-how much happiness and glory are lost by *delays*, though conversion at last may have taken place!

Verse 10. Sat at meat in the house] Viz. of Matthew, who it appears, from ^{<4153>}**Luke 5:29**, made a great feast on the occasion, thus testifying his gratitude for the honour done him; and that his friends and acquaintances might profit by the teaching of his new master, he invites them to the entertainment that was honoured by the presence of Christ. His companions, it appears, were not of the most creditable kind. They were *tax-gatherers* (See Clarke "^{<4154>}**Matthew 5:46**") and *sINNERS*, *αμαρτωλοι*, a word which I believe in general signifies heathens, throughout the Gospels, and in several other parts of the New Testament. See, among others, ^{<4119>}**Matthew 11:19; 26:45;** ^{<4025>}**Mark 2:15-17; 14:41;** ^{<4153>}**Luke 5:30-32; 6:32-34; 7:34, 37, 39;** ^{<4150>}**Luke 15:1, 2, 7, 10; 19:7; 24:7;** ^{<4016>}**John 9:16, 24, 25, 31;** ^{<4158>}**Romans 5:8;** ^{<4025>}**Galatians 2:15;** ^{<4026>}**Hebrews 7:26;** ^{<4048>}**1 Peter 4:18;** in most, if not all of which places, it evidently refers to the character or state of a *Gentile*, or *Heathen*. See also the notes on these passages.

Verse 11. When the Pharisees saw it] He who, like a Pharisee, never felt himself indebted to infinite mercy for his own salvation, is rarely solicitous about the salvation of others. The grace of Christ alone inspires the soul with true benevolence. The self-righteous Pharisees considered it equal to legal defilement to sit in company with tax-gatherers and heathens. It is

certain that those who fear God should not associate, through choice, with the workers of iniquity, and should only be found with them when transacting their secular business requires it, or when they have the prospect of doing good to their souls.

Verse 12. They that be whole need not a physician] A common proverb, which none could either misunderstand or misapply. Of it the reader may make the following use:-

1. Jesus Christ represents himself here as the sovereign Physician of souls. 2. That all stand in need of his healing power. 3. That men must acknowledge their spiritual maladies, and the need they have of his mercy, in order to be healed by him. 4. That it is the most inveterate and dangerous disease the soul can be afflicted with to imagine itself *whole*, when the *sting of death, which is sin*, has pierced it through in every part, infusing its poison every where.

Verse 13. I will have mercy, and not sacrifice] Quoted from ~~152~~¹ **Samuel 15:22**. These are remarkable words. We may understand them as implying, 1st. That God prefers an act of mercy, shown to the necessitous, to any act of religious worship to which the person might be called at that time. Both are good; but the former is the greater good, and should be done in preference to the other. 2dly. That the whole sacrificial system was intended only to point out the infinite mercy of God to fallen man, in his redemption by the blood of the new covenant. And 3dly. That we should not rest in the *sacrifices*, but look for the *mercy* and salvation prefigured by them. This saying was nervously translated by our ancestors, [Anglo-Saxon], *I will mild-heartedness, and not sacrifice*.


Go ye and learn] *dml w ax tse velimmed*, a form of speech in frequent use among the rabbins, when they referred to any fact or example in the Sacred Writings. Nothing tends more to humble pretenders to devotion than to show them that they understand neither Scripture nor religion, when, relying on external performances, they neglect love to God and man, which is the very soul and substance of true religion. True holiness has ever consisted in *faith working by love*.

I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners] Most of the common editions add, *εις μετανοιαν*, *unto repentance*; but this is omitted in the *Codex Vatic.* and *Bezae*, sixteen others, both the *Syriac*, both the *Persic*, *Ethiop.* *Armen.* *Gothic*, *Anglo-Saxon*, all the *Itala* except three, the

Vulgate, Clemens Roman, Origen, Basil, Jerome, Augustin, Ambrose, and Barnabas. The omission is approved by *Mill and Bengel.* *Griesbach* leaves it out of the text.

Verse 14. Thy disciples fast not?] Probably meaning that they did not fast so *frequently* as the others did, or for the same purposes, which is very likely, for the Pharisees had many superstitious fasts. They fasted in order to have lucky *dreams*, to obtain the interpretation of a dream, or to avert the evil import of a dream. They also fasted often, in order to obtain the things they wished for. The tract, *Taanith* is full of these *fasts*, and of the wonders performed thus by the Jewish doctors.

Verse 15. Can the children of the bride-chamber] *νυμφωνος.* Or, *νυμφιου,* *bridegroom*, as the *Cod. Beza* and several *versions* have it. These persons were the companions of the bridegroom, who accompanied him to the house of his father-in-law when he went to bring the bride to his own home. The marriage-feast among the Jews lasted *seven* days; but the new married woman was considered to be a bride for *thirty* days. Marriage feasts were times of extraordinary festivity, and even of *riot*, among several people of the east.

When the bridegroom shall be taken from them, &c.] There was one *annual* fast observed in the primitive Church, called by our ancestors [Anglo-Saxon] the *spring fast*, and, by us, LENT; by the Greeks *τεσσαρακοστη*, and by the Latins, *Quadragesima*. This fast is pretended to be kept by many, in the present day, in commemoration of our Lord's *forty days'* fast in the wilderness; but it does not appear that, in the purest ages of the *primitive Church*, genuine Christians ever pretended that their *quadragesimal* fast was kept for the above purpose. Their fast was kept merely to commemorate the *time* during which Jesus Christ lay under the power of death, which was about FORTY HOURS; and it was in this sense they understood the words of this text: *the days will come, &c.* With them, the *bridegroom* meant *Christ*: the time in which he was *taken away*, his crucifixion, death, and the time he lay in the grave. Suppose him dying about twelve o'clock on what is called *Friday*, and that he rose about *four* on the morning of his own day, (St. John says, *Early, while it was yet dark,*  **Matthew 20:1.**) the interim makes *forty hours*, which was the true primitive *Lent*, or *quadragesimal fast*. It is true that many in the primitive Church were not agreed on this subject, as *Socrates*, in his *Church History*, book v. chap. 22, says, "Some thought they should fast *one day*; others

two; others *more*.” Different Churches also were divided concerning the length of the time, some keeping it *three*, others *five*, and others *seven* weeks; and the historian himself is puzzled to know why they all agreed in calling these fasts, differing so much in their *duration*, by the name of *Quadragesima*, or *forty days’ fast*: the plain obvious reason appears to me to have been simply this: They put *DAYS* in the place of *HOURS*; and this absurdity continues in some Christian Churches to the present day. For more on *fasting*, See Clarke’s note “⁴⁰¹⁶Matthew 6:16”.

Verse 16. No man putteth a piece of new cloth] ουδεις δε επιβαλλει επιβλημα ρακουσ αγναφου επι ιματιω παλαιω. *No man putteth a patch of unscoured cloth upon an old garment.* This is the most literal translation I can give of this verse, to convey its meaning to those who cannot consult the original. *ρακος αγναφον* is that cloth which has not been scoured, or which has not passed under the hand of the *fuller*, who is called *γναφευς* in Greek: and *επιβλημα* signifies a *piece put on*, or what we commonly term a *patch*.

It-taketh from the garment] Instead of *closing* up the rent, it makes a larger, by tearing away with it the whole breadth of the cloth over which it was laid; *αιρει γαρ το πληρωμα αυτου*—*it taketh its fulness or whole breadth from the garment*; this I am persuaded is the meaning of the original, well expressed by the *Latin*, or *Itala* of the C. BEZÆ, *Tollit enim plenitudo ejus de vestimento*. “It takes away its fulness from the garment.”

Verse 17. New wine into old bottles] It is still the custom, in the eastern countries, to make their bottles of *goat skins*: if these happened to be old, and new wine were put into them, the violence of the *fermentation* must necessarily burst them; and therefore newly made bottles were employed for the purpose of putting that wine in which had not yet gone through its state of fermentation. The institutes of Christ, and those of the Pharisees, could never be brought to accord: an attempt to combine the two systems would be as absurd as it would be destructive. The old covenant made way for the *new*, which was its completion and its end; but with that old covenant the new cannot be incorporated.

Christian prudence requires that the weak, and newly converted, should be managed with care and tenderness. To impose such duties and mortifications as are not absolutely necessary to salvation, before God has properly prepared the heart by his grace for them, is a conduct as absurd and ruinous as putting a piece of raw, unscoured cloth on an old garment;

it is, in a word, requiring the person to do the work of a *man*, while as yet he is but a *little child*. Preachers of the Gospel, and especially those who are instruments in God's hand of *many* conversions, have need of much heavenly wisdom, that they may know to watch over, guide, and advise those who are brought to a sense of their sin and danger. How many auspicious beginnings have been ruined by men's proceeding too hastily, endeavouring to make their own designs take place, and to have the honour of that success themselves which is due only to God.

Verse 18. A certain ruler] There were two officers in the synagogue, **tsnkh ^zj** *chazan ha-ceneseth*, the bishop or overseer of the congregation; and **tsnkh var** *rosh ha-ceneseth*, the head or ruler of the congregation. The *chazan* takes the book of the Law, and gives it to the *rosh*, or ruler; and he appoints who shall read the different sections, &c. *Jairus*, who is the person intended here, was, in this latter sense, the ruler or governor of one of the synagogues, probably at *Capernaum*. See **Mark 5:22**; **Luke 8:41**.

My daughter is even now dead] Or, *my daughter was just now dying*; **αρι ετελευτησεν**, or, *is by this time dead*: i.e. as Mr. Wakefield properly observes, She was so ill when I left home that she must be dead by this time. This turn of the expression reconciles the account given here with that in Mark and Luke. Michaelis conjectures that, in the Hebrew original, the words must have stood thus, **htm ht** [*atah matah*, which, without the points, may signify either, *She is dead*, or *She is dying*.

To be successful in our applications to God by prayer, *four* things are requisite; and this ruler teaches us what they are.

First, A man should place himself in the presence of God-*he came unto him*.

Secondly, He should humble himself sincerely before God-*he fell down before him-at his feet*. **Mark 5:22**.

Thirdly, He should lay open his wants with a holy earnestness-*he besought him greatly*. **Mark 5:23**.

Fourthly, he should have unbounded confidence in the power and goodness of Christ that his request shall be granted-*put thy hand upon her, and she shall live*. He who comes in this way to God, for salvation, is sure

to be heard. *Imposition* of hands was a rite anciently used by the servants of God, through which heavenly influences were conveyed to the bodies and souls of men. This rite is still used in certain Churches; but, as there is no Holy Ghost communicated by it, some suppose it may be as well omitted. But why is this? Is it not because there is an unfaithfulness in the person who lays on hands, or an unfitness in him on whom they are laid? Let the rite be restored to its primitive simplicity, and God will own it as he formerly did. But, however this may be, where is the man or number of men who have authority to abrogate a rite of God's own appointment? In the appointment of men to the sacred ministry it should never be omitted: even in these degenerate days, it may still serve as a sign of the necessity of the gifts and graces of that Holy Spirit without which no man can fulfil the work of the ministry, or be the instrument of saving the souls of them that hear him. When the inventions of men are put in the place of the ordinances of God, the true Church of Christ is in great danger.

Verse 19. Jesus arose, and followed him] Our blessed Lord could have acted as well at a *distance* as *present*; but he goes to the place, to teach his ministers not to spare either their steps or their pains when the salvation of a soul is in question. Let them not think it sufficient to pray for the sick in their closets; but let them go to their bed-sides, that they may instruct and comfort them. He can have little unction in *private*, who does not also give himself up to *public* duties.

Verse 20. A woman which was diseased with an issue of blood] γυνή αἰμορροῦσα. *Mulier sanguinis profluvio laborans. Significatur hoc loco, fluxus muliebris, in SANIS, menstruus; in HAC perpetuus.* It would be easy to explain the nature and properties of the disease here mentioned; but, when it is said that prudence forbids it, the intimation itself may be thought sufficiently explanatory of the disorder in question. There are some remarkable circumstances relative to this case mentioned by St. Mark, ^{<41025>}**Mark 5:25**, &c., which shall be properly noticed in the notes on that place.

The hem of his garment] The **tyxyx** *tsitsith*, or *fringes*, which the Jews were commanded to wear on their garments. See ^{<041538>}**Numbers 15:38**, and the note there.

Verse 21. She said within herself, If I may but touch his garment] Her disorder was of that delicate nature that modesty forbade her to make any

public acknowledgment of it; and therefore she endeavoured to transact the whole business in private. Besides, the touch of such a person was by the law reputed unclean. By faith in Christ Jesus, little things are often rendered efficacious to our salvation. What more simple than a *morsel of bread*, and a *few drops of wine*, in the Lord's Supper! And yet, they who receive them by faith in the sacrifice they represent, are made partakers of the blessings purchased by the crucified body and spilled blood of the Lord Jesus!

Verse 22. Daughter, be of good comfort] **θαρσει θυγατερ**, *Take courage, daughter.* See Clarke on “^{<4092>}Matthew 9:2”. The reason of this kind speech was—Jesus, finding that virtue had proceeded from him; made inquiry who had touched him. The woman, finding that she could not be hid, came *fearing and trembling*, (^{<4033>}Mark 5:33,) and confessed the truth: to dispel these *fears* and to comfort her mind, Jesus said, *Daughter, take courage.*

Thy faith hath made thee whole.] **η πιστις σου σεσωκε σε**, *This thy faith hath saved thee:* i.e. thy faith in my power has interested that power in thy behalf, so that thou art *saved* from thy disorder, and from all its consequences. See Clarke on “^{<4145>}Luke 8:46”.

Verse 23. Saw the minstrels and the people making a noise] **αυλητας**, *pipers*; Anglo-Saxon, [Anglo-Saxon] *the whistlers*; Gothic, *haurngans haurngandans*, the *horn-blowers blowing with their horns*. Nearly the same as the *pipublasara*, pipe-blowers of the *Islandic*: for among all those nations funeral lamentations accompanied with such rude instruments, were made at the death of relatives. That *pipes* were in use among the *Jews*, in times of calamity or death, is evident from ^{<4436>}Jeremiah 48:36. And among the *Greeks*, and *Romans*, as well as among the *Jews*, persons were *hired* on purpose to follow the funeral processions with *lamentations*. See ^{<4017>}Jeremiah 9:17-21; ^{<3056>}Amos 5:16. Even the poorest among the *Jews* were required to have two *pipers*, and one mourning woman. At these funeral solemnities it was usual with them to drink considerably; even *ten* cups of wine each, where it could be got. See *Lightfoot*. This custom is observed among the native *Irish* to this day, in what is called their CAOINAN. The body of the deceased, dressed in grave-clothes and ornamented with flowers, is placed in some eminent place; the relations and *caoiners* range themselves in two divisions, one at the head and the other at the feet of the corpse. Anciently, where the deceased was a great

personage, the *bards* and *croteries* prepared the *caoinan*. The chief bard of the head chorus began by singing the first stanza in a low doleful tone; which was softly accompanied by the harp. At the conclusion, the *foot* semichorus began the lamentation, or ULLALOO, from the final note of the preceding stanza, in which they were answered by the head *semichorus*; then both united in one general chorus.

The chorus of the first stanza being ended, the chief bard of the *foot* semichorus sung the second stanza, the strain of which was taken from the concluding note of the preceding chorus, which ended, the head semichorus began the GOL, or lamentation, in which they were answered by that of the *foot*, and then, as before, both united in the general full chorus. Thus alternately were the song and choruses performed during the night. I have seen a number of women, sometimes fourteen, twenty-four, or more, accompany the deceased from his late house to the grave-yard, divided into two parties on each side the corpse, singing the ULLALOO, alternately, all the way. That drinking, in what is called the *wake*, or watching with the body of the deceased, is practised, and often carried to a shameful excess, needs little proof. This kind of intemperance proceeded to such great lengths among the Jews that the Sanhedrin were obliged to make a decree, to restrain the drinking to *ten* cups each. I mention these things more particularly, because I have often observed that the customs of the aboriginal Irish bear, a very striking resemblance to those of the ancient Jews, and other Asiatic nations. The application of these observations I leave to others.

It was a custom with the Greeks to make a great noise with brazen vessels; and the Romans made a general *outcry*, called *conclamatio*, hoping either to stop the soul which was now taking its flight, or to awaken the person, if only in a state of *torpor*. This they did for eight days together, calling the person incessantly by his name; at the expiration of which term the phrase, *Conclamatum est—all is over—there is no hope*—was used. See the words used in this sense by *Terence*, EUN. l. 347. In all probability this was the **θορυβουμενον**, the making a *violent outcry*, mentioned here by the evangelist. How often, on the death of relatives, do men incumber and perplex themselves with vain, worldly, and tumultuous ceremonies, instead of making profitable reflections on death!

Verse 24. The maid is not dead, but sleepeth] That is, she is not dead so as to *continue* under the power of death; but shall be raised from it as a person is from natural sleep.

They laughed him to scorn.] κατεγελων αυτον, *they ridiculed him*; from κατα, *intensive*, and γελαω, *I laugh*:-they grinned a ghastly smile, expressive of the contempt they felt for his person and knowledge. People of the world generally ridicule those truths which they neither comprehend nor love, and deride those who publish them; but a faithful minister of God, (copying the example of Christ,) keeps on his way, and does the work of his Lord and Master.

Verse 25. He-took her by the hand, and the maid arose.] The fountain of life thus communicating its vital energy to the dead body. Where death has already taken place, no power but that of the great God can restore to life; in such a case, vain is the help of man. So the soul that is dead in trespasses and sins-that is, sentenced to death because of transgression-and is thus dead in law, can only be restored to spiritual life by the mighty power of the Lord Jesus; because HE alone has made the atonement, and HE alone can pardon transgression. If the spiritually dead person be utterly unconcerned about the *state* and *fate* of his soul, let a converted relative either *bring him to Christ by leading him to hear the unadulterated Gospel of the kingdom*; or *bring Christ to him by fervent, faithful, and persevering prayer*.

Verse 26. And the fame hereof went abroad] In this business Jesus himself scarcely appears, but the *work* effected by his sovereign power is *fully manifested*; to teach us that it is the business of a successful preacher of the Gospel to conceal *himself* as much as possible, that God *alone* may have the glory of his own grace. This is a proper miracle, and a full exemplification of the unlimited power of Christ.

Verse 27. Son of David] This was the same as if they had called him *Messiah*. Two things here are worthy of remark: 1st. That it was a generally received opinion at this time in Judea, that the Messiah should be son of David. (⋈372⋈ **John 7:42**.) 2dly. That Jesus Christ was generally and incontestably acknowledged as coming from this stock. (⋈01223⋈ **Matthew 12:23**.)

Have mercy on us.] That man has already a measure of heavenly light who knows that he has no *merit*; that his cry should be a cry for *mercy*;

that he must be *fervent*, and that in *praying* he must *follow* Jesus Christ as the true Messiah, the *son of David*, expected from heaven.

Verse 28. When he was come unto the house] That is, the house of Peter at Capernaum, where he ordinarily lodged.

Believe ye that I am able to do this?] Without *faith* Jesus does nothing to men's souls *now*, no more than he did to their bodies in the days of his flesh.

They said unto him, Yea, Lord.] Under a sense of our spiritual blindness we should have, 1st. A lively faith in the almighty grace of Christ. 2dly. A *fervent, incessant cry* for the communication of this grace. 3dly. A proper view of his *incarnation*, because it is through his union with our nature, and by his sufferings and death, we are to expect salvation.

Verse 29. According to your faith] See Clarke on “~~4013~~ Matthew 8:13”.

Verse 30. Straitly charged them] *He charged them severely*, from *ενεβριμησατο*, from *εν*, and *βριμιαομαι*, to *roar or storm with anger*; he charged them, on pain of his *displeasure*, not to make it as yet public. See the reasons, Clarke “~~4104~~ Matthew 8:4”.

Verse 31. But they-spread abroad his fame] They should have held their peace; for to *obey* is better than *sacrifice*, ~~49152~~ **1 Samuel 15:22**; but man must always be wiser than God, however, it may be profitable to remark, 1st. That honour pursues those who fly from it. 2dly. He who is thoroughly sensible of God's mercy cannot *long* contain his acknowledgments. 3dly. That God in general requires that what a man has received, for his own salvation, shall become subservient to that of others-*Let your light so shine*, &c. God chooses to help man by man, that all may be firmly *knit* together in brotherly love.

Verse 32. A dumb man possessed with a devil.] Some demons rendered the persons they possessed *paralytic*, some *blind*, others *dumb*, &c. It was the interest of Satan to hide his influences under the appearance of *natural* disorders. A man who does *not acknowledge* his sin to God, who *prays not* for salvation, who *returns no praises* for the mercies he is continually receiving, may well be said *to be possessed with a dumb demon*.

Verse 33. And when the devil was cast out, the dumb spake] The very miracle which was now wrought was to be the demonstrative proof of the Messiah's being manifested in the flesh. See ^{<23816>} **Isaiah 35:5, 6.**

It was never so seen in Israel.] The greatest of the prophets has never been able to do such miracles as these. This was the remark of the people; and thus we find that the poor and the simple were more ready to acknowledge the hand of God than the *rich* and the *learned*. Many miracles had been wrought in the course of this one day, and this excited their surprise.

Verse 34. He casteth out devils through the prince of the devils.] This verse is wanting in both the Greek and Latin of the *C. Bezae*, in another copy of the *Itala*, and in *Hilary* and *Juvenus*. But see **Clarke on** ^{<<0124>} **Matthew 12:24**".

It is a consummate piece of *malice* to attribute the *works of God* to the *devil*. *Envy* cannot suffer the approbation which is given to the excellencies of others. Those whose hearts are possessed by this vice speak the very language of the devil. *Calumny* is but a little distance from *envy*. Though all persons may not have as much *envy* as the *Pharisees*, yet they should fear having some degree of it, as all have the *principle* from whence it proceeds, viz. *sin*.

Verse 35. Jesus went about all the cities and villages] Of Galilee. See on ^{<0023>} **Matthew 4:23, 24.** A real minister of Jesus Christ, after his example, is neither detained in one place by a comfortable provision made by some, nor discouraged from pursuing his work by the calumny and persecution of others. It is proper to remark, that, wherever Christ comes, the proofs of his presence evidently appear: he works none but salutary and beneficial miracles, because his ministry is a ministry of salvation.

Among the people.] εν τω λαω. This clause is omitted by about *fifty* MSS., several of them of the first antiquity and authority; by the *Complutensian*, and by *Bengel*; by both the *Syriac*, both the *Arabic*, both the *Persic*; the *Ethiopic*, *Gothic*, *Saxon*, and all the *Itala*, except four. *Griesbach* has left it out of the text.

Verse 36. Moved with compassion] εσπλαγχνισθη, from σπλαγχνον, *a bowel*. The Jews esteemed *the bowels* to be the seat of sympathy and the tender passions, and so applied the *organ* to the *sense*. εσπλαγχνιζομαι

signifies, says *Mintert*, “to be moved with pity from the very inmost bowels. It is an emphatic word, signifying a vehement affection of commiseration, by which the bowels and especially the heart is moved.” Both this verb and the noun seem to be derived from **σπαω**, *to draw*; the whole intestinal canal, in the peristaltic motion of the bowels, being drawn, affected, and agitated with the sight of a distressed or miserable object. Pity increases this motion of the bowels, and produces considerable pain: hence **σπλαγχνίζομαι**, *to have the bowels moved*, signifies to feel pity or compassion at seeing the miseries of others.

They fainted] Instead of **εκλελυμενοι**, *fainted*, all the best MSS., versions, and fathers, read **εσκυλμενοι**, *grieved and melancholy*. *Kypke* says **σκυλλειν** properly signifies, *to pluck off the hair*, as persons do in extreme sorrow or distress. The margin says, *They were tired and lay down*.

And were scattered abroad] **επιιμμενοι**, *thrown down*, or, *all along*. They were utterly *neglected* as to the interests of their souls, and *rejected* by the proud and disdained Pharisees. *This people (οχλος, this mob) that knoweth not the law, is accursed*, ~~επι~~ **John 7:49**. Thus those execrable men spoke of the souls that God had made, and of whom they should have been the instructors.

Those teachers, in *name*, have left their successors behind them; but, as in the days of Christ, so now, God has in his mercy rescued the flock out of the hands of those who only fed upon their flesh, and clothed themselves with their wool. The days in which a man was obliged to give his property to what was called *THE Church*, for the salvation of his soul, Christ being left out of the question, are, thank God, nearly over and gone. Jesus is the true Shepherd; without him there is nothing but *fainting, fatigue, vexation, and dispersion*. O that we may be led out and in by *him*, and find pasture!

Verse 37. The harvest] The souls who are ready to receive the truth are very numerous; *but the labourers are few*. There are *multitudes* of scribes, Pharisees, and priests, of *reverend* and *right reverend* men; but there are few that *work*. Jesus wishes for *labourers*, not *gentlemen*, who are either *idle drones*, or *slaves* to pleasure and sin, and *nati consumere fruges*. “Born to consume the produce of the soil.”

It was customary with the Jews to call their rabbins and students *reapers*; and their work of instruction, the *harvest*. So in *Idra Rabba*, s. 2. “The

days are few; the creditor is urgent; the crier calls out incessantly; and the *reapers are few.*” And in *Pirkey Aboth*: “The day is short, the work great, the *workmen* idle, the reward abundant, and the *master of the household* is urgent.” In all worldly concerns, if there be the prospect of much gain, most men are willing enough to labour; but if it be to save their own souls, or the souls of others, what indolence, backwardness, and carelessness! While their adversary, the devil, is going about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour; and a careless soul, and especially a careless minister is his especial prey.

The *place* of the *harvest* is the *whole earth*: it signifies little *where* a man works, provided it be by the *appointment*, in the *Spirit*, and with the *blessing* of God.

Verse 38. That he will send forth labourers] *οπως εκβαλλη εργατας*, *that he would thrust forth labourers.* Those who are fittest for the work are generally most backward to the employment. The man who is forward to become a preacher knows little of God, of human nature, or of his own heart. It is, God’s province to *thrust out* such preachers as shall *labour*; and it is our duty to *entreat* him to do so. A minister of Christ is represented as a *day-labourer*: he comes into the harvest, not to become *lord* of it, not to live on the labour of others, but to *work*, and to labour *his day*. Though the work may be very *severe*, yet, to use a familiar expression, there is good wages in the harvest-home; and the day, though *hot*, is but a *short* one. How earnestly should the flock of Christ pray to the good Shepherd to send them pastors after his own heart, who will feed them with knowledge, and who shall be the means of spreading the knowledge of his truth and the savour of his grace over the face of the whole earth!

The subject of *fasting*, already slightly noticed in the preceding notes, should be farther considered.

In all countries, and under all religions, *fasting* has not only been considered a *duty*, but also of extraordinary virtue to procure blessings, and to avert evils. Hence it has often been practised with extraordinary *rigour*, and abused to the most superstitious purposes. There are *twelve* kinds of fasts among the Hindoos:-

1. The person neither eats nor drinks for a day and night. This fast is indispensable, and occurs twenty-nine times in the year.

2. The person fasts during the day, and eats at night.
3. The person eats nothing but fruits, and drinks milk or water.
4. He eats *once* during the day and night.
5. Eats one particular kind of food during the day and night, but as often as he pleases.
6. Called *Chanderaym*, which is, to eat on the first day, only one mouthful; two on the second; and thus continue increasing one mouthful every day for a month, and then decreasing a mouthful every day, till he leaves off where he began.
7. The person neither eats nor drinks for twelve days.
8. Lasts twelve days: the first three days he eats a little once in the day; the next three, he eats only once in the night; the next three, he eats nothing, unless it be brought to him; and, during the last three days, he neither eats nor drinks.
9. Lasts fifteen days. For three days and three nights, he eats only one handful at night; the next three days and nights, he eats one handful if it be brought him, if not, he takes nothing. Then he eats nothing for three days and three nights. The next three days and nights he takes only a handful of warm water each day. The next three days and nights he takes a handful of warm milk each day.
10. For three days and nights he neither eats nor drinks. He lights a fire, and sits at a door where there enters a hot wind, which he draws in with his breath.
11. Lasts fifteen days. Three, days and three nights he eats nothing but leaves; three days and three nights, nothing but the Indian fig; three days and three nights, nothing but the seed of the lotus; three days and three nights, nothing but *peepul* leaves; three days and three nights, the expressed juice of a particular kind of grass called *doobah*.
12. Lasts a week. First day he eats milk; second, milk-curd; third, *ghee*, i.e. clarified butter; fourth, cow's urine; fifth, cow's dung; sixth, water; seventh, nothing.

During every kind of fast, the person sleeps on the ground, plays at no game, has no connection with women, neither shaves nor anoints himself,

and bestows alms each day.-AYEEN AKBERY, vol. iii. p. 247-250. How much more simple and effectual is the way of salvation taught in the BIBLE! But, because it is *true*, it is not credited by fallen man.

FASTING is considered by the *Mohammedans* as an essential part of *piety*. Their orthodox divines term it *the gate of religion*. With them, it is of two kinds, *voluntary* and *incumbent*; and is distinguished by the *Mosliman* doctors into three degrees: 1. The refraining from every kind of nourishment or carnal indulgence. 2. The restraining the various members from every thing which might excite sinful or corrupt desires. 3. The abstracting the mind wholly from worldly cares, and fixing it exclusively upon God. Their great annual fast is kept on the month *Ramzan*, or *Ramadhan*, beginning at the first new moon, and continuing until the appearance of the next; during which, it is required to abstain from every kind of nourishment from day-break till after sun-set of each day. From this observance none are excused but the *sick*, the *aged*, and *children*. This is properly the Mohammedan *Lent*. See HEDAYAH, prel. Dis. p. LV. LVI.

It is worthy of remark, that these children of the Bridegroom, the disciples, did not *mourn*, were exposed to no persecution, while the *Bridegroom*, the Lord Jesus, was *with them*, but after he had been *taken from them*, by death and his ascension, they did *fast* and *mourn*; they were exposed to all manner of *hardships*, *persecutions*, and even *death* itself, in some of its worst forms.

ST. MATTHEW

CHAPTER 10.

Jesus calls, commissions, and names his twelve disciples, 1-4. Gives them particular instructions relative to the objects of their ministry, 5, 6. Mode of preaching, &c., 7-15. Foretells the afflictions and persecutions they would have to endure, and the support they should receive, 16-25. Cautions them against betraying his cause, in order to procure their personal safety, 26-39. And gives especial promises to those who should assist his faithful servants in the execution of their work, 40-42.

NOTES ON CHAP. 10.

Verse 1. Twelve disciples] Our Lord seems to have had the *twelve patriarchs*, heads of the congregation of Israel, in view, in his choosing *twelve disciples*. That he had the plan of the ancient Jewish Church in his eye is sufficiently evident from ^{<40928>}**Matthew 19:28**; and from ^{<42101>}**Luke 10:1; 22:30**; ^{<43170>}**John 17:1**, &c., and ^{<46212>}**Revelation 21:12-14**.

He gave them power against unclean spirits] The word **κατα**, *against*, which our translators have supplied in *Italic*, is found in many MSS. of good note, and in the principal versions. Here we find the first call to the Christian ministry, and the *end* proposed by the commission given. To call persons to the ministry belongs only to *Him* who can give them *power to cast out unclean spirits*. He whose ministry is not accompanied with *healing* to diseased souls, was never called of God. But let it be observed, that, though the spiritual gifts requisite for the ministry must be supplied by God himself, yet this does not preclude the importance of *human learning*. No man can have his mind too well cultivated, to whom a dispensation of the Gospel is committed. The influence of the Spirit of God was no more designed to render human learning useless, than that learning should be considered as superseding the necessity of Divine inspiration.

Verse 2. Apostles] This is the first place where the word is used. **αποστολος**, an *apostle*, comes from **αποστελλω**, *I send a message*. The word was anciently used to signify a person commissioned by a king to negotiate any affair between him and any other power or people. Hence **αποστολοι** and **κηρυκες**, *apostles* and *heralds*, are of the same import in *Herodotus*. See the remarks at the end of chap. 3.

It is worthy of notice, that those who were Christ's *apostles* were first his *disciples*; to intimate, that men must be first *taught* of God, before they be *sent* of God. Jesus Christ never made an *apostle* of any man who was not first his *scholar* or *disciple*. These twelve apostles were chosen. 1. That they might be with our Lord, to see and witness his miracles, and hear his doctrine. 2. That they might bear testimony of the former, and preach his truth to mankind.

The first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; &c.] We are not to suppose that the word *πρωτος*, *first*, refers to any kind of dignity, as some have imagined; it merely signifies the *first in order*—the person *first mentioned*. A pious man remarks: “God here unites by *grace* those who were before united by *nature*.” Though nature cannot be deemed a step towards grace, yet it is not to be considered as always a hinderance to it. Happy the brothers who are joint envoys of Heaven, and the parents who have two or more children employed as ambassadors for God! But this is a very rare case; and family compacts in the work of the ministry are dangerous and should be avoided.

Verse 3. Bartholomew] Many are of opinion that this was *Nathanael*, mentioned ~~40146~~ **John 1:46**, whose name was probably *Nathanael bar Talmai*, Nathanael, the son of *Talmai*: here, his own name is repressed, and he is called *Bar Talmai*, or *Bartholomew*, from his *father*.

Matthew the publican] The writer of this history. See the preface.

James the son of Alpheus] This person was also called *Cleopas*, or *Clopas*, ~~42418~~ **Luke 24:18**; ~~43125~~ **John 19:25**. He had married *Mary*, sister to the blessed Virgin, ~~43125~~ **John 19:25**.

Verse 4. Simon] He was third son of *Alpheus*, and brother of *James* and *Jude*, or *Judas*, ~~40135~~ **Matthew 13:55**.

The Canaanite] This word is not put here to signify a particular *people*, as it is elsewhere used in the Sacred Writings; but it is formed from the Hebrew *anq kana*, which signifies *zealous*, literally translated by Luke, ~~40615~~ **Luke 6:15**, *ζηλωτης*, *zelotes*, or the *zealous*, probably from his great *fervency* in preaching the Gospel of his Master. But see Clarke “~~40615~~ **Luke 6:15**”.

Judas Iscariot] Probably from the Hebrew **twyrq vya** *ish kerioth*, a man of *Kerioth*, which was a city in the tribe of Judah, ^{<6152>}**Joshua 15:25**, where it is likely this man was born.

As **arkca** *iscara*, signifies the *quinsy*, or *strangulation*, and Judas *hanged* himself after he had betrayed our Lord, Dr. Lightfoot seems inclined to believe that he had his name from this circumstance, and that it was not given him till after his death.

Who also betrayed him] Rather, *even he who betrayed him*, or *delivered him up*; for so, I think, **ο και παραδους αυτον** should be translated. The common translation, *who ALSO betrayed him*, is very exceptionable, as it seems to imply, he was betrayed by *some others*, as well as by Judas.

Verse 5. These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded] To be properly qualified for a minister of Christ, a man must be, 1. filled with the spirit of holiness; 2. called to this particular work; 3. instructed in its nature, &c.; and, 4. commissioned to *go forth*, and testify the Gospel of the grace of God. These are four different gifts which a man must receive from God by Christ Jesus. To these let him add all the human qualifications he can possibly attain; as in his arduous work he will require every gift and every grace.

Go not into the way of the Gentiles] Our Lord only intended that the *first* offers of salvation should be made to the Jewish people; and that the heathen should not be noticed in this first mission, that no stumbling-block might be cast in the way of the Jews.

Into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not] The Samaritans had afterwards the Gospel preached to them by Christ himself, ^{<800>}**John 4:4**, &c., for the reason assigned above. Such as God seems at first to pass by are often those for whom he has designed his greatest benefits, (witness the Samaritans, and the Gentiles in general,) but he has his own proper time to discover and reveal them.

The history of the *Samaritans* is sufficiently known from the Old Testament. Properly speaking, the inhabitants of the city of Samaria should be termed Samaritans; but this epithet belongs chiefly to the people sent into that part of the promised land by Salmanezer, king of Assyria, in the year of the world 3283, when he carried the Israelites that dwelt there captives beyond the Euphrates, and sent a mixed people, principally

Cuthites, to dwell in their place. These were altogether heathens at first; but they afterwards incorporated the worship of the true God with that of their idols. See the whole account, ^{<12176>}**2 Kings 17:5**, &c. From this time they feared Jehovah, and served other gods till after the Babylonish captivity. From Alexander the Great, Sanballat, their governor, obtained permission to build a temple upon Mount Gerizim, which the Jews conceiving to be in opposition to their temple at Jerusalem, hated them with a perfect hatred, and would have no fellowship with them. The Samaritans acknowledge the Divine authority of the law of Moses, and carefully preserve it in their own characters, which are probably the genuine ancient Hebrew; the character which is now called *Hebrew* being that of the Chaldeans. The Samaritan Pentateuch is printed in the London Polyglott, and is an undeniable record. A poor remnant of this people is found still at *Naplouse*, the ancient *Shechem*; but they exist in a state of very great poverty and distress, and probably will soon become extinct.

Verse 6. But go rather to the lost sheep, &c.] The Jewish Church was the ancient *fold* of God; but the sheep had wandered from their Shepherd, and were lost. Our blessed Lord sends these under-shepherds to seek, find, and bring them back to the Shepherd and Overseer of their souls.

Verse 7. And as ye go, preach] πορευομενοι δε κηρυσσετε, and as *you proceed, proclaim like heralds*-make this proclamation wherever ye go, and while ye are journeying. Preach and travel; and, as ye travel, preach-proclaim salvation to all you meet. Wherever the ministers of Christ go, they find lost, ruined souls; and, *wherever* they find them, they should proclaim *Jesus*, and his power to save. For an explanation of the word *proclaim* or *preach*, see **Clarke on** ^{<4030>}**Matthew 3:1**.

From this commission we learn what the grand subject of apostolic preaching was-THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS AT HAND! This was the great message. "They *preached*," says *Quesnel*, "to establish the faith; *the kingdom*, to animate the hope; *of heaven*, to inspire the love of heavenly things, and the contempt of earthly; which *is at hand*, that men may prepare for it without *delay*."

Verse 8. Raise the dead] This is wanting in the MSS. marked EKLMS of *Griesbach*, and in those marked BHV of *Mathai*, and in upwards of *one hundred* others. It is also wanting in the *Syriac*, (Vienna edition,) latter *Persic*, *Sahidic*, *Armenian*, *Sclavonic*, and in one copy of the *Itala*; also in *Athanasius*, *Basil*, and *Chrysostom*. There is no evidence that the disciples

raised any dead person previously to the resurrection of Christ. The words should certainly be omitted, unless we could suppose that the authority now given respected not only their present mission, but comprehended also their future conduct. But that our blessed Lord did not give this power to his disciples *at this time*, is, I think, pretty evident from ~~<1001>~~ **Matthew 10:1**, and from ~~<1006>~~ **Luke 9:6, 10**; ~~<1019>~~ **Luke 10:19, 20**, where, if any such power had been *given*, or *exercised*, it would doubtless have been mentioned. *Wetstein* has rejected it, and so did *Griesbach* in his first edition; but in the second (1796) he has left it in the text, with a note of doubtfulness.

Freely ye have received, freely give.] A rule very necessary, and of great extent. A minister or *labourer* in the Gospel vineyard, though worthy of his comfortable support while in the work, should never preach for hire, or make a secular traffic of a spiritual work. What a scandal is it for a man to traffic with gifts which he pretends, at least, to have received from the Holy Ghost, of which he is not the master, but the dispenser. He who preaches to get a *living*, or to make a *fortune*, is guilty of the most infamous *sacrilege*.

Verse 9. Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass, in your purses] εἰς τὰς ζώνας ὑμῶν, *in your GIRDLES*. It is supposed that the people of the east carry their money in a fold of their girdles. This is scarcely correct: they carry it in a purse *in their bosom, under their girdles*. This I have often observed.

In a thousand instances an apostolic preacher, who goes to the wilderness to seek the lost sheep, will be exposed to hunger and cold, and other inconveniences; he must therefore resign himself to God, depending on his providence for the necessaries of life. If God have sent him, he is bound to support him, and *will* do it: anxiety therefore, in him, is a double crime, as it insinuates a bad opinion of the Master who has employed him. Every *missionary* should make himself master of this subject.

Have no money in your purse, is a command, obedience to which was secured by the narrow circumstances of most of the *primitive* genuine preachers of the Gospel. Whole herds of friars mendicants have professed the same principle, and abandoned themselves to voluntary poverty; but if the money be in the *heart* it is a worse evil. In the former case, it *may* be a temptation to sin; in the latter, it *must* be *ruinous*.

Verse 10. Nor scrip for your journey] To carry provisions. This was called *lymrwt tormil*, by the rabbins; it was a leathern pouch hung about their necks, in which they put their victuals. This was properly, the *shepherd's bag*.

Neither two coats, &c.] Nothing to encumber you.

Nor yet staves] *ραβδον*, a staff, as in the margin, but, instead of *ραβδον*, staff, which is the common reading, all the following MSS. and versions have *ραβδους*, staves, and CEFGLMPS. V. ninety-three others, Coptic, Armenian, latter Syriac, one of the Itala, Chrysostom, and Theophylact. This reading is of great importance, as it reconciles this place with **Luke 9:3**, and removes the seeming contradiction from **Mark 6:8**; as if he had said: "Ye shall take nothing to defend yourselves with, because ye are the servants of the Lord, and are to be supported by his *bounty*, and defended by his *power*. In a word, be like men in haste, and eager to begin the important work of the ministry. The sheep are lost-ruined: Satan is devouring them: give all diligence to pluck them out of the jaws of the destroyer."

The workman is worthy of his meat.] *της τροφης αυτου*, of his maintenance. It is a maintenance, and that only, which a minister of God is to expect, and that he has a Divine right to; but not to make a fortune, or lay up wealth: besides, it is the *workman*, he that labours in the word and doctrine, that is to get even this. How contrary to Christ is it for a man to have vast revenues, as a minister of the Gospel, who ministers no Gospel, and who spends the revenues of the Church to its disgrace and ruin!

Verse 11. Into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter] In the commencement of Christianity, Christ and his preachers were all *itinerant*.

Inquire who in it is worthy] That is, of a good character; for a preacher of the Gospel should be careful of his reputation, and lodge only with those who are of a regular life.

There abide till ye go thence.] *Go not about from house to house*, **Luke 10:7**. Acting contrary to this precept has often brought a great disgrace on the Gospel of God. Stay in your own lodging as much as possible, that you may have time for prayer and study. Seldom frequent the tables of the rich and great; if you do, it will unavoidably prove a snare to you. The unction of God will perish from your mind, and your preaching

be only a dry barren repetition of *old things*; the bread of God in your hands will be like the *dry, mouldy, Gibeonitish crusts*, mentioned ~~<60>~~ **Joshua 9:5**. He who knows the value of time, and will redeem it from useless chit-chat, and trifling visits, will find enough for all the purposes of his own salvation, the cultivation of his mind, and the work of the ministry. He to whom time is not precious, and who lives not *by rule*, never finds time sufficient for any thing—is always embarrassed—always in a hurry, and never capable of bringing one good purpose to proper effect.

Verse 12. Salute it] λεγουτες ειρηνη εν τω οικω τουτω, *saying, "Peace be to this house."* This clause, which, as explanatory of the word **ασπασαθε**, is necessary to the connection in which it now stands, is added, by the MSS. D and L, and *forty-three* others, the *Armenian, Ethiopic, Slavonic, Saxon, Vulgate*, all the copies of the old *Itala, Theophylact, and Hilary*. The clause is also found in several modern versions. The *modern Greek* has λεγοντες, ειρηνη εις το σκηπρι τουτο. The *Italian*, by Matthew, of Erberg, and of Diodati, renders it thus: *Pace sia a questa casa*. Peace be to this house.

It is found also in *Wickliff*, and in my old MS. *Seyinge, pees be to this hous*. Some suppose it is an addition taken from *Luke*; but there is nearly as much reason to believe *he* took it from *Matthew*.

Peace, **μwl v**, among the Hebrews, had a very extensive meaning:—it comprehended all blessings, spiritual and temporal. Hence that saying of the rabbins, **wb twl wl k twkrbh l kv μwl v l wdg** *Gadal shalom, shecol haberacoth culoloth bo*. *Great is PEACE, for all other blessings are comprehended in it*. To wish peace to a family, in the name and by the authority of Christ, was in effect a positive *promise*, on the Lord's side, of all the good implied in the wish. This was paying largely even beforehand. Whoever receives the messengers of God into his house confers the highest honour upon *himself*, and not upon the preacher, whose honour is from God, and who comes with the blessings of life eternal to that man and his family who receives him.

In India, it is customary for a way-faring man, when night draws on, to enter a house, and simply say, "Sir, I am a guest with you this night." If the owner cannot lodge him, he makes an apology, and the traveller proceeds to another house.

Verse 13. If that house be worthy] If that *family* be proper for a preacher to lodge in, and the master be ready to embrace the message of salvation.

Your peace] The blessings you have prayed for shall come upon the family: God will prosper them in their bodies, souls, and substance.

But if it be not worthy] As above explained.

Let your peace] The blessings prayed for, return to you. **προς υμας επιστραφητω**, *it shall turn back upon yourselves*. They shall get nothing, and *you* shall have an increase.

The trials, disappointments, insults, and wants of the followers of Christ become, in the hand of the all-wise God, subservient to their best interests: hence, nothing can happen to them without their deriving profit from it, unless it be their own fault.

Verse 14. Shake off the dust of your feet.] The Jews considered themselves defiled by the dust of a heathen country, when was represented by the prophets as a *polluted land*, ^{<30717>}**Amos 7:17**, when compared with the land of Israel, which was considered as a *holy land*, ^{<3650>}**Ezekiel 45:1**; therefore, to shake the dust of any city of Israel from off one's clothes or feet was an *emblematical* action, signifying a renunciation of all farther connection with them, and placing them on a level with the cities of the *Heathen*. See Clarke on "^{<30307>}**Amos 9:7**".

Verse 15. In the day of judgment] Or, *punishment*, -**κρισεως**. Perhaps not meaning *the day of general judgment*, nor the day of the *destruction of the Jewish state* by the *Romans*; but *a day* in which God should send *punishment* on that particular city, or on that person, for their crimes. So *the day of judgment of Sodom and Gomorrah*, was the time in which the Lord destroyed them by fire and brimstone, from the Lord out of heaven.

If men are thus treated for not receiving the preachers of the Gospel, what will it be to despise the *Gospel* itself-to decry it-to preach the contrary-to hinder the preaching of it-to abuse those who do preach it in its purity-or to render it fruitless by calumnies and lies! Their *punishment*, our Lord intimates, shall be greater than that inflicted on the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah!

Verse 16. Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves] He who is called to preach the Gospel is called to embrace a state of constant

labour, and frequent suffering. He who gets ease and pleasure, in consequence of embracing the ministerial office, neither preaches the Gospel, nor is sent of God. If he did the *work* of an *evangelist*, wicked men and demons would both oppose him.

Wise (**φρονιμοι** *prudent*) **as serpents, and harmless as doves.**] This is a proverbial saying: so in *Shir hashirim Rabba*, fol. 16, “The holy blessed God said to the Israelites, Ye shall be towards me as *upright as the doves*; but, towards the Gentiles, as *cunning as serpents*.”

There is a beauty in this saying which is seldom observed. The serpent is represented as prudent to excess, being full of cunning, ^{<1000>}**Genesis 3:1**; ^{<4710>}**2 Corinthians 11:3**; and the dove is simple, even to stupidity, ^{<8071>}**Hosea 7:11**; but Jesus Christ corrects here the *cunning* of the *serpent*, by the *simplicity* of the *dove*; and the *too great simplicity* of the *dove*, by the *cunning* of the *serpent*. For a fine illustration of this text, see the account of the *Boiga*:-

“This species is remarkably beautiful, combining the richest colours of the finest gems with the splendour of burnished gold, mingled with dark brown shades, which contrast and heighten its brilliant ornaments. The whole under surface of the head and body is of a silver white, separated from the changing blue of the back by a golden chain on each side, the whole length of the body. This fine blue and silver, ornamented with gold, by no means give a full idea of the beautiful embroidery of the boiga. We must take in all the reflected tints of silver colour, golden yellow, red, blue, green, and black, mingled, and changing in the most extraordinary and beautiful manner possible; so that, when about to change its skin, it seems studded with a mixed assemblage of diamonds, emeralds, topazes, sapphires, and rubies, under a thin transparent veil of bluish crystal. Thus, in the rich and torrid plains of India, where the most splendid gems abound, nature seems to have chosen to reunite them all, together with the noble metals, to adorn the brilliant robe of the boiga. This is one of the most slender of serpents in proportion to its length. The specimens in the royal collection, which exceed three feet in length, are hardly a few lines in diameter. The tail is almost as long as the body, and at the end is like a needle for fineness; yet it is sometimes flattened above, below, and on the two sides, rendering it in some measure square. From the delicacy

of its form, its movements are necessarily extremely agile; so that, doubling itself up several times, it can spring to a considerable distance, with great swiftness. It can twine and twist itself, most readily, and nimbly, around trees or other such bodies; climbing, or descending, or suspending itself, with the utmost facility. The boiga feeds on small birds, which it swallows very easily, notwithstanding the small diameter of its body, in consequence of the great distensibility of its jaws, throat, and stomach, common to it with other serpents. It conceals itself under the foliage of trees, on purpose to surprise the small birds, and is said to attract them by a peculiar kind of whistling, to which the term of *song* has been applied; but we must consider this as an exaggeration, as its long divided tongue, and the conformation of its other organs of sound, are only adapted for producing a hiss, or species of simple whistle, instead of forming a melodious assemblage of tones. Yet, if nature has not reckoned the boiga among the songsters of the woods, it seems to possess a more perfect instinct than other serpents, joined to more agile movements, and more magnificent ornament. In the isle of Borneo, the children play with the boiga, without the smallest dread. They carry it in their hands, as innocent as themselves, and twist it about their necks, arms, and bodies, in a thousand directions. This circumstance brings to recollection that fine emblem of Candour and Confidence imagined by the genius of the ancients: a child smiling on a snake, which holds him fast in his convolutions. But, in that beautiful allegory, the snake is supposed to conceal a deadly poison; while the boiga returns caress for caress to the Indian children who fondle it, and seems pleased to be twisted about their delicate hands. As the appearance of such nimble and innocent animals in the forests must be extremely beautiful, displaying their splendid colours, and gliding swiftly from branch to branch, without possessing the smallest noxious quality, we might regret that this species should require a degree of heat greatly superior to that of our regions, and that it can only subsist near the tropics, in Asia, Africa, and America. It has usually a hundred and sixty-six large plates, and a hundred and twenty-eight pairs of small plates, but is subject to considerable variation.

“According to this representation, the boiga is not merely to be praised for its beauty, but may be said to fulfil the old maxim of

combining *the wisdom of the serpent with the harmlessness of the dove.*” Cepede’s Hist. of Oviparous Quadrupeds and Serpents.

Instead of **ακεραιοι**, *harmless*, or as the *Etymol. Mag.* defines it, *without mixture of evil*, the *Cod. Beza* reads **απλουστατοι**, *simple-uncompounded*,—so all the copies of the old *Itala*, the *Vulgate*, and the *Latin fathers*; but this curious and explanatory reading is found in no other Greek MS.

Verse 17. But beware of men] Or, be on your guard against *men*, **των ανθρωπων** THESE men; i.e. your *countrymen*; those from whom you might have reasonably expected comfort and support; and especially those in *power*, who will abuse that power to oppress you.

Councils] **συνεδρια**, *sanhedrins* and *synagogues*. See Clarke on “^{<4082>}**Matthew 5:22**”. “By *synagogues* we may understand here, not the places of public worship, but assemblies where *three* magistrates, chosen out of the principal members of the synagogue, presided to adjust differences among the people: these had power, in certain cases, to condemn to the *scourge*, but not to *death*. See ^{<44219>}**Acts 22:19**; ^{<47124>}**2 Corinthians 11:24**, compared with ^{<4211>}**Luke 12:11**.” See *Lightfoot*.

Verse 18. Ye shall be brought before governors, &c.] “This affords a striking proof of the prescience of Christ. Who could have thought, at *that time*, that these *despised* and *illiterate* men could excite so much attention, and be called upon to apologize for the profession of their faith before the tribunals of the most illustrious personages of the earth ?” *Wakefield*.

By governors and kings we may understand, the Roman proconsuls, governors of provinces, and the kings who were tributary to the Roman government, and the emperors themselves, before whom many of the primitive Christians were brought.

For a testimony against them and the Gentiles.] That is, to render testimony, both to Jews and Gentiles, of the truth and power of my Gospel.

Verse 19. Take no thought how or what ye shall speak] **μη μεριμνησετε**—Be not *anxiously* careful, because such anxiety argues distrust in God, and infallibly produces a *confused* mind. In such a state, no person is fit to proclaim or vindicate the truth. This promise, *It shall be given you*, &c., banishes all distrust and inquietude on dangerous occasions; but without encouraging sloth and negligence, and without

dispensing with the obligation we are under to prepare ourselves by the meditation of sacred truths, by the study of the Holy Scriptures, and by prayer.

It shall be given you in that same hour what] This clause is wanting in the MSS. D and L, and several others, some versions, and several of the fathers: but it is found in ^{<4131>}**Mark 13:11**, without any *various reading*; and in substance in ^{<2113>}**Luke 11:13**.

Verse 20. For it is-the Spirit of your Father, &c.] This was an extraordinary promise, and was literally fulfilled to those first preachers of the Gospel; and to them it was essentially necessary, because the New Testament dispensation was to be fully opened by their extraordinary inspiration. In a certain measure, it may be truly said, that the Holy Spirit animates the true disciples of Christ, and enables them to *speak*. The Head *speaks* in his members, by his Spirit; and it is the province of the Spirit of God to speak for God. Neither surprise, defect of talents, nor even ignorance itself, could hurt the cause of God, in the primitive times, when the hearts and minds of those Divine men were influenced by the Holy Spirit.

Your Father] This is added to excite and increase their confidence in God.

Verse 21. And the brother shall deliver up the brother, &c.] What an astonishing enmity is there in the soul of man against God and goodness! That men should think they did God service, in putting to death those who differ from them in their political or religious creed, is a thing that cannot be accounted for but on the principle of an indescribable depravity.

*O shame to men! devil with devil damn'd
Firm concord holds, men only disagree
Of creatures rational; though under hope
Of heavenly grace; and, God proclaiming peace,
Yet live in hatred, enmity, and strife
Among themselves, and levy cruel wars,
Wasting the earth, each other to destroy!
PAR. LOST, b. ii. l. 496.*

Verse 22. Ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake] Because ye are attached to me, and saved from the corruption that is in the world; *therefore* the world will hate you. "The laws of Christ condemn a vicious world, and gall it to revenge."

He that endureth to the end shall be saved] He who holds fast faith and a good conscience *to the end*, till the punishment threatened against this wicked people be poured out, *he shall be saved*, preserved from the destruction that shall fall upon the workers of iniquity. This verse is commonly understood to refer to the destruction of Jerusalem. It is also true that they who do not hold fast faith and a good conscience till *death* have no room to hope for an admission into the kingdom of God.

Verse 23. But when they persecute you] It is prudence and humility (when charity or righteousness obliges us not to the contrary) to avoid persecution. To deprive those who are disposed to do evil of the opportunities of doing it; to convey the grace which they despise to others; to accomplish God's designs of justice on the former, and of mercy on the latter, are consequences of the flight of a persecuted preacher. This *flight* is a *precept* to those who are highly necessary to the Church of Christ, an *advice* to those who might imprudently draw upon themselves persecution, and of *indulgence* for those who are weak. But this *flight* is highly criminal in those mercenary preachers who, through love to their flesh and their property, abandon the flock of Christ to the wolf. See *Quesnel*.

In this city, flee ye into another] There is a remarkable *repetition* of this clause found in the MSS. DL and eight others; the *Armenian*, *Saxon*, all the *Italia* except three; *Athan.*, *Theodor.*, *Tertul.*, *August.*, *Ambr.*, *Hilar.*, and *Juvenus*. *Bengel*, in his *gnomon* approves of this reading. On the above authorities Griesbach has inserted it in the text. It probably made a portion of this Gospel as written by Matthew. The verse in the MSS. is as follows:—*But when they shall persecute you in this city, flee ye into another; and if they persecute in the other, flee ye unto another.*

Ye shall not have gone over (*ended or finished*, margin) **the cities, &c.]** The word **τελεσητε** here is generally understood as implying *to go over* or *through*, intimating that there should not be time for the disciples to *travel over* the cities of Judea before the destruction predicted by Christ should take place. But this is very far from being the truth, as there were not less than forty years after this was spoken, before Jerusalem was destroyed: **τελειων και μανθαναντων** are used by the Septuagint. ^{<1328>}**1**

Chronicles 25:8, for those who *teach* and those who *learn*. And **τοις τελειοις** is used by the apostle, ^{<4116>}**1 Corinthians 2:6**, for those who are *perfectly instructed* in the things of God. Ovid has used the Latin *perficio*, which answers to the Greek **τελειωω** in exactly the same sense.

Phillyrides puerum cithara perfecit Achillem.

“Chiron TAUGHT the young Achilles to play on the harp.” For these reasons some contend that the passage should be translated, *Ye shall not have INSTRUCTED*, i.e. preached the Gospel *in the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be came*. The Greek divines call baptism **τελειωσις** or *initiation*. See *Leigh. Crit. sacr.* Edit. Amst. p. 326, 328.

Dr. Lightfoot supposes the meaning to be: “Ye shall not have travelled over the cities of Israel, preaching the Gospel, before the Son of man is revealed by his resurrection, **ⲉⲟⲓⲟⲩⲁ** **Romans 1:4**; compare **ⲉⲗⲉⲓⲃⲓⲛ** **Acts 3:19, 20; 5:26**. To you first, God, raising up his Son, sent him to bless you, &c. The epoch of the Messiah is dated from the resurrection of Christ.” After all, the place may be understood literally; for **τελειν τας πολεις**, to finish the cities, is only a concise mode of speech, for **τελειν οδον δια τας πολεις**, to complete the journey through the cities. To finish the survey, to preach in every one: *till the Son of man be come*, may refer either to the outpouring of the Spirit on the day of pentecost, or to the subversion of the Jewish state. See *Rosenmuller*.

Verse 24. The disciple is not above his master] Or in plainer terms, *A scholar is not above his teacher*. The saying itself requires no comment, its truth and reasonableness are self-evident, but to the spirit and design we should carefully attend. Jesus is the great *teacher*: we profess to be his *scholars*. He who keeps the above saying in his heart will never complain of what he suffers. How many irregular thoughts and affections is this maxim capable of restraining! A man is not a scholar of Christ unless he learn his doctrine; and he does not learn it as he ought unless he put it in *practice*.

Verse 25. It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master] Can any man who pretends to be a scholar or disciple of Jesus Christ, expect to be treated well by the *world*? Will not the world love its *own*, and them *only*? Why, then, so much impatience under sufferings, such an excessive sense of injuries, such delicacy? Can you expect any thing from the world better than you receive? If you want the *honour* that comes from it, abandon Jesus Christ, and it will again receive you into its bosom. But you will, no doubt, count the cost before you do this. Take the converse, abandon the love of the world, &c., and God will receive you.

Beelzebub] This name is variously written in the MSS. *Beelzebaul*, *Beelzeboun*, *Beelzebud*, but there is a vast majority in favour of the reading *Beelzebub*, which should, by all means, be inserted in the text instead of *Beelzebub*. See the reasons below, and see the *margin*.

It is supposed that this idol was the same with **bwbz l** [**b** *Baalzebub* the *god fly*, worshipped at Ekron, ^{<1200>}**2 Kings 1:2**, &c., who had his name changed afterwards by the Jews to **l wbz l** [**b** *Baal zebul*, the *dung god*, a title expressive of the utmost *contempt*. It seems probable that the worship of this vile idol continued even to the time of our Lord; and the title, being applied by the Jews to our blessed Lord, affords the strongest proof of the inveteracy of their malice.

Dr. *Lightfoot* has some useful observations on this subject, which I shall take the liberty to subjoin.

“For the searching out the sense of this horrid blasphemy, these things are worthy observing,

“I. Among the *Jews* it was held, in a manner, for a matter of religion, to *reproach idols*, and to give them odious names. *R. Akibah saith, Idolatry pollutes, as it is said, Thou shalt cast away the (idol) as something that is abominable, and thou shalt say to it, Get thee hence: (^{<2302>}Isaiah 30:22.) R. Lazar saith, Thou shalt say to it, Get thee hence: that which they call the face of God, let them call the face of a dog. That which they call swk `y[ein cos, the FOUNTAIN OF A CUP, let them call xwq `y[ein kuts, the FOUNTAIN OF TOIL (or of flails.) That which they call hydg gedyah, FORTUNE, let them call ayyil g geliya, a STINK, &c. That town which sometimes was called Bethel, was afterwards called Bethaven. See also the tract *Schabbath*.*

“II. Among the ignominious names bestowed upon idols, the general and common one was **l wbz Zebul**, DUNG, or a DUNGHILL. ‘*Even to them that have stretched out their hands l wbzb bezebul in a dunghill, (that is, in an idol temple, or in idolatry,) there is hope. Thou canst not bring them (into the Church) because they have stretched forth their hands bezebul, in a dunghill. But yet you cannot reject them, because they have repented.*’ And a little after,

He that sees them dunging, יל bzb (that is, sacrificing,) to an idol, let him say, Cursed be he that sacrifices to a strange god. Let them, therefore, who dare, form this word in Matthew into Beelzebub. I am so far from doubting that the Pharisees pronounced the word BEELZEBUL, and that Matthew so wrote it, that I doubt not but the sense fails if it be writ otherwise.

“III. Very many names of evil spirits, or devils, occur in the *Talmud*, which it is needless here to mention. Among all the devils, they esteemed that devil the worst, the foulest, as it were, the prince of the rest, who ruled over the idols, and by whom oracles and miracles were given forth among the *Heathens* and *idolaters*. And they were of this opinion for this reason, because they held idolatry, above all other things, chiefly wicked and abominable, and to be the prince and head of evil. This demon they called I wbz I [b *Baal-zebul*, not so much by a proper name, as by one more general and common; as much as to say, the *lord of idolatry*: the worst devil, and the worst thing: and they called him the *prince of devils*, because idolatry is the prince (or *chief*) of wickedness.”

Verse 26. Fear them not] A general direction to all the persecuted followers of Christ. Fear them not, for they can make you suffer nothing worse than they have made Christ suffer; and under all trials he has promised the most ample support.

For there is nothing covered, &c.] God sees every thing; this is consolation to the upright and dismay to the wicked; and he will bring into judgment every work, and every secret thing, whether good or bad,

<1124> **Ecclesiastes 12:14.**

Verse 27. What I tell you in darkness] A man ought to preach that only which he has learned from God’s Spirit, and his testimonies; but let him not pretend to bring forth any thing *new*, or *mysterious*. There is nothing that concerns our salvation that is *newer* than the *new covenant*; and in that there are, properly speaking, no *mysteries*: what was *secret* before is now made *manifest* in the Gospel of the ever-blessed God. See <400> **Ephesians 3:1-12.**

What ye hear in the ear] The doctor who explained the law in Hebrew had an interpreter always by him, in whose ears he softly whispered what

he said; this interpreter spoke aloud what had been thus whispered to him. Lightfoot has clearly proved this in his *Horæ Talmudicæ*, and to this custom our Lord here evidently alludes. The spirit of our Lord's direction appears to be this: whatever I speak to you is for the benefit of *mankind*, -keep nothing from them, declare explicitly the whole counsel of God; preach ye, (**κηρυξατε** *proclaim*,) *on the house-tops*. The houses in Judea were *flat-roofed*, with a ballustrade round about, which were used for the purpose of taking the air, prayer, meditation, and it seems, from this place, for announcing things in the most public manner. As there are no bells among the Turks, a *crier* proclaims all times of public worship from the house-tops. Whoever will give himself the trouble to consult the following scriptures will find a variety of uses to which these housetops were assigned. **Deuteronomy 22:8**; **Joshua 2:6**; **Judges 9:51**; **Nehemiah 8:16**; **2 Samuel 11:2**; **2 Kings 23:12**; **Isaiah 15:3**; **Jeremiah 32:29**, and **Acts 10:9**.

Lightfoot thinks that this may be an allusion to that custom, when the minister of the synagogue, on the Sabbath eve, sounded with a trumpet six times, *upon the roof of a very high house*, that from thence *all might have notice* of the coming in of the Sabbath. The *first* blast signified that they should heave off their work in the field: the *second* that they should cease from theirs in the city: the *third* that they should light the Sabbath candle, &c.

Verse 28. Fear not them which kill the body] **των αποκτεινοντων.**

Those who slay with acts of cruelty, alluding probably to the cruelties which persecutors should exercise on his followers in their martyrdom. *But are not able to kill the soul*. Hence we find that the body and the soul are distinct principles, for the *body* may be slain and the *soul* escape; and, secondly, that the soul is immaterial, for the murderers of the body are not able, **μη δυναμενων**, have it not in their power, to injure it.

Fear him] It is, not *hell-fire* we are to fear, but it is *God*; without the stroke of whose justice *hell* itself would be no *punishment*, and whose *frown* would render heaven itself *insupportable*. What strange blindness is it to expose our souls to endless ruin, which should enjoy God eternally; and to save and pamper the body, by which we enjoy nothing but the creatures, and them only for a moment!

Verse 29. Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing?] **ασσαριου.** A Roman AS was one-tenth of a DENARIUS, which was about

sevenpence-halfpenny, and one-tenth of sevenpence-halfpenny makes just three *farthings*.

The word **ασσαριον**, which we translate *farthing*, is found among the rabbins in the word **rsy**[*aisar*, which, according to *Maimonides*, is equal to four grains of silver, but is used among them to express a thing of the *lowest*, or almost *no value*. Our Lord seems to have borrowed the expression, One of them shall not fall on the ground, &c., from his own countrymen. In *Bereshith Rabba*, sec. 79, fol. 77, it is said: In the time in which the Jews were compelled to apostatize, Rab. Simeon, Ben. Jochai, and Eliezer his son hid themselves in a cave, and lived upon dry husks. After thirteen years they came out; and, sitting at the mouth of the cave, they observed a fowler stretching his nets to catch birds; and as often as the Bath Kol said **swmyd dimos**, escape! the bird escaped; but when it said **al wqps** *spicula*, a dart, the bird was taken. Then the rabbin said, *Even a bird is not taken without Heaven*, i.e. without the will of God, *how much less the life of man!* The doctrine intended to be inculcated is this: The providence of God extends to the minutest things; every thing is continually under the government and care of God, and nothing occurs without his will or permission; if then he regards *sparrows*, how much more man, and how much more still the soul that trusts in him!

Fall on the ground] Instead of **επι την γην**, *Origen, Clement, Chrysostom, Juvenus*, and six MSS. of *Mathai*, read **εις την παγίδα**, *into a snare*. *Bengel* conjectures that it might have been written at first, **επι την παγην**; that the first syllable **πα** being lost out of the word, **γην**, *the earth*, instead of **παγην**, *snare*, became the common reading.

Without your Father.] Without the will of your Father: **της βουλης**, *the will or counsel*, is added here by *Origen, Coptic*, all the *Arabic*, latter *Persic, Gothic*, all the *Itala* except two; *Tert., Iren., Cypr., Novatian*, and other *Latin* fathers. If the evidence be considered as insufficient to entitle it to admission into the text, let it stand there as a supplementary *italic* word, necessary to make the meaning of the place evident.

All things are ordered by the *counsel* of God. This is a great consolation to those who are tried and afflicted. The belief of an *all-wise, all-directing* Providence, is a powerful support under the most grievous accidents of life. Nothing escapes his merciful regards, not even the smallest things of which he may be said to be only the creator and preserver; how much less

those of whom he is the Father, Saviour, and endless felicity! See Clarke on “Luke 12:7 Luke 12:7”.

Verse 30. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered.] Nothing is more astonishing than the care and concern of God for his followers. The least circumstances of their life are regulated, not merely by that *general* providence which extends to all things, but by a *particular* providence, which fits and directs all things to the design of their salvation, causing them all to co-operate for their present and eternal good. Romans 5:1-5 **Romans 5:1-5.**

Verse 31. Fear ye not-ye are of more value] None can estimate the value of a soul, for which Christ has given his *blood* and *life*! Have confidence in his goodness; for he who so dearly purchased thee will miraculously preserve and save thee. Did the poet intend to contradict Christ when he said:-

*“He sees with equal eye, as God of all,
A HERO perish, or a SPARROW fall?”*

How cold and meagre is this shallow deistical saying! But could the poet mean, that a *sparrow* is of as much worth in the sight of God, who regards (if we may believe him) things only in *general*, as an *immortal soul*, purchased by the sacrifice of Christ?

Verse 32. Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men] That is, whosoever shall acknowledge me to be the Messiah, and have his heart and *life* regulated by my spirit and doctrine. It is not merely sufficient to have the *heart* right before God; there must be a firm, manly, and public profession of Christ before men. “I am no hypocrite,” says one; neither should you be. “I will keep my religion to myself” i.e. you will not confess Christ before men; then he will *renounce* you before God.

We *confess* or *own* Christ when we own his doctrine, his ministers, his servants, and when no fear hinders us from supporting and assisting them in times of necessity.

Verse 33. Whosoever shall deny me] Whosoever prefers his worldly interest to his duty to God, sets a greater value on earthly than on heavenly things, and prefers the friendship of *men* to the approbation of GOD.

Let it be remembered, that to be renounced by Christ is to have him neither for a Mediator nor Saviour. To appear before the tribunal of God without having Christ for our Advocate, and, on the contrary, to have him there as our Judge, and a witness against us, -how can a man think of this and not die with *horror!*

Verse 34. Think not that I am come to send peace, &c.] The meaning of this difficult passage will be plain, when we consider the import of the word *peace*, and the *expectation* of the Jews. I have already had occasion to remark, (^{<401012>}**Matthew 10:12**,) that the word $\mu\omega\iota \vee$ *shalom*, rendered by the Greeks $\epsilon\iota\rho\eta\nu\eta$, was used among the Hebrews to express all possible blessings, temporal and spiritual; but especially the *former*. The *expectation* of the Jews was, that, when the *Messiah* should come, all temporal *prosperity* should be accumulated on the land of Judea; therefore $\tau\eta\nu \gamma\eta\nu$, in this verse, should not be translated *the earth*, but *this land*. The import of our Lord's teaching here is this, Do not imagine, as the Jews in general vainly do, that I am come to *send forth*, ($\beta\alpha\lambda\lambda\epsilon\iota\nu$.) by *forcing* out the Roman power, that *temporal prosperity* which they long for; I am not come for this purpose, but to send forth ($\beta\alpha\lambda\lambda\epsilon\iota\nu$) the Roman *sword*, to cut off a disobedient and rebellious nation, the cup of whose iniquity is already full, and whose crimes cry aloud for speedy vengeance. **See also Clarke on** "^{<2124>}**Luke 12:49**". From the time they rejected the *Messiah*, they were a prey to the most cruel and destructive factions; they employed their time in butchering one another, till the Roman sword was unsheathed against them, and desolated the land.

Verse 35. I am come to set a man at variance] The spirit of Christ can have no union with the spirit of the world. Even a father, while unconverted, will oppose a godly child. Thus the spirit that is in those who sin against God is opposed to that spirit which is in the followers of the Most High. It is the *spirits* then that are in opposition, and not the *persons*.

Verse 36. A man's foes shall be they of his own household.] Our Lord refers here to their own traditions. So *Sota*, fol. 49. "A little before the coming of the *Messiah*, the son shall insult the father, the daughter rebel against her mother, the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; and each man shall have his own household for his enemies." Again, in *Sanhedrin*, fol. 97, it is said: "In the age in which the *Messiah* shall come, the young men shall turn the elders into ridicule; the elders shall rise up against the youth, the daughter against her mother, the daughter-in-law

against her mother-in-law; and the man of that age shall be excessively impudent; nor shall the son reverence his father.” These are most remarkable sayings, and, by them, our Lord shows them that he was the Messiah, for all these things literally took place shortly after their final rejection of Christ. See the terrible account, given by Josephus, relative to the desolations of those times. Through the just judgment of God, they who rejected the Lord that bought them became abandoned to every species of iniquity; they rejected the salvation of God, and fell into the condemnation of the devil.

Father Quesnel’s note on this place is worthy of deep attention. “The *father* (says he) is the *enemy* of his *son*, when, through a bad education, an irregular love, and a cruel indulgence, he leaves him to take a wrong bias, instructs him not in his duty, and fills his mind with ambitious views. The *son* is the *father’s enemy*, when he is the occasion of his doing injustice, in order to heap up an estate for him, and to make his fortune. The *mother* is the *daughter’s enemy*, when she instructs her to please the world, breeds her up in *excess* and *vanity*, and suffers any thing scandalous or unseemly in her dress. The *daughter* is the *mother’s enemy*, when she becomes her idol, when she engages her to comply with her own irregular inclinations, and to permit her to frequent balls and plays. The *master* is the *enemy* of his *servant*, and the *servant* that of his *master*, when the one takes no care of the other’s salvation, and the latter is subservient to his master’s passions.”

Verse 37. He that loveth father or mother more than me] He whom we love the most is he whom we study most to please, and whose will and interests we prefer in all cases. If, in order to please a father or mother who are opposed to vital godliness, we abandon God’s ordinances and followers, we are unworthy of any thing but hell.

Verse 38. He that taketh not his cross] i.e. He who is not ready, after my example, to suffer death in the cause of my religion, *is not worthy of me*, does not deserve to be called my disciple.

This alludes to the custom of causing the criminal *to bear his own cross* to the place of execution; so *Plutarch*, **εκάστος ρυς κακούργων εκφέρει τον αυτου σταυρον**. *Each of the malefactors carries on his own cross.* See Clarke on “⁴³¹⁹¹⁷John 19:17”.

Verse 39. He that findeth his life, &c.] i.e. He who, for the sake of his *temporal interest*, abandons his *spiritual concerns*, shall lose his soul; and he who, in order to avoid *martyrdom*, abjures the pure religion of Christ, shall lose his *soul*, and perhaps his *life* too. *He that findeth his life shall lose it*, was literally fulfilled in Archbishop *Cranmer*. He confessed Christ against the devil, and his eldest son, the pope. He was ordered to be burnt; to *save his life* he recanted, and was, notwithstanding, *burnt*. Whatever a man sacrifices to God is never *lost*, for he finds it again in God.

There is a fine piece on this subject in *Juvenal*, Sat. viii. l. 80, which deserves to be recorded here.

----- *ambiguæ si quando citabere testis
Incertæque rei, Phalaris licet imperet ut sis
Falsus, et admoto dictet perjuriam tauro,
Summum crede nefas ANIMAM præferre PUDORI
Et propter VITAM VIVENDI perdere causas.*

----- *If ever call'd
To give thy witness in a doubtful case,
Though Phalaris himself should bid thee lie,
On pain of torture in his flaming bull,
Disdain to barter innocence for life;
To which life owes its lustre and its worth.*
Wakefield.

Verse 40. He that receiveth you] Treats you kindly, *receiveth me*; I will consider the kindness as shown to myself; for he who receiveth me, as the true Messiah, receiveth that God by whose counsels and through whose love I am come.

Verse 41. He that receiveth a prophet] *προφητην*, a *teacher*, not a *foreteller of future events*, for this is not always the meaning of the word; but one commissioned by God to *teach the doctrines* of eternal life. It is no small honour to receive into one's house a minister of Jesus Christ. Every person is not admitted to exercise the sacred ministry; but none are excluded from partaking of its grace, its spirit, and its reward. If the teacher should be weak, or even if he should be found afterwards to have been worthless, yet the person who has *received him in the name*, under the sacred character, of an evangelist, shall not lose his reward; because what he did he did for the sake of Christ, and through love for his Church. Many sayings of this kind are found among the rabbins, and this one is

common: “He who receives a learned man, or an elder, into his house, is the same as if he had received the *Shekinah*.” And again: “He who speaks against a faithful pastor, it is the same as if he had spoken against God himself.” See *Schoettgen*.

Verse 42. A cup of cold water] *υδατος*, of *water*, is not in the common text, but it is found in the *Codex Bezae*, *Coptic*, *Armenian*, *Gothic*, *Anglo-Saxon*, *Slavonic*, all copies of the *Itala*, *Vulgate*, and *Origen*. It is necessarily understood; the ellipsis of the same *substantive* is frequent, both in the Greek and Latin writers. See *Wakefield*.

Little ones] My apparently mean and generally despised disciples.

But a cup of water in the eastern countries was not a matter of small worth. In India, the Hindoos go sometimes a great way to fetch it, and then boil it that it may do the less hurt to travellers when they are hot; and, after that, they stand from morning to night in some great road, where there is neither pit nor rivulet, and offer it, in honour of their god, to be drunk by all passengers. This necessary work of charity, in these hot countries, seems to have been practised by the more pious and humane Jews; and our Lord assures them that, if they do this in *his name*, they shall not lose their reward. See the *Asiatic Miscellany*, vol. ii. p. 142.

Verily-he shall in no wise lose his reward.] The rabbins have a similar saying: “He that gives food to one that studies in the law, God will bless him in this world, and give him a lot in the world to come.” *Syn. Sohar*.

Love heightens the smallest actions, and gives a worth to them which they cannot possess without it. Under a *just* and *merciful* God every sin is either punished or pardoned, and every good action rewarded. The most indigent may exercise the works of mercy and charity; seeing even a *cup of cold water*, given in the name of Jesus, shall not lose *its* reward. How astonishing is God’s kindness! It is not the *rich* merely whom he calls on to be charitable; but even the poor, and the most *impoverished of the poor*! God gives the power and inclination to be charitable, and then rewards the work which, it may be truly said, *God himself hath wrought*. It is the name of *Jesus* that sanctifies every thing, and renders services, in themselves comparatively contemptible, of high worth in the sight of God. See *Quesnel*.

ST. MATTHEW

CHAPTER 11.

Christ, having finished his instructions to his disciples, departs to preach in different cities, 1. John sends two of his disciples to him to inquire whether he were the Christ, 2-6. Christ's testimony concerning John, 7-15. He upbraids the Jews with their capriciousness, 16-19. The condemnation of Chorazin, and Bethsaida, and Capernaum, for their unbelief and impenitence, 20-24. Praises the Divine wisdom for revealing the Gospel to the simple-hearted, 25, 26. Shows that none can know God but by the revelation of his Son, 27. Invites the distressed to come unto him, and gives them the promise of rest for their souls, 29-30.

NOTES ON CHAP. 11.

Verse 1. This verse properly belongs to the preceding chapter, from which it should on no account be separated; as with *that* it has the strictest connection, but with *this* it has none.

To teach and to preach] *To teach*, to give *private* instructions to as many as came unto him; and *to preach*, to proclaim *publicly*, that the kingdom of God is at hand; two grand parts of the duty of a Gospel minister.

Their cities] The cities of the Jews.

Verse 2. John had heard in the prison] John was cast into prison by order of *Herod Antipas*, ^{<0148>} **Matthew 14:3**, &c., (where see the notes,) a little after our Lord began his public ministry, ^{<0142>} **Matthew 4:12**; and after the first passover, ^{<0124>} **John 3:24**.

Verse 3. Art thou he that should come] ο ερχομενος, *he that cometh*, seems to have been a proper name of the *Messiah*; to *save* or *deliver* is necessarily implied. See Clarke on "^{<0179>} **Luke 7:19**".

There is some difficulty in what is here spoken of John. Some have thought he was utterly ignorant of our Lord's Divine mission, and that he sent merely for his own information; but this is certainly inconsistent with his own declaration, ^{<0115>} **Luke 3:15**, &c.; ^{<0015>} **John 1:15, 26, 33; 3:28**, &c. Others suppose he sent the message merely for the instruction of his disciples; that, as he saw his end approaching, he wished them to have the

fullest conviction that Jesus was the Messiah, that they might attach themselves to him.

A third opinion takes a middle course between the two former, and states that, though John was at first perfectly convinced that Jesus was the Christ, yet, entertaining some hopes that he would erect a secular kingdom in Judea, wished to know whether this was likely to take place speedily. It is very probable that John now began, through the length of his confinement, to entertain doubts, relative to his kingdom, which perplexed and harassed his mind; and he took the most reasonable way to get rid of them at once, *viz.* by applying to Christ himself.

Two of his disciples] Instead of **δυο**, *two*, several excellent MSS., with both the *Syriac, Armenian, Gothic*, and one copy of the *Itala*, have **δια**, *by; he sent by his disciples.*

Verse 4. Go and show John the things-ye do hear and see] Christ would have men to judge only of him and of others by their works. This is the only safe way of judging. A man is not to be credited because he professes to know such and such things; but because he demonstrates by his conduct that his pretensions are not vain.

Verse 5. The blind receive their sight, &c.] **αναβλεπωσι**, *look upwards*, contemplating the heavens which their Lord hath made.

The lame walk] **περιπατωσι**, *they walk about*; to give the fullest proof to the multitude that their cure was real. These miracles were not only the most convincing proofs of the supreme power of Christ, but were also emblematic of that work of salvation which he effects in the souls of men.

1. Sinners are *blind*; their understanding is so darkened by sin that they *see not* the way of truth and salvation. 2. They are *lame*-not able to walk in the path of righteousness. 3. They are *leprous*, their souls are defiled with sin, the most loathsome and inveterate disease; *deepening* in themselves, and *infecting* others. 4. They are *deaf* to the voice of God, his word, and their own conscience. 5. They are *dead* in trespasses and sins; God, who is the life of the soul, being separated from it by iniquity. Nothing less than the power of Christ can redeem from all this; and, from *all this*, that power of Christ actually does redeem every penitent believing soul. Giving sight to the blind, and raising the dead, are allowed by the ancient rabbins to be works which the Messiah should perform, when he should manifest himself in Israel.

The poor have the Gospel preached to them.] And what was this Gospel? Why, the glad tidings that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners: that he *opens the eyes of the blind*; enables the *lame to walk* with an even, steady, and constant pace in the way of holiness; *cleanses the lepers* from all the *defilement of their sins*; *opens the ears of the deaf* to hear his *pardoning words*; and *raises* those who were *dead* in trespasses and sins to *live in union* with himself to all eternity.

Verse 6. Blessed is he whosoever shall not be offended in me.] Or, *Happy is he who will not be stumbled at me*; for the word **σκανδαλιζεσθαι**, in its root, signifies to *hit against* or *stumble over* a thing, which one may meet with in the way. The Jews, as was before remarked, expected a *temporal deliverer*. Many might he tempted to reject Christ, because of his mean appearance, &c., and so lose the benefit of salvation through him. To *instruct* and *caution* such, our blessed Lord spoke these words. By his *poverty* and *meanness* he condemns the *pride* and *pomp* of this world. He who will not *humble* himself, and become *base*, and *poor*, and *vile* in his own eyes, cannot enter into the kingdom of God. It is the *poor*, in general, who hear the Gospel; the rich and the great are either too busy, or too much gratified with temporal things, to pay any attention to the voice of God.

Verse 7. What went ye out into the wilderness to see?] The purport of our Lord's design, in this and the following verses, is to convince the scribes and Pharisees of the inconsistency of their conduct in acknowledging John Baptist for a divinely authorized teacher, and not believing in the very Christ which he pointed out to them. He also shows, from the *excellencies* of John's character, that their confidence in him was not misplaced, and that this was a farther argument why they should have believed in him, whom the Baptist proclaimed as being far superior to himself.

A reed shaken with the wind?] An emblem of an irresolute, unsteady mind, which believes and speaks one thing to-day, and another to-morrow. Christ asks these Jews if they had ever found any thing in John like this: Was he not ever steady and uniform in the testimony he bore to me? The *first excellency* which Christ notices in John was his *steadiness*; convinced once of the truth, he continued to believe and assert it. This is essentially necessary to every *preacher*, and to every private Christian. He who changes about from opinion to opinion, and from one sect or party to

another, is never to be depended on; there is much reason to believe that such a person is either mentally weak, or has never been rationally and divinely convinced of the truth.

Verse 8. A man clothed in soft raiment?] A *second excellency* in John was, his sober and mortified life. A preacher of the Gospel should have nothing about him which savours of *effeminacy* and *worldly pomp*: he is awfully mistaken who thinks to prevail on the world to hear him and receive the truth, by conforming himself to its *fashions* and *manners*. Excepting the mere colour of his clothes, we can scarcely now distinguish a preacher of the Gospel, whether in the establishment of the country, or out of it, from the merest worldly man. Ruffles, powder, and fribble seem universally to prevail. Thus the Church and the world begin to shake hands, the latter still retaining its enmity to God. How can those who profess to preach the doctrine of the cross act in this way? Is not a worldly-minded preacher, in the most peculiar sense, an abomination in the eyes of the Lord?

Are in kings' houses.] A *third excellency* in John was, he did not affect high things. He was contented to live in the desert, and to announce the solemn and severe truths of his doctrine to the simple inhabitants of the country. Let it be well observed, that the preacher who conforms to the world in his *clothing*, is never in his element but when he is frequenting the *houses* and *tables* of the *rich* and *great*.

Verse 9. A prophet? yea-and more than a prophet] That is, one more excellent (*περισσοτερον*) than a prophet; one greatly beyond all who had come before him, being the immediate forerunner of Christ, (see below,) and who was especially commissioned to prepare the way of the Lord. This was a *fourth excellency*: he was a prophet, a teacher, a man divinely commissioned to point out Jesus and his salvation; and more excellent than any of the old prophets, because he not only *pointed out* this *Christ*, but *saw him*, and had the honour of *dying* for that sacred truth which he steadily believed and boldly proclaimed.

Verse 10. Behold, I send my messenger] A *fifth excellency* of the Baptist was, his *preparing the way of the Lord*; being the instrument, in God's hand, of preparing the people's hearts to receive the Lord Jesus; and it was probably through his preaching that so many thousands attached themselves to Christ, immediately on his appearing as a public teacher.

Verse 11. A greater than John the Baptist] A *sixth excellency* of the Baptist-he was greater than any prophet from the beginning of the world till that time:-1st. Because he was prophesied of by them, ^{<240B>}**Isaiah 40:3**, and ^{<300B>}**Malachi 3:1**, where Jesus Christ himself seems to be the speaker. 2ndly. Because he had the privilege of showing the fulfilment of their predictions, by pointing out that Christ has *now come*, which they foretold *should come*. And 3dly. Because he saw and enjoyed that salvation which they could only *foretell*. See *Quesnel*.

Notwithstanding, he that is least in the kingdom of heaven] By the kingdom of heaven in this verse is meant, the *fulness of the blessings of the Gospel of peace*; which fulness was not known till after Christ had been crucified, and had risen from the dead. Now the least in this kingdom, the meanest preacher of a *crucified, risen, and glorified* Saviour, was *greater* than John, who was not permitted to live to see the *plenitude* of Gospel grace, in the pouring out of the Holy Spirit. Let the reader observe, 1st. That the kingdom of heaven here does not mean the state of future glory. See ^{<400B>}**Matthew 3:2**. 2dly. That it is not in holiness or devotedness to God that the *least in this kingdom is greater than John*; but 3dly. That it is merely in the *difference* of the *ministry*. The prophets pointed out a Christ that was *coming*; John showed that *that* Christ was *then among them*; and the preachers of the Gospel prove that this Christ *has suffered, and entered into his glory, and that repentance and remission of sins are proclaimed through his blood*. There is a saying similar to this among the Jews: “Even the servant maid that passed through the Red Sea, saw what neither Ezekiel, nor any other of the prophets had seen.”

Verse 12. The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence] The tax-gatherers and heathens, whom the scribes and Pharisees think have no right to the kingdom of the Messiah, filled with holy zeal and earnestness, seize at once on the proffered mercy of the Gospel, and so take the kingdom as by force from those learned doctors who claimed for themselves the chiefest places in that kingdom. Christ himself said, *The tax-gatherers and harlots go before you into the kingdom of God*. See the parallel place, ^{<407B>}**Luke 7:28-30**. He that will *take*, get possession of the kingdom of righteousness, peace, and spiritual joy, must be in earnest: all hell will oppose him in every step he takes; and if a man be not absolutely determined to give up his sins and evil companions, and have his soul saved at all hazards, and at every expense, he will surely perish everlastingly. This requires a *violent* earnestness.

Verse 13. All the prophets and the law prophesied until John.] I believe *προεφητευσαν* means here, *they taught*, or *continued to instruct*. They were the instructors concerning the Christ who was to come, till John came and showed that all the *predictions* of the *one*, and the *types* and *ceremonies* of the *other* were *now* about to be fully and finally accomplished; for Christ was *now* revealed. The word is taken in this sense, ^{<072>}**Matthew 7:22.**

Verse 14. This is Elias, which was for to come.] This should always be written Elijah, that as strict a conformity as possible might be kept up between the names in the Old Testament and the New. The Prophet Malachi, who predicted the coming of the Baptist in the spirit and power of Elijah, gave the *three* following distinct characteristics of him. First, That he should be the forerunner and messenger of the Messiah: *Behold I send my messenger before me*, ^{<001>}**Malachi 3:1**. Secondly, That he should appear *before* the destruction of the second temple: *Even the Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to his temple*, *ibid*. Thirdly, That he should preach repentance to the Jews; and that, some time after, the *great and terrible day of the Lord should come*, and the Jewish land be smitten with a curse, ^{<005>}**Malachi 4:5, 6**. Now these three characters agree perfectly with the conduct of the Baptist, and what shortly followed his preaching, and have not been found in any one else; which is a convincing proof that Jesus was the promised *Messiah*.

Verse 15. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.] As if our Lord had said, These things are so clear and manifest that a man has only to hear them to be convinced and fully satisfied of their truth. But neither the Jews of that time nor of the succeeding times to the present day, have heard or considered, these things. When spoken to on these subjects, their common custom is to stop their ears, spit out, and blaspheme; this shows not only a *bad*, but a *ruined* cause. They are deeply and wilfully blind. They will not come unto the light, lest their deeds should become manifest, that they are not wrought in God. They have ears but they will not hear.

Verse 16. But whereunto shall I liken this generation?] That is, the Jewish people-*την γενεαν ταυτην*, *this race*: and so the word *γενεα* is often to be understood in the evangelists.

In the markets] Or, *places of concourse*, *αγοραις*, from *αγειρω*, *I gather together*; not a *market-place* only, but any place of public resort: probably meaning here, places of public amusement.

Calling unto their fellows] Or, *companions*. Instead of **εταίροις**, *companions*, many of the best MSS. have **ετεροις**, *others*. The great similarity of the words might have easily produced this difference.

There are some to whom every thing is useful in leading them to God; others, to whom nothing is sufficient. Every thing is good to an upright mind, every thing bad to a vicious heart.

Verse 17. We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced] We have begun the music, which should have been followed by the dance, but ye have not attended to it.

We have mourned-and ye have not lamented.] *Ye have not smote the breast: ουκ εκοψασθε*, from **κοπτομαι**, *to strike*, or *beat the breasts with the hands*, particularly in *lamentation*. So used, ^{<4017>}**Nahum 2:7**; ^{<2181>}**Luke 18:13; 23:48**, and by the best Greek and Roman writers. There is an allusion here to those funeral lamentations explained ^{<4023>}**Matthew 9:23**.

Verse 18. For John came neither eating nor drinking] Leading a very austere and mortified life: and yet, he did not receive him. A sinner will not be persuaded that what he has no mind to imitate can come from God. There are some who will rather blame holiness itself, than esteem it in those whom they do not like.

He hath a devil.] He is a vile hypocrite, influenced by a *demon* to deceive and destroy the simple.

Verse 19. The Son of man came eating and drinking] That is, went wheresoever he was invited to eat a morsel of bread, and observed no rigid fasts: how could he, who had no corrupt appetites to mortify or subdue?

They say, Behold a man gluttonous, &c.] Whatever measures the followers of God may take, they will not escape the censure of the world: the best way is not to be concerned at them. Iniquity, being always ready to oppose and contradict the Divine conduct, often contradicts and exposes itself.

But wisdom is justified of her children.] Those who follow the dictates of true wisdom ever justify, point out as excellent, the holy maxims by which they are guided, for they find the *way pleasantness*, and the *path, peace*. Of, here, and in many places of our translation, ought to be written *by* in modern English.

Some suppose that our blessed Lord applies the epithet of $\eta \sigma\omicron\phi\iota\alpha$, *that Wisdom* to himself; as he does that of *Son of man*, in the first clause of the verse: and that this refers to the sublime description given of wisdom in Prov. 8. Others have supposed that by the *children* or *sons* ($\tau\epsilon\kappa\nu\omicron\nu$) of *wisdom* our Lord means *John Baptist* and *himself*, who came to preach the doctrines of true wisdom to the people, and who were known to be teachers come from God by all those who seriously attended to their ministry: they recommending themselves, by the purity of their doctrines, and the holiness of their lives, to every man's conscience in the sight of God. It is likely, however, that by *children* our Lord simply means the *fruits* or *effects* of wisdom, according to the Hebrew idiom, which denominates the fruits or effects of a thing, its *children*. So in ^{<1807>}**Job 5:7**, sparks emitted by coals are termed $\bar{a}vr \ ynb$ *beney resheph*, the *children of the coal*. It was probably this well known meaning of the word, which led the *Codex Vaticanus*, one of the most ancient MSS. in the world, together with the *Syriac*, *Persic*, *Coptic*, and *Ethiopic*, to read $\epsilon\rho\gamma\omega\nu$, *works*, instead of $\tau\epsilon\kappa\nu\omicron\nu$, *sons* or *children*. Wisdom is vindicated by her works, i.e. the good effects prove that the cause is excellent.

The children of true wisdom can justify all God's ways in their salvation; as they know that all the dispensations of Providence work together for the good of those who love and fear God. See on ^{<1075>}**Luke 7:35**.

Verse 20. Then began he to upbraid the cities] The more God has done to draw men unto himself, the less excusable are they if they continue in iniquity. If our blessed Lord had not done every thing that was necessary for the salvation of these people, he could not have reproached them for their impenitence.

Verse 21. Wo unto thee, Chorazin-Bethsaida!] It would be better to translate the word $\omicron\upsilon\upsilon\alpha\iota \ \sigma\omicron\iota$, *alas for thee*, than *wo to thee*. The former is an exclamation of pity; the latter a denunciation of wrath. It is evident that our Lord used it in the former sense. It is not known precisely where *Chorazin* was situated; but as Christ joins it in the same censure with *Bethsaida*, which was in Upper Galilee, beyond the sea, ^{<1065>}**Mark 6:45**, it is likely that *Chorazin* was in the same quarter. Though the people in these cities were (generally) impenitent, yet there is little doubt that several received the word of life. Indeed, *Bethsaida* itself furnished not less than *three* of the *twelve* apostles, *Philip*, *Andrew*, and *Peter*. See ^{<1014>}**John 1:44**.

Tyre and Sidon] Were two heathen cities, situated on the shore of the Mediterranean Sea, into which it does not appear that Christ ever went, though he was often very nigh to them; see ^{<4052>}**Matthew 15:21**.

They would have repented long ago] **παλαι**, *formerly*, seems here to refer to the time of Ezekiel, who denounced destruction against *Tyre* and *Sidon*, Ezekiel 26, 27, and 28. Our Lord, then, intimates that, if Ezekiel had done as many miracles in those cities as himself had in Chorazin and Bethsaida, the inhabitants would have repented in sackcloth and ashes, with the deepest and most genuine sorrow.

A *Hindoo* who renounces the secular life, and becomes a religious mendicant, often covers himself with a *coarse cloth* sprinkled over with *ashes*. This is the *sackcloth* and *ashes* which our Lord refers to; and this covering was the outward sign of deep repentance, and forsaking of sin.

Verse 22. But-it shall be more tolerable] Every thing will help to overwhelm the impenitent at the tribunal of God-the benefits and favours which they have received, as well as the sins which they have committed.

Verse 23. Thou, Capernaum-exalted unto heaven] A Hebrew metaphor, expressive of the utmost prosperity, and the enjoyment of the greatest privileges. This was properly spoken of this city, because that in it our Lord dwelt, and wrought many of his miraculous works.

Shalt be brought down to hell] Perhaps not meaning, here, the place of torment, but rather a state of *desolation*. The original word is *Hades*, **αδης**, from **α**, *not*, and **ιδειν**, *to see*; the *invisible* receptacle or mansion of the dead, answering to **l wav sheol**, in Hebrew; and implying often, 1st. the *grave*; 2dly. the state of *separate souls*, or *unseen* world of spirits, whether of *torment*, ^{<4123>}**Luke 16:23**, or, in *general*, ^{<4018>}**Revelation 1:18; 6:8; 20:13, 14**. The word *hell*, used in the common translation, conveys *now* an improper meaning of the original word; because *hell* is only used to signify the place of the damned. But, as the word *hell* comes from the Anglo-Saxon, *helan*, *to cover*, or *hide*, hence the *tiling* or *slating* of a house is called, in some parts of England (particularly Cornwall) *heling*, to this day; and the *covers* of books (in Lancashire) by the same name: so the literal import of the original word **αδης** was formerly well expressed by it. Here it means a state of the utmost wo, and ruin, and desolation, to which these impenitent cities should be reduced. This prediction of our Lord was literally fulfilled; for, in the wars between the Romans and the Jews, these

cities were totally destroyed, so that no traces are now found of *Bethsaida*, *Chorazin*, or *Capernaum*. See Bp. PEARCE.

Verse 24. But-it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom] γη σοδομων, *the land of the Sodomites*; i.e. the ancient inhabitants of that city and its neighbourhood.

In Jude, ~~<68007>~~ **Jude 1:7**, we are told that these persons are *suffering the vengeance of eternal fire*. The destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah happened A. M. 2107, which was 1897 years before the incarnation. What a terrible thought is this! It will be more tolerable for certain sinners, who have already been damned nearly four thousand years, than for those who, live and die infidels under the Gospel! There are various degrees of punishments in hell, answerable to various degrees of guilt, and the contempt manifested to, and the abuse made of; the preaching of the Gospel, will rank semi-infidel Christians in the *highest* list of transgressors, and purchase them the *hottest* place in hell! Great God! save the reader from this destruction!

Day of judgment] May either refer to that *particular* time in which God visits for iniquity, or to that great day in which he will judge the world by the Lord Jesus Christ. The day of Sodom's judgment was that in which it was destroyed by fire and brimstone from heaven, ~~<01924>~~ **Genesis 19:24**; and the day of judgment to *Chorazin*, *Bethsaida*, and *Capernaum*, was the time in which they were destroyed by the *Romans*, ~~<01123>~~ **Matthew 11:23**. But there is a day of final judgment, when Hades itself, (sinners in a state of partial punishment in the invisible world) shall be cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, which is the second death. See ~~<63014>~~ **Revelation 20:14**.

Verse 25. I thank thee] εξομολογουμαι σοι, *I fully agree with thee*-I am perfectly of the same mind. Thou hast acted in all things according to the strictest holiness, justice, mercy, and truth.

Wise and prudent] The scribes and Pharisees, vainly puffed up by their fleshly minds, and having their foolish hearts darkened, refusing to submit to the righteousness of God (God's method of saving man by Christ) and going about to establish their own righteousness, (their own method of saving themselves,) they rejected God's counsel, and God sent the peace and salvation of the Gospel to others, called here *babes*, (his disciples,) simple-hearted persons, who submitted to be instructed and saved in God's own way. Let it be observed, that our Lord does not thank the Father that

he had hidden these things from the wise and prudent, but that, seeing they were hidden from *them*, he had revealed them to the others.

There is a remarkable saying in the Talmudists, which casts light upon this: “Rab. Jochanan said: ‘From the time in which the temple was destroyed, wisdom was taken away from the prophets, and give a to fools and children.’ *Bava Bathra*, fol. 12. Again: ‘In the days of the Messiah, every species of wisdom, even the most profound, shall, be revealed; and this even to children.’” *Synop. Sohar*. fol. 10.

Verse 26. Even so, Father] $\nu\alpha\iota\ \omicron\ \pi\alpha\tau\eta\rho$. An emphatical ratification of the preceding address.

It was right that the heavenly wisdom, despised, rejected, and persecuted by the scribes and Pharisees, should be offered to the simple people, and afterwards to the foolish people, the Gentiles, who are the children of wisdom, and justify God in his ways, by bringing forth that fruit of the Gospel of which the Pharisees refused to receive even the *seed*.

Verse 27. All things are delivered unto me of my Father] This is a great truth, and the key of the science of salvation. The man Christ Jesus *receives* from the Father, and in consequence of his union with the eternal Godhead becomes the Lord and sovereign Dispenser of all things. All the springs of the Divine favour are in the hands of Christ, as Priest of God, and atoning Sacrifice for men: all good proceeds from him, as Saviour, Mediator, Head, Pattern, Pastor, and sovereign Judge of the whole world.

No man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man, &c.] None can fully comprehend the nature and attributes of God, but Christ; and none can fully comprehend the nature, incarnation, &c., of Christ, but the Father. The *full* comprehension and acknowledgment of the Godhead, and the mystery of the Trinity, belong to God alone.

Verse 28. Come unto me] This phrase in the new covenant implies simply, *believing in Christ*, and *becoming his disciple*, or *follower*.

All ye that labour and are heavy laden] The metaphor here appears to be taken from a man who has a great load laid upon him, which he must carry to a certain place: every step he takes reduces his strength, and renders his load the more oppressive. However, it must be carried on; and he *labours*, uses his utmost exertions, to reach the place where it is to be

laid down. A kind person passing by, and, seeing his distress, offers to ease him of his load, that he may enjoy rest.

The *Jews*, heavily laden with the burdensome rites of the Mosaic institution, rendered still more oppressive by the *additions* made by the scribes and Pharisees, who, our Lord says, (~~4234~~ **Matthew 23:4**.) *bound on heavy burdens*; and labouring, by their observance of the law, to make themselves pleasing to God, are here invited to lay down their load, and receive the salvation procured for them by Christ.

Sinners, wearied in the ways of iniquity, are also invited to come to this Christ, and find speedy relief.

Penitents, burdened with the guilt of their crimes, may come to this Sacrifice, and find instant pardon.

Believers, sorely tempted, and oppressed by the remains of the carnal mind, may come to this blood, that cleanseth from all unrighteousness; and, purified from all sin, and powerfully succoured in every temptation, they shall find uninterrupted *rest* in this complete Saviour.

All are invited to come, and all are promised *rest*. If *few* find *rest* from sin and vile affections, it is because few *come to Christ* to receive it.

Verse 29. Take my yoke upon you] Strange paradox! that a man already weary and overloaded must take a new *weight* upon him, in order to be eased and find *rest*! But this advice is similar to that saying, ~~19572~~ **Psalm 55:22**. *Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he will sustain thee*; i.e. trust thy soul and concerns to him, and he will carry both *thyself* and *thy load*.

I am meek and lowly in heart] Wherever *pride* and *anger* dwell, there is nothing but *mental labour* and *agony*; but, where the *meekness* and *humility* of Christ dwell, all is *smooth, even, peaceable, and quiet*; for the work of righteousness is peace, and the effect of righteousness, *quietness* and *assurance* for ever. ~~23217~~ **Isaiah 32:17**.

Verse 30. For my yoke is easy] My Gospel imposes nothing that is difficult; on the contrary, it provides for the complete removal of all that which oppresses and renders man miserable, viz. *sin*. The commandments of Christ are not grievous. Hear the whole: *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and thy neighbour as thyself*. Can any thing be more congenial to the nature of man than *love*?-such a love as is inspired

by God, and in which the soul rests supremely satisfied and infinitely happy? *Taste*, and know, by experience, how good the Lord is, and how worthy his *yoke* is to be *taken, borne, and loved*. This most tender invitation of the compassionate Jesus is sufficient to inspire the most diffident soul with confidence. See Clarke on “~~41034~~ Mark 8:34”.

Creeshna, the incarnate God of the Hindoos, is represented in the Geeta addressing one of his beloved disciples thus: “I am the creator of all things, and all things proceed from me. Those who are endued with spiritual wisdom, believe this, and worship me: their very hearts and minds are in me; they rejoice among themselves, and delight in speaking of my name, and teaching one another my doctrine. I gladly inspire those who are constantly employed in my service with that use of reason by which *they come unto me*; and, in compassion, I stand in my own nature, and dissipate the darkness of their ignorance with the light of the lamp of wisdom.” *Bhagvat Geeta*, p. 84.

The word **l w[** *aval*, among the Jews, which we properly enough translate *yoke*, signified not only that sort of *neck-harness* by which bullocks drew in wagons, carts, or in the plough; but also any kind of *bond, or obligation*, to do some *particular thing*, or to do some *particular work*. By them it is applied to the following things:-

1. The *yoke* of the KINGDOM of heaven, **ymvh twkl m l w[** -obedience to the revealed will of God.
2. The *yoke* of the LAW, **hrwh l w[** -the necessity of obeying all the rites, ceremonies, &c., of the Mosaic institution.
3. The *yoke* of the PRECEPT, **hwxm l w[** -the necessity of performing that particular obligation by which any person had bound himself, such as that of the Nazarite, &c.
4. The *yoke* of REPENTANCE, **hkvvh l v l w[** -without which, they knew, they could not enter into the kingdom of heaven. With the Jews, *repentance* not only implied *forsaking sin*, but *fasting, mortification, &c.*
5. The *yoke* of FAITH, **hnwma l w[** -the necessity of believing in the promised Messiah.

6. The DIVINE *yoke*, **al y[ir l w]**-the obligation to live a spiritual life; a life of thanksgiving and gratitude unto God.

In *Shemoth Rabba* it is said: “Because the ten tribes did not *take the yoke of the holy and blessed God* upon them, therefore Sennacherib led them into captivity.”

CHRIST'S *yoke* means, the obligation to receive him as the MESSIAH, to believe his *doctrine*, and to be in all things conformed to his *Word* and to his *Spirit*.

ST. MATTHEW

CHAPTER 12.

Jesus and his disciples go through the cornfields on the Sabbath, and the latter pluck and eat some of the ears, at which the Pharisees take offence, 1, 2. Our Lord vindicates them, 3-8. The man with the withered hand cured, 9-13. The Pharisees seek his destruction, 14. He heals the multitudes, and fulfils certain prophecies, 15-21. Heals the blind and dumb demoniac, 22, 23. The malice of the Pharisees reprov'd by our Lord, 24-30. The sin against the Holy Ghost, 31, 32. Good and bad trees known by their fruits-evil and good men by their conduct, 33-37. Jonah, a sign of Christ's death and resurrection, 38-40. The men of Nineveh and the queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment against the Jews, 41, 42. Of the unclean spirit, 43-45. Christ's mother and brethren seek him, 46-50.

NOTES ON CHAP. 12.

Verse 1. At that time Jesus went on the Sabbath-day through the corn] “The time is determined by Luke in these words, *εν σαββατω δευτεροπρωτω*, that is, *on the Sabbath from the second-first*.

“1. Provision was made by the *Divine* law that the sheaf of first-fruits should be offered on the *second* day of the pass-over week, ^{<R2310>} **Leviticus 23:10, 11.** *On the morrow after the Sabbath, the priest shall shake (or wave) it.* Not on the morrow after the *ordinary* Sabbath of the *week*, but the morrow after the *first* of the *pass-over* week, which was a *Sabbatic* day, ^{<R21216>} **Exodus 12:16;** ^{<R2307>} **Leviticus 23:7.** Hence the *seventy*, *επαυριον της πρωτης*, *the morrow of the first day*; the Chaldee, *the morrow after the holy day*. The rabbins, *Solomon* and *Menachen*, have it, *On the morrow after the first day of the pass-over feast*; of which mention had been made in the verses foregoing.

“But now, from the second day of the *pass-over* solemnity, wherein the sheaf was offered, were numbered *seven weeks* to *pentecost*: for the day of the *sheaf*, and the day of *pentecost* did mutually respect each other; for on this second day of the *pass-over*, the offering of the sheaf was supplicatory, and by way of prayer, beseeching a blessing upon the new corn, and leave to eat it, and to pot in the sickle into the standing corn. Now, the offering of the first-fruit loaves on the day of *pentecost*, (^{<R2315>} **Leviticus 23:15-17,**) did

respect the giving of thanks for the finishing and housing of the barley-harvest. Therefore, in regard of this relation, these two solemnities were linked together, that both might respect the harvest; *that*, the harvest beginning; *this*, the harvest ended: *this* depended on *that*, and was numbered *seven weeks* after it.

Therefore, the computation of the time coming between could not but carry with it the memory of that second day of the *pass-over week*; and hence *pentecost* is called the *feast of weeks*,

^{<51610>} **Deuteronomy 16:10.** The true calculation of the time between could not otherwise be retained, as to *Sabbaths*, but by numbering thus: this is σαββατων δευτεροπρωτον, *the first Sabbath after the second day of the pass-over*. This is δευτεροδυβερων, *the second Sabbath after that second day*. And so of the rest. In the *Jerusalem Talmud*, the word αγγμωωωρηπ tbn *shebeth protogamiya, the Sabbath, πρωτογαμιας, of the first marriage, is a composition not very unlike.*” *Lightfoot*.

His disciples were an hungered] Were hungry. The former is a mode of expression totally obsolete. How *near* does the translation of this verse come to our ancient mother-tongue, the Anglo-Saxon!-[Anglo-Saxon]-*The Healer went on rest-day over acres: truly his learning knights hungred, and they began to pluck the ear and eaten*. We may well wonder at the extreme poverty of Christ and his disciples. He was himself present with them, and yet permitted them to lack bread! A man, therefore, is not forsaken of God because he is in *want*. It is more honourable to suffer the want of all temporal things in fellowship with Christ and his followers, than to have all things in abundance in connection with the world.

Verse 2. Thy disciples do that which is not lawful to do] The Jews were so superstitious, concerning the observance of the Sabbath, that in their wars with *Antiochus Epiphanes*, and the *Romans*, they thought it a crime even to attempt to defend themselves on the Sabbath: when their enemies observed this, they deterred their operations to that day. It was through this, that *Pompey* was enabled to take Jerusalem. *Dion. Cass. lib. xxxvi.*

Those who know not the spirit and design of the divine law are often *superstitious to inhumanity*, and *indulgent to impiety*. An intolerant and censorious spirit in religion is one of the greatest curses a man can well fall under.

Verse 3. - 4. Have ye not read what David did] The original history is in ^{<0210>}**1 Samuel 21:1-6.**

When he was an hungered] Here hearken to *Kimchi*, producing the opinion of the ancients concerning this story in these words: “*Our rabbins of blessed memory say, that he gave him the shew-bread, &c.* The interpretation also of the clause, *Yea, though it were sanctified this day in the vessel,* is this: *It is a small thing to say, that it is lawful for us to eat THESE LOAVES, taken from before the Lord, when we are hungry; for it would be lawful to eat this very loaf which is now set on, which is also sanctified in the vessel, (for the table sanctifieth,) it would be lawful to eat even this, when another loaf is not present with you to give us, and we are so hunger-bitten.* And a little after, *There is nothing which may hinder taking care of life, beside idolatry, adultery, and murder.* That is, a man, according to them, should do any thing but these in order to preserve life.” See *Lightfoot*.

He entered into the house of God] Viz. the house of *Ahimelech* the priest, who dwelt at *Nob*, with whom the tabernacle then was, in which the Divine presence was manifested.

And did eat the shew-bread] τους αρτους της προθεσεως-in Hebrew, לֶחֶם מִן הַפָּנִים | *lechem panim*-bread of the presence, or faces, because this bread was to be set continually, לִפְנֵי יְהוָה | *lipney Yehovah*, before the face of *Jehovah*. See the notes on ^{<0252>}**Exodus 25:23, 30.**

“Since part of the frankincense put in the bread was to be burnt on the altar for a memorial, ^{<0247>}**Leviticus 24:7**, and since Aaron and his sons were to eat it in the holy place, it is evident that this bread typified *Christ*, first presented as a sacrifice *to*, or in the presence of, *Jehovah*, and then becoming spiritual food to such as, *in* and *through* him, are spiritual priests to God. See ^{<0106>}**Revelation 1:6; 5:10; 20:6**; also ^{<0115>}**1 Peter 2:5.**” *Parkhurst*.

Verse 5. The priests-profane the Sabbath] *Profane*, i.e. put it to what might be called a *common use*, by *slaying* and *offering* up sacrifices, and by doing the *services* of the temple, as on *common* days, ^{<0238>}**Exodus 29:38**; ^{<0239>}**Numbers 28:9.**

Verse 6. In this place is one greater than the temple.] Does not our Lord refer here to ^{<0301>}**Malachi 3:1**? Compare this with ^{<0303>}**Hebrews 3:3.**

The Jews esteemed nothing greater than the temple, except that God who was worshipped in it. Christ, by asserting he was *greater than the temple*, asserts that he was *God*; and this he does, in still more *direct terms*, ^{<0128>}**Matthew 12:8**, *The Son of man is Lord of the Sabbath-is Instructor and Governor* of it. Compare this with ^{<0128>}**Genesis 2:3**, and see the notes there.

Verse 7. I will have mercy, &c.] See this explained, ^{<0113>}**Matthew 9:13**. There are *four* ways in which *positive laws* may cease to oblige.

First, by the natural law of *necessity*.

Secondly, by a *particular law*, which is *superior*.

Thirdly, by the *law of charity and mercy*.

Fourthly, by the *dispensation and authority* of the *Lawgiver*.

These cases are all exemplified from ^{<0124>}**Matthew 12:4-8**.

Verse 8. The Son of man is Lord even of the Sabbath-day.] The change of the Jewish into the Christian Sabbath, called the *Lord's day*, ^{<0110>}**Revelation 1:10**, shows that Christ is not only the *Lord*, but also the *truth and completion* of it. For it seems to have been by an especial providence that this change has been made and acknowledged all over the Christian world.

Verse 10. A man which had his hand withered.] Probably through a partial *paralysis*. The man's hand was withered; but God's mercy had still preserved to him the use of his feet: He uses them to bring him to the public worship of God, and Jesus meets and heals him there. How true is the proverb-*It is never so ill with us, but it might be much worse!*

Verse 11. If it fall into a pit on the Sabbath-day, &c.] It was a canon among the Jews: "We must take a tender care of the goods of an Israelite." Hence:-

"If a beast fall into a ditch, or into a pool of water, let (the owner) bring him food in that place if he can; but, if he cannot, let him bring clothes and litter, and bear up the beast; whence, if he can come up, let him come up, &c."

"If a beast or its foal fall into a ditch on a holy day, R. Lazar saith, Let him lift up the former to kill him, and let him kill him; but let him give fodder to the other, lest he die in that place. R. Joshua

saith, Let him lift up the former with the intention of killing him, although he kill him not; let him lift up the other also, although it be not in his mind to kill him.” To these canons our Lord seems here very properly to appeal, in vindication of his intention to heal the distressed man. See *Lightfoot*.

Self-interest is a very decisive casuist, and removes abundance of scruples in a moment. It is always the first consulted, and the must readily obeyed. It is not sinful to hearken to it, but it must not govern nor determine by itself.

Verse 12. How much then is a man better than a sheep?] Our Lord’s argument is what is called *argumentum ad hominem*; they are taken on their own ground, and confuted on their own maxims and conduct. There are many persons who call themselves *Christians*, who do more for a *beast* of burden or pleasure than they do for a man for whom Christ died! Many spend that on *coursers*, *spaniels*, and *hounds*, of which multitudes of the followers of Christ are destitute:-but this also shall come to judgment.

Wherefore, it is lawful to do well, &c.] This was allowed by a multitude of Jewish canons. See *Schoettgen*.

Verse 13. Stretch forth thine hand.] The bare command of God is a sufficient reason of obedience. This man might have reasoned thus: “Lord, my hand is *withered*; how then can I stretch it out? Make it whole first, and afterwards I will do as thou commandest.” This may appear *reasonable*, but in his case it would have been *foolishness*. At the command of the Lord he made the effort, and in making it the cure was effected! Faith disregards apparent impossibilities, where there is a command and promise of God. The *effort* to believe is, often, that *faith* by which the soul is *healed*.

A little before (^{<0126>}**Matthew 12:6, 8**) Jesus Christ had *asserted* his Godhead, in this verse he *proves* it. What but the omnipotence of the living God could have, in a moment, restored this withered hand? There could be no collusion here; the man who had a *real* disease was instantaneously and therefore miraculously cured; and the mercy and power of God were both amply manifested in this business.

It is worthy of remark, that as the man was healed with a *word*, without even a *touch*, the Sabbath was unbroken, even according to their most rigid interpretation of the letter of the law.

Verse 14. Held a council against him] Nothing sooner leads to utter blindness, and hardness of heart, than *envy*. There are many who abandon themselves to *pleasure-taking* and *debauchery* on the Sabbath, who condemn a poor man whom necessity obliges to *work* on what is termed a *holiday*, or a *national fast*.

Verse 15. Jesus-withdrew himself from thence] It is the part of prudence and Christian charity not to provoke, if possible, the blind and the hardened; and to take from them the occasion of sin. A man of God is not afraid of persecution; but, as his aim is only to do good, by proclaiming every where the grace of the Lord Jesus, he departs from any place when he finds the obstacles to the accomplishment of his end are, humanly speaking, *invincible*, and that he can not do good without being the means of much evil. Yield to the stream when you cannot stem it.

Great multitudes followed him, and he healed them all] The rejection of the Gospel in one place has often been the means of sending it to and establishing it in another. Jesus *healed all that followed* him, i.e. all who had *need* of healing, and who *desired* to be healed; for thus the passage must be understood:- and is he not still the *same*? No soul shall ever implore his healing power in vain; but let it be remembered, that only those who *follow* Christ, and apply to him, are healed of their spiritual maladies.

Verse 16. Charged them that they should not make him known] See ^{<4084>} **Matthew 8:4**. Jesus Christ, as GOD, could have easily concealed himself, but he chooses to do it as *man*, and to use no other than human means, as these were quite sufficient for the purpose, to teach us not to neglect them in our necessity. Indeed, he always used his power less on his *own* account, than on that of *men*.

Verse 18. Behold my servant] This title was given to our blessed Lord in several prophecies. See ^{<3401>} **Isaiah 42:1; 53:2**. Christ assumes it, ^{<19407>} **Psalm 40:7-9**. Compare these with ^{<6170>} **John 17:4**, and ^{<50107>} **Philippians 2:7**. God required an *acceptable* and *perfect service* from man; but man, being *sinful*, could not perform it. Jesus, taking upon him the nature of man, fully performed the whole will of God, and communicates grace to all his followers, to enable them perfectly to love and worthily to magnify their Maker.

And he shall show judgment to the Gentiles.] That is, He will publish the Gospel to the heathens; for the word **κρίσιν** here answers to the word

cpvm *mishpat* of the prophet, and it is used among the Hebrews to signify laws, precepts, and a whole system or body of doctrine. See ^{<1919>}**Psalm 19:9; 119:30, 39,** ^{<2880>}**Isaiah 58:2.**

Verse 19. He shall not strive, nor cry] The spirit of Christ is not a spirit of contention, murmuring, clamour, or litigiousness. He who loves these does not belong to him. Christ therefore fulfilled a prophecy by withdrawing from this place, on account of the rage of the Pharisees.

Verse 20. A bruised reed shall he not break] A *reed* is, in Scripture, the emblem of *weakness*, ^{<3216>}**Ezekiel 29:6;** and a *bruised* reed must signify that state of weakness that borders on dissolution and death.

And smoking flax shall he not quench] **λινον τυφομενον. λινος** means the *wick* of a lamp, and **τυφομενον** is intended to point out its *expiring state*, when the oil has been all burnt away from it, and nothing is left but a mere *snuff, emitting smoke*. Some suppose the Jewish state, as to ecclesiastical matters, is here intended, the prophecy declaring that Christ would not destroy it, but leave it to expire of itself, as it already contained the principles of its own destruction. Others have considered it as implying that great tenderness with which the blessed Jesus should treat the weak and the ignorant, whose good desires must not be stifled, but encouraged. The *bruised reed* may recover itself, if permitted to vegetate under the genial influences of heaven; and the *life* and *light* of the *expiring lamp* may be supported by the addition of fresh oil. Jesus therefore quenches not faint desires after salvation, even in the worst and most undeserving of men; for even such desires may lead to the fulness of the blessing of the Gospel of peace.

Judgment unto victory.] See ^{<4028>}**Matthew 12:18.** By *judgment*, understand the *Gospel*, and by *victory* its complete triumph over Jewish opposition, and Gentile impiety. He will continue by these mild and gentle means to work till the whole world is Christianized, and the universe filled with his glory.

Verse 21. And in his name shall the Gentiles trust.] **ελπιουσι,** *they shall hope*. Jesus Christ is the sole *hope* and *trust* of mankind; *to trust* and *hope in his name*, JESUS, is to expect salvation and all things necessary from *him alone*, to despise, comparatively, all earthly promises, to esteem, love, and desire heavenly things only, and to bear with patience and

tranquillity all the losses and evils of this life, upon the prospect and *hope* of that felicity which he has purchased for us.

Verse 22. One possessed with a devil, blind and dumb] A person from whom the indwelling demon took away both *sight* and *hearing*. Satan makes himself master of the *heart*, the *eyes*, and the *tongue* of the sinner. His *heart* he fills with the love of sin; his *eyes* he blinds that he may not see his guilt, and the perdition which awaits him; and his *tongue* he hinders from prayer and supplication, though he gives it increasing liberty in blasphemies, lies, slanders, &c. None but Jesus can redeem from this threefold captivity.

Verse 23. Is not this the son of David?] Is not this the true Messiah? Do not these miracles sufficiently prove it? See ^{<238>}**Isaiah 35:5**.

Verse 24. Beelzebub] See ^{<410>}**Matthew 10:25**.

Verse 25. Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation] Our Lord's argument was thus:—"The welfare of any *kingdom*, *city*, or *family*, depends on its *concord* and *unanimity*; Satan, like every other potentate, must wish to rule his empire in *peace* and *security*; how then can he be in league with me, who *oppose* his authority, and am *destroying* his kingdom?"

The reasoning of the Pharisees, ^{<412>}**Matthew 12:24**, was not *expressed*, and Jesus, *knowing their thoughts*, gave them ample proof of his *omniscience*. This, with our Lord's masterly confutation of their reasonings, by a conclusion drawn from their own premises, one would have supposed might have humbled and convinced these men; but the most conclusive reasoning, and the most astonishing miracles, were lost upon a people who were obstinately determined to disbelieve every thing good, relative to Christ. How true the saying—*He came unto his own, and his own received him not!*

Verse 26. If Satan cast out Satan] A good cause will produce a good effect, and an evil cause an evil effect. Were I on Satan's side, I would act for his interest and confirm his influence among you; but I oppose his maxims by my *doctrine*, and his *influence* by my *power*.

Verse 27. By whom do your children cast them out?] *Children*, or *sons of the prophets*, means the *disciples* of the prophets; and *children* or sons of the Pharisees, *disciples* of the *Pharisees*. From ^{<419>}**Acts 19:13, 14**, it is

evident there were *exorcists* among the Jews, and, from our Lord's saying here, it is also evident that the disciples of the Pharisees did cast out demons, or, at least, those who educated them wished to have it believed that they had such a power. Our Lord's argument here is extremely conclusive: If the man who casts out demons proves himself thereby to be in league with and influenced by Satan, then *your disciples*, and *you* who taught them, are all of you in league with the devil: ye must either give up your assertion, that I cast out demons by Beelzebul, or else admit this conclusion, in its fullest force and latitude, that *ye* are all children of the devil, and leagued with him against God.

Envy causes persons often to *condemn* in *one*, what they *approve* in *another*.

Verse 28. But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God] Perhaps the *Spirit of God* is here mentioned by way of opposition to the *magical incantations* of the Jews; for it is well known that by fumigations and magical washings, they professed to cast out devils. See a case mentioned by *Schoettgen* on this verse.

Then the kingdom of God] For the destruction of the *kingdom of Satan* plainly implies the setting up of the *kingdom of God*.

Is come unto you.] Is come unexpectedly upon you. $\epsilon\varphi\theta\alpha\sigma\epsilon\nu$, from $\varphi\theta\alpha\nu\omega$, *to appear suddenly-unexpectedly*.

They pretended to be in expectation of the kingdom of God, and consequently of the destruction of the kingdom of Satan. But, by being not prepared to receive Christ in these proofs of his Divine mission, they showed that their expectation was but *pretended*. They were too *carnal* to mind *spiritual* things.

Verse 29. Else how can one enter into a strong man's house] Men, through sin, are become the very *house* and dwelling place of Satan, having of their own accord surrendered themselves to this unjust possessor; for whoever gives up his soul to sin gives it up to the devil. It is Jesus, and Jesus *alone*, who can deliver from the power of this bondage. When Satan is cast out, Jesus *purifies* and *dwells* in the heart.

Verse 30. He that is not with me is against me] In vain do men seek for methods to reconcile God and mammon. There is no medium between loving the Lord and being his enemy-between belonging to Christ or to

Satan. If we be on the side of the devil, we must expect to go to the devil's hell; if we be on the side of Christ, we may expect to go to his heaven. When Christ, his truth, and his servants are assaulted, he who does not espouse their cause is not on Christ's side, but incurs the guilt of deserting and betraying him. There are many, (it is to be feared,) in the world who are really *against* Christ, and *scatter abroad*, who flatter themselves that they are workers together *with him*, and of the number of his *friends*!

Scattereth abroad.] This seems to have been a proverbial form of speech, and may be a metaphor taken from shepherds. He who does not help the true shepherd to gather his flock into the fold is, most likely, one who wishes to scatter them, that he may have the opportunity of stealing and destroying them. I do not find any parallel to this proverbial mode of speech in the Jewish rabbins, if it be one, nor have I met with it among the Greek or Roman writers.

Verse 31. All manner of sin and blasphemy] βλασφημία, injurious or impious speaking. [Anglo-Saxon], mocking and deriding speech, Anglo-Saxon. See ~~40B~~ **Matthew 9:3.**

But the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost] Even personal reproaches, revilings, persecutions against Christ, were remissible; but blasphemy, or impious speaking against the Holy Spirit was to have no forgiveness: i.e. when the person obstinately attributed those works to the devil, which he had the fullest evidence could be wrought only by the Spirit of God. That this, and nothing else, is the *sin against the Holy Spirit*, is evident from the connection in this place, and more particularly from ~~40B~~ **Mark 3:28-30.** "All sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewith soever they shall blaspheme; but he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation; BECAUSE they said, He hath an unclean spirit."

Here the matter is made clear beyond the smallest doubt-the *unpardonable sin*, as some term it, is neither less nor more than *ascribing the miracles Christ wrought, by the power of God, to the spirit of the devil*. Many sincere people have been grievously troubled with apprehensions that they had committed the unpardonable sin; but let it be observed that no man who believes the Divine mission of Jesus Christ, ever can commit this sin: therefore let no man's heart fail because of it, from henceforth and for ever, Amen. See below.

Verse 32. Neither in this world, neither in the world to come.] Though I follow the common translation, yet I am fully satisfied the meaning of the words is, neither in this dispensation, (viz. the Jewish,) nor in that which is to come, viz. the Christian. *abh ml w[olam ha-bo*, the world to come, is a constant phrase for the times of the Messiah in the Jewish writers. See below. The sin here spoken of by our Lord ranks high in the catalogue of *presumptuous sins*, for which there was no forgiveness under the Mosaic dispensation. See ^{<04153>}**Numbers 15:30, 31; 35:31;** ^{<03010>}**Leviticus 20:10;** ^{<0025>}**1 Samuel 2:25.** When our Lord says that such a sin hath no forgiveness, is he not to be understood as meaning that the crime shall be punished under the Christian dispensation as it was under the Jewish, viz. by the destruction of the body? And is not this the same mentioned ^{<03007>}**1 John 1:7**, called there *the sin unto death*; i.e. a sin that was to be punished by the death of the body, while mercy might be extended to the soul? The punishment for presumptuous sins, under the Jewish law, to which our Lord evidently alludes, certainly did not extend to the *damnation of the soul*, though the body was destroyed: therefore I think that, though there was no such forgiveness to be extended to this crime as to absolve the man from the punishment of *temporal death*, yet, *on repentance*, mercy might be extended to the soul; and every sin may be repented of under the Gospel dispensation.

Dr. Lightfoot has sufficiently vindicated this passage from all false interpretation. "They that endeavour hence to prove the remission of some sins after death, seem little to understand to what Christ had respect when he spake these words. Weigh well this common and, most known doctrine of the *Jewish schools*, and judge.

"He that transgresses an affirmative precept, if he presently repent, is not moved until the Lord pardon him; and of such it is said, Be ye converted, O back sliding children! and I will heal your backslidings. He that transgresses a negative precept, and repents, his repentance suspends judgment, and the day of expiation expiates him; as it is said, This day shall all your uncleannesses be expiated to you. He that transgresses to cutting off (by the stroke of God) or to death by the Sanhedrin, and repents, repentance and the day of expiation do suspend judgment, and the strokes that are laid upon him wipe off sin, as it is said, And I will visit their transgression with a rod, and their iniquity with scourges. But he by whom the name of God is profaned (or blasphemed) repentance is

of no avail to him to suspend judgment, nor the day of expiation to expiate it, nor scourges (or corrections inflicted) to wipe it off, but all suspend judgment, and death wipes it off. Thus the Babylonian Gemara writes; but the Jerusalem thus: Repentance and the day of expiation expiate as to the third part, and corrections as to the third part, and death wipes it off, as it is said, And your iniquities shall not be expiated to you until ye die: behold, we learn that death wipes off. Note this, which Christ contradicts, concerning blasphemy against the Holy Ghost. *It shall not be forgiven*, saith he, *neither in this world, nor in the world to come*; that is, neither before death, nor, as you dream, by death. Jerus. Sanhed. fol. 37. and Bab. Yoma, fol. 86.

“*In the world to come*.-I. Some phrases were received into common use, by which, in common speech, they opposed the heresy of the Sadducees, who denied immortality, Of that sort were **abh ml w[olam ha-ba**, **αιων ο μελλων**, *The world to come*. **^d[^g gan aden**, **παραδεισος**, *paradise*: **μωνη wg gei hinnom**, **γεεννα**, *hell*, &c.

“*At the end of all the prayers in the temple* (as we observed before) *they said ml w[d[ad olam*, for ever. *But when the heretics* (i.e. the Sadducees) *brake in, and said there was NO AGE but one, then it was appointed to be said for ever and ever*. **ml w[h ^m ml w[h d[w min ha-olam**, *vead ha-olam*. Bab. Beracoth, fol. 54. This distinction of **hzh ml w[olam hazeh**, *this world*, and of **abh ml w[olam ha-ba**, *the world to come*, you may find almost in every page of the rabbins.

“*The Lord recompense thee a good reward for this thy good work in this world, and let thy reward be perfected in the world to come*. Targum on Ruth.

“*It* (that is, the history of the creation and of the Bible) *therefore begins with the letter b beth*, (in the word **tyvyrb bereshith**,) *because two worlds were created, this world and a world to come*. Baal Turim.

“*The world to come* hints two things especially, (of which see *Rambam*, in Sanhed. cap. ii. Chelek.) I. The times of the *Messiah*:

‘Be mindful of the day wherein thou camest out of Egypt, all the days of thy life: the wise men say, by the days of thy life is intimated this world: by all the days of thy life, the days of the Messiah are superinduced.’ In this sense the apostle seems to speak, ^{<2415>}Hebrews 2:5; 6:5. II. The state after death: thus Rab. *Tancum*, The world to come, is when a man has departed out of this world.”

Verse 33. Either make the tree good] That is, the *effect* will be always similar to the *cause*; a *bad tree* will produce *bad fruit*, and a *good tree*, *good fruit*.

The works will resemble the heart: nothing good can proceed from an evil spirit; no good fruit can proceed from a corrupt heart. Before the heart of man can produce any good, it must be renewed and influenced by the Spirit of God.

Verse 34. O generation of vipers] These are apparently severe words; but they were extremely proper in reference to that execrable people to whom they were addressed: the whole verse is an inference from what was spoken before.

Out of the abundance (περισσευματος, the overflowings) of the heart] Wicked words and sinful actions may be considered as the *overflowings* of a heart that is *more than full* of the spirit of wickedness; and holy words and righteous deeds may be considered as the *overflowings* of a heart that is filled with the Holy Spirit, and *running over* with love to God and man.

Verse 35. A good man out of the good treasure of the heart] της καρδιας, *of the heart*, is omitted by upwards of one hundred MSS., many of them of the greatest antiquity and authority; by all the *Syriac, Arabic, and Persic*; by the *Slavonic, Saxon, Vulgate, and Itala*, (except four,) and by several of the *primitive fathers*. It seems to have been added here by some copyist, merely to explain. The good heart is the good *treasury*, and the treasure that is in it is the love of God, and of all mankind. The bad heart is the bad *treasury*, and its treasure is the *carnal mind*, which is *enmity* against God, and *ill-will* to man.

Verse 36. Every idle word] ρημα αργον, a word that *does nothing*, that neither ministers *grace* nor *instruction* to them who hear it. The word αργον corresponds to the Hebrew אַוּב *shave*, which signifies not only

vain or empty, but also wicked and injurious, such as a false testimony against a neighbour, compare ^{<B51>}Deuteronomy 5:11, 20. Add to this, that Symmachus translates **l wgp piggul**, polluted, ^{<B197>}Leviticus 19:7, by the very Greek word in the text. It was to explain this ambiguous meaning of the word, that ten MSS. have changed **αργον** Into **πονηρον**, evil. Our Lord must be understood here as condemning all false and injurious words: the scope of the place necessarily requires this meaning.

Verse 37. By thy words thou shalt be justified] That is, the whole tenor of thy conversation will be an evidence for or against thee, in the great day. How many are there who count words for nothing! and yet eternity often depends on them. Lord, put a watch before the door of my lips! is a prayer proper for all men.

Verse 38. We would see a sign from thee.] That is, we wish now to see thee work a miracle. Pride, vain curiosity, and incredulity, have never proof sufficient of the truth: for they will not be satisfied.

Verse 39. An evil and adulterous generation] Or, race of people; for so **γενεα** should be translated here, and in most other places in the Gospels; for our Lord, in general, uses it to point out the Jewish people. This translation is a key to unlock some very obscure passages in the evangelists.

Seeketh after a sign] Or, seeketh another sign, (**επιζητει**.) so I think this word should be translated. Our Lord had already given the Jews several signs; and here they desire sign upon sign.

Our Lord terms the Jews an adulterous race. Under the old covenant, the Jewish nation was represented as in a marriage contract with the Lord of hosts; as believers, in the new covenant, are represented as the spouse of Christ. All unfaithfulness and disobedience was considered as a breach of this marriage contract; hence the persons who were thus guilty are denominated adulterers and adulteresses. But, independently of this, there is the utmost proof, from their own writings, that in the time of our Lord they were most literally an adulterous race of people: for, at this very time, R. Jochanan ben Zacchai abrogated the trial by the bitter waters of jealousy, because so many were found to be thus criminal. See on ^{<B18>}John 8:3.

Verse 40. Three days and three nights] Our Lord rose from the grave on the day but *one* after his crucifixion: so that, in the computation in this verse, the part of the day on which he was crucified, and the part of that on which he rose again, are severally estimated as an *entire day*; and this, no doubt, exactly corresponded to the time in which Jonah was in the belly of the fish. Our Lord says, As Jonah was, so shall the Son of man be, &c. *Evening and morning, or night and day*, is the Hebrew phrase for a *natural day*, which the Greeks termed *νυξθημερον*, *nuchthemeron*. The very same quantity of time which is here termed three days and three nights, and which, in reality, was only *one whole day, a part of two others, and two whole nights*, is termed *three days and three nights*, in the book of *Esther*: *Go; neither eat nor drink THREE DAYS, NIGHT or DAY, and so I will go in unto the king:* ^{<17416>}**Esther 4:16**. Afterwards it follows, ^{<17401>}**Esther 5:1**. *On the THIRD DAY, Esther stood in the inner court of the king's house*. Many examples might be produced, from both the sacred and profane writers, in vindication of the propriety of the expression in the text. For farther satisfaction, the reader, if he please, may consult *Whitby* and *Wakefield*, and take the following from *Lightfoot*.

“I. The Jewish writers extend that memorable station of the unmoving sun, at *Joshua's* prayer, to six and thirty hours; for so *Kimchi* upon that place: ‘According to more exact interpretation, the sun and moon stood still for six and thirty hours: for when the fight was on the eve of the Sabbath, Joshua feared lest the Israelites might break the Sabbath; therefore he spread abroad his hands, that the sun might stand still on the sixth day, according to the measure of the day of the Sabbath, and the moon according to the measure of the night of the Sabbath, and of the going out of the Sabbath, which amounts to six and thirty hours.’

“II. If you number the hours that pass from our Saviour's giving up the ghost upon the cross to his resurrection, you shall find almost the same number of hours; and yet that space is called by him *three days and three nights*, whereas two nights only came between, and one complete day. Nevertheless, while he speaks these words, he is not without the consent both of the *Jewish* schools and their computation. Weigh well that which is disputed in the tract *Scabbath*, concerning the separation of a woman for three days; where many things are discussed by the *Gemarists*, concerning the computation of this space of *three days*. Among other things these

words occur: *R. Ismael saith, Sometimes it contains four hwnwa onoth, sometimes five, sometimes six. But how much is the space of an hnwa onah? R. Jochanan saith, Either a day or a night. And so also the Jerusalem Talmud: 'R. Akiba fixed a DAY for an onah, and a NIGHT for an onah.'* But the tradition is, that *R. Eliazar ben Azariah* said, *A day and a night make an onah: and a PART of an onah is as the WHOLE.* And a little after, *R. Ismael computed a part of the onah for the whole."*

Thus, then, three days and three nights, according to this Jewish method of reckoning, included any part of the first day; the whole of the following night; the next day and its night; and any part of the succeeding or third day.

In the whale's belly] That a fish of the *shark* kind, and not a *whale*, is here meant, *Bochart* has abundantly proved, vol. iii. col. 742, &c., edit. Leyd. 1692. It is well known that the throat of a *whale* is capable of admitting little more than the *arm* of an ordinary man; but many of the shark species can swallow a man whole, and men have been found whole in the stomachs of several. Every natural history abounds with facts of this kind. Besides, the shark is a native of the *Mediterranean* Sea, in which *Jonah* was sailing when swallowed by what the Hebrew terms **l wdg gd dag gadol**, a great fish; but every body knows that *whales* are no produce of the *Mediterranean* Sea, though some have been by *accident* found there, as in most other parts of the maritime world: but, let them be found where they may, there is none of them capable of swallowing a man. Instead of either *whale* or *shark*, some have translated **l wdg gd dag gadol**, ^{<30117>}**Jonah 1:17**, by a fishing cove, or something of this nature; but this is merely to get rid of the miracle: for, according to some, the whole of Divine revelation is a forgery-or it is a system of metaphor or allegory, that has no miraculous interferences in it. But, independently of all this, the criticism is contemptible. Others say, that the great fish means a vessel so called, into which *Jonah* went, and into the *hold* of which he was thrown, where he continued three days and three nights. In short, it must be any thing but a real miracle, the existence of which the wise men, so called, of the present day, cannot admit. Perhaps these very men are not aware that they have scarcely any belief even in the existence of God himself!

Verse 41. The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment] The voice of God, threatening temporal judgments, caused a whole people to repent, who had neither Moses nor Christ, neither the law nor the prophets; and who perhaps never had but this one preacher among them. What judgment may not we expect, if we continue impenitent, after all that God has bestowed upon *us*?

A greater than Jonas is here.] **πλειον**, for **τι πλειον**, *something more*. The *evidence* offered by Jonah sufficed to convince and lead the Ninevites to repentance; but here was *more* evidence, and a greater person; and yet so obstinate are the Jews that all is ineffectual. 1. Christ, who preached to the Jews, was infinitely greater than Jonah, in his nature, person, and mission. 2. Jonah preached repentance in Nineveh only *forty* days, and Christ preached among the Jews for several years. 3. Jonah wrought no miracles to authorize his preaching; but Christ wrought miracles every day, in every place where he went, and of every kind. And 4. Notwithstanding all this, the people of Judea did not repent, though the people of Nineveh did.

Verse 42. The queen of the south] In ^{<1100>}**1 Kings 10:1**, this queen is said to be of *Saba*, which was a city and province of Arabia Felix, to the *south*, or *south-east*, of Judea.

Uttermost parts of the earth] **περατων της γης**-a form of speech which merely signifies, *a great distance*. See ^{<6249>}**Deuteronomy 28:49**.

Verse 43. When the unclean spirit] If there had been no reality in demoniacal possessions, our Lord would have scarcely appealed to a case of this kind here, to point out the real state of the Jewish people, and the desolation which was coming upon them. Had this been only a vulgar error, of the nonsense of which the learned scribes and the wise Pharisees must have been convinced, the case not being one in point, because not true, must have been treated by that very people with contempt for whose conviction it was alone designed.

He walketh through dry places] **δι ανυδρων τοπων**. There seems to be a reference here to the *Orphic* demonology, in which evil spirits were divided into various classes, according to the different regions of their abode, or places in which they delighted. These classes were *five*: 1. **δαιμονες ουρανιοι**, *Celestial demons*. 2. **δαιμονες ηεριοι**, *Aerial*. 3. **δαιμονες ενυδριοι**, *Aquatic*. 4. **δαιμονες χθονιοι**, *Terrestrial*. 5. **και**

δαιμονες υποχθονιοι, *And subterranean demons*. See Orph. ad Mus. ap. Schott. The Platonists, the followers of Zoroaster, and the primitive Jews, made nearly the same distinctions.

Seeking rest] Or *refreshment*. Strange! a fallen corrupt spirit can have no rest but in the polluted human heart: the corruption of the one is suited to the pollution of the other, and thus *like* cleaves to *like*.

Verse 44. Into my house] The soul of that person from whom he had been expelled by the power of Christ, and out of which he was to have been kept by continual prayer, faith, and watchfulness.

He findeth it empty] *Unoccupied*, σχολαζοντα, *empty* of the former inhabitant, and *ready* to receive a new one: denoting a soul that has lost the life and power of godliness, and the testimony of the Holy Spirit.

Swept and garnished.] As σχολαζω signifies to be *idle*, or *unemployed*, it may refer here to the *person*, as well as to his *state*. His affections and desires are no longer *busied* with the things of God, but *gad about*, like an *idle* person, among the vanities of a perishing world. *Swept*, from love, meekness, and all the fruits of the Spirit; and *garnished*, or *adorned*, κεκοσμημενον, *decorated*, with the vain showy trifles of folly and fashion. This may comprise also *smart speeches*, *cunning repartees*, &c., for which many who have lost the life of God are very remarkable.

Verse 45. Seven other spirits more wicked] *Seven* was a favourite number with the Jews, implying frequently, with them, something *perfect*, *completed*, *filled up*, for such is the proper import of the Hebrew word [wv sheva or shevang: nearly allied in sound to our *seven*. And perhaps this meaning of it refers to the *seventh day*, when God rested from his work, having *filled up*, or *completed* the whole of his creative design. *Seven demons*-as many as could occupy his soul, harassing it with pride, anger, self-will, lust, &c., and torturing the body with disease.

The last state of that man is worse than the first.] His soul, before influenced by the Spirit of God, dilated and expanded under its heavenly influences, becomes more capable of refinement in iniquity, as its powers are more capacious than formerly. Evil habits are formed and strengthened by relapses; and relapses are multiplied, and become more incurable, through new habits.

So shall it be also unto this wicked generation.] And so it was: for they grew worse and worse, as if totally abandoned to diabolic influence; till at last the besom of destruction swept them and their privileges, national and religious, utterly away. What a terrible description of a state of apostasy is contained in these verses! May he who readeth understand!

Verse 46. His mother and his brethren] These are supposed to have been the *cousins* of our Lord, as the word *brother* is frequently used among the Hebrews in this sense. But there are others who believe Mary had other children beside our Lord and that these were literally his *brothers*, who are spoken of here. And, although it be possible that these were the sons of Mary, the wife of Cleopas or Alpheus, his mother's sister, called his *relations*, ^{<403>}**Mark 3:31**; yet it is as likely that they were the children of Joseph and Mary, and *brethren of our Lord*, in the strictest sense of the word. See on ^{<0155>}**Matthew 13:55**.

Verse 48. Who is my mother? and who are my brethren?] The reason of this seeming disregard of his relatives was this: *they came to seize upon him, for they thought he was distracted*. See ^{<4033>}**Mark 3:33**.

Verse 50. Whosoever shall do the will of my Father, &c.] Those are the best acknowledged relatives of Christ who are united to him by spiritual ties, and who are become *one* with him by the indwelling of his Spirit. We generally suppose that Christ's relatives must have shared much of his affectionate attention; and doubtless they did: but here we find that whosoever does the will of God is equally esteemed by Christ, as his *brother, sister, or even his virgin mother*. What an encouragement for fervent attachment to God!

1. From various facts related in this chapter, we see the nature and design of the revelation of God, and of all the ordinances and precepts contained in it—they are all calculated to do man *good*: to improve his understanding, to soften and change his nature, that he may love his neighbour as himself. That religion that does not inculcate and produce *humanity* never came from heaven.

2. We have already seen what the sin against the Holy Ghost is: no soul that *fears* God *can* commit it: perhaps it would be impossible for any but *Jews* to be guilty of it, and they only in the circumstances mentioned in the text; and in such circumstances, it is impossible that any person should *now* be found.

ST. MATTHEW

CHAPTER 13.

Christ teaches the multitudes out of a ship, they standing on the shore, 1, 2. The parable of the sower, 3-9. He gives his reasons for speaking in parables, 10-17. Explains the parable of the sower, 18-23. Parable of the tares and the wheat, 24-30. Of the grain of mustard seed, 31, 32. Of the leaven, 33. The prophecy fulfilled by this mode of teaching, 34, 35. He explains the parable of the tares and the wheat, 36-43. Parable of the treasure hid in a field, 44. Of the pearl-merchant, 45, 46. Of the dragnet, 47-50. His application of the whole, 51, 52. He teaches in his own country, and his neighbours take offence, 53-56. Our Lord's observations on this, 57. He works no miracle among them because of their unbelief. 58.

NOTES ON CHAP. 13.

Verse 1. The same day] Our Lord scarcely ever appears to take any rest: he is incessant in his labours, and instant in season and out of season; and in this he has left all his successors in the ministry an example, that they should follow his steps: for he who wishes to save souls will find few opportunities to rest. As Satan is going about as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour, the messenger of God should imitate his diligence, that he may counteract his work. The gospels are journals of our Lord's life.

Went Jesus out of the house] This was the house of Peter. See ~~<01724>~~ **Matthew 17:24.**

Sat by the sea side.] The sea of Galilee, on the borders of which the city of Capernaum was situated.

Verse 2. Into a ship] το πλοιον, THE vessel or boat. Mr. Wakefield supposes (which is very likely) that a particular vessel is uniformly specified, which seems to have been kept on the lake for the use of Christ and his apostles: it probably belonged to some of the *fishermen*, (see ~~<01722>~~ **Matthew 4:22.**) who, he thinks, occasionally, at least, followed their former occupation. See ~~<02103>~~ **John 21:3.**

The thought of pious *Quesnel* on this verse should not be neglected. We see here a representation of the Church, which consists of the people

united to their pastors. *These*, being more exposed to violent tossings and storms, are, as it were, in a *ship*, while *those* continue at ease *on the shore*.

Verse 3. He spake many things unto them in parables] *Parable*, from *παρα*, *near*, and *βαλλω*, *I cast*, or *put*. A comparison or similitude, in which one thing is compared with another, especially spiritual things with natural, by which means these spiritual things are better understood, and make a deeper impression on an attentive mind. Or, a parable is a representation of any matter accommodated, in the way of similitude, to the *real subject*, in order to delineate it with the greater *force* and *perspicuity*. See more on this subject at the conclusion of this chapter. No scheme, says Dr. Lightfoot, of Jewish rhetoric was more familiarly used than that of parables; which, perhaps, creeping in from thence among the heathens, ended in fables.

It is said in the tract *Sotah*, chap. 9. “From the time that Rabbi Meri died, those that spake in parables ceased.” Not that this figure of rhetoric perished in the nation from that time; but because he surpassed all others in these flowers, as the gloss there from the tract *Sanhedrin* speaks. “A third part of his discourses was tradition; a third part allegory; and a third part parable.” The Jewish books every where abound with these figures, the nation inclining by a kind of natural genius to this kind of rhetoric. Their very religion might be called parabolical, folded up within the covering of ceremonies; and their oratory in their sermons was like to it. But is it not indeed a wonder, that they who were so much given to and delighted in parables, and so dexterous in unfolding them, should stick in the outward shell of ceremonies, and should not have brought out the parabolical and spiritual sense of them? Our Saviour, who always spoke with the common people, uses the same kind of speech, and very often the same preface which they used, *To what is it likened?* See *Lightfoot* in loco. Though we find the basis of many of our Lord’s parables in the Jewish writings, yet not one of them comes through his hands without being astonishingly improved. In this respect also, *Surely never man spoke like this man*.

Under the parable of the *sower*, our Lord intimates, 1. That of all the multitudes then attending his ministry, few would bring forth fruit to perfection. And 2. That this would be a general case in preaching the Gospel among men.

Verse 4. Some seeds fell by the way side] The hard beaten path, where no plough had broken up the ground.

Verse 5. Stony places] Where there was a thin surface of earth, and a rock at the bottom.

Verse 7. Among thorns] Where the earth was ploughed up, but the brambles and weeds had not been cleared away.

Verse 8. Good ground] Where the earth was deep, the field well ploughed, and the brambles and weeds all removed. See more on ~~<01318>~~ **Matthew 13:18**, &c., and see on ~~<01815>~~ **Luke 8:15**.

Some a hundred-fold.] For the elucidation of this text, I beg leave to introduce the following experiment. In 1816 I sowed, for a third crop, a field with oats, at Millbrook, in Lancashire; the grains weighed, on an average, $\frac{3}{4}$ of a grain each. One grain produced *three stalks* with *three ears*: the largest had 68 *grains* in it, the second 26, and the third 25.

Whole number of grains 119, which together weighed — 82 grs
 The *root* separately, after washing and drying, weighed — $13 \frac{1}{2}$
 The stalks and remaining *leaves* (for many had perished in the wet season) — $630 \frac{1}{2}$

Weight of the whole produce of one grain of oats — 726 grs.

which was *725 times and one quarter* more than the original weight.

The power of grain to multiply itself, even in the same year, is a subject as much of curiosity and astonishment as of importance and general utility. For the farther elucidation of this text, I shall give the following example from a practice in agriculture, or rural economy, which is termed *filtering*.

On the 2nd of June, 1766, Mr. C. Miller, of Cambridge, sowed some grains of the common, *red wheat*; and on the 8th of August a single plant was taken up, and separated into 18 parts, and each planted separately: these plants having pushed out several *side shoots*, about the middle of September some of them were taken up and divided; and the rest between that time and October. This second division produced 67 plants. These plants remained through the winter, and another division of them, made between the middle of March and the 12th of April, produced 500 plants. They were divided no farther, but permitted to remain in the field. These plants were in general stronger than any of the wheat in the field. Some of them produced upwards of 100 ears from a single root and many of the ears measured *seven inches* in length, and contained between *sixty* and

seventy grains. The whole number of ears produced from the single plant was 21,109, which yielded *three* pecks and *three-quarters* of clear corn, weighing 47lbs. 7oz., and, from a calculation made by counting the grains in an ounce, the whole number of grains was about 576,840. Mr. Miller thinks that, had he made a *second* division in the *spring*, the number of plants would have amounted to 2000. Who can help admiring the wisdom and providence of God in this single grain of corn! He has, in some sort, impressed on it an idea of his own infinity; and an idea which, like the subject to which it refers, confounds our imagination and reason. How infinitely *great* is God, even in his *minor* works.

Verse 9. Who hath ears to hear, &c.] Let every person who feels the necessity of being instructed in the things which concern his soul's welfare pay attention to what is spoken, and he shall become wise unto salvation.

Verse 11. It is given unto you to know the mysteries, &c.] By *mysteries*, here, we may understand not only things concerning the scheme of salvation, which had not yet been revealed; but also the *prophetic* declarations concerning the *future* state of the Christian Church, expressed in the ensuing parables. *It is not given to them* to know the purport and design of these things—they are *gross of heart*, earthly and sensual, and do not improve the light they have received: *but to you it is given*, because I have appointed you not only to be the *first preachers* of my Gospel to sinners, but also the persons who shall transmit accounts of all these things to posterity. The knowledge of these mysteries, in the first instance, can be given only to a few; but when these faithfully *write* and *publish* what they have *heard* and *seen*, unto the world, then the science of salvation is *revealed* and addressed to *all*. From ^{<0137>}Matthew 13:17, we learn, that many prophets and righteous men had desired to see and hear these things, but had not that privilege—*to them it was not given*; not because God designed to exclude them from salvation, but because HE who knew all things knew, either that they were not proper *persons*, or that that was not the proper *time*: for the choice of the PERSONS *by whom*, and the choice of the TIME *in which* it is most proper to reveal Divine things, must ever rest with the all-wise God.

Verse 12. Whosoever hath, to him shall be given] This is an allusion to a common custom in all countries: he who possesses *much* or is *rich*, to such a person, *presents* are ordinarily given.

Whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath.] That is, the *poor man*: he that has *little* may be easily made a prey of, and so lose his little. This is a proper sense of the word *εχειν* in sacred and profane writers. In ^{<4612>}**1 Corinthians 11:22**, *τους μη εχοντας*, *those who have not*, means simply THE POOR: and *Aristophanes* uses *τους εξοντας*, *those that have*, for the RICH or OPULENT. See a variety of pertinent examples in *Kypke* on ^{<41818>}**Luke 8:18**. There is one example in *Juvenal*, Sat. iii. l. 208, 209, that expresses the whole of our Lords meaning, and is a beautiful illustration of this apparently difficult passage. *NIL habuit Codrus: quis enim negat? et tamen illud Perdidit infelix TOTUM NIL.*

*“Tis true, poor Codrus NOTHING had to boast,
And yet poor Codrus ALL that NOTHING lost.”*

Dryden.

Now what was this NOTHING which, the poet said, Codrus *had* and *lost*? The five preceding lines tell you.

*Lectus erat Codro Procule minor, urceoli sex,
Ornamentum abaci; necnon et parvulus infra
Cantharus, et recubans sub eodem marmore Chiron;
Jamque vetus Græcos servabat cista libellos,
Et divina Opici rodebant carmina mures.*

He had *one small bed*, *six little pitchers*, the *ornament* of a *side-board*; a *small jug* or *tankard*, the *image* of a *centaur*, and an *old chest* with some *Greek books* in it, on which the mice had already begun to make depredations. And *all* this he *lost*; probably by continuing, in spite of his destiny, to be a *poet*. So those who devote not the light and power which God has given them to the purposes for which he has granted these gifts, from them shall be taken away these unemployed or prostituted blessings. This seems to have been a proverbial mode of speech, which our Lord here uses to inform his disciples, that he who does not improve the *first* operations of grace, howsoever *small*, is in danger of losing not only all the possible product, but even the principal; for God delights to heap benefits on those who properly improve them. See **Clarke's note on ^{<41818>}Luke 8:18**".

Verse 13. Therefore speak I to them in parables] On this account, viz. to lead them into a proper knowledge of God. I speak to them in parables, *natural* representations of *spiritual* truths, that they may be allured to

inquire, and to find out the *spirit*, which is hidden under the *letter*; *because, seeing* the miracles which I have wrought, *they see not*, i.e. the end for which I have wrought them; *and hearing* my doctrines, *they hear not*, so as to profit by what is spoken; *neither do they understand*, **ουδε συνιουσι**, they do not lay their hearts to it. Is not this obviously our Lord's meaning? Who can suppose that he would employ his time in speaking enigmatically to them, on purpose that they might not understand what was spoken? Could the God of truth and sincerity act thus? If he had designed to act otherwise, he might have saved his time and labour, and not spoken *at all*, which would have answered the same end, viz. to leave them in gross ignorance.

Verse 14. In them is fulfilled] **αναπληρουται**, *Is AGAIN fulfilled*: this proper meaning of the Greek word has been generally overlooked. The evangelist means, that as these words were fulfilled in the Jews, in the time of the Prophet *Isaiah*, so they are now *again* fulfilled in these their posterity, who exactly copy their fathers example. These awful words may be again fulfilled in *us*, if we take not warning by the things which these disobedient people have suffered.

By hearing ye shall hear] Jesus Christ shall be sent to you, his miracles ye shall fully see, and his doctrines ye shall distinctly hear; but God will not *force* you to receive the salvation which is offered.

Verse 15. Heart is waxed gross] **επαχυνθη**, is *become fat-inattentive* stupid, insensible. *They hear heavily with their ears*-are half asleep while the salvation of God is preached unto them.

Their eyes they have closed] Totally and *obstinately* resisted the truth of God, and shut their eyes against the light.

Lest-they should see, &c.] Lest they should see their lost estate, and be obliged to turn unto God, and seek his salvation. His state is truly deplorable who is sick unto death, and yet is afraid of being cured. The fault is here totally in the people, and not at all in that God whose name is Mercy and whose nature is love.

Verse 16. But blessed are your eyes] Ye improve the light which God has given you; and you receive an increase of heavenly wisdom by every miracle and by every sermon.

Verse 17. Many prophets and righteous men] These lived by and died in the faith of the promised Messiah: the fulness of the time was not then come for his manifestation in the flesh. See also on ^{<4031>}**Matthew 13:11**.

Verse 19. When any one heareth the word of the kingdom] Viz. the preaching of the Gospel of Christ.

And understandeth it not] μη συνιεντος, perhaps more properly, *regardeth it not*, does not lay his heart to it.

The wicked one] ο πονηρος, from πονος, *labour, toil*, he who distresses and torments the soul. Mark, ^{<4045>}**Mark 4:15**, calls him ο σατανας, the *adversary* or *opposer*, because he *resists* men in all their purposes of amendment, and, to the utmost of his power *opposes*, in order to frustrate, the influences of Divine grace upon the heart. In the parallel place in Luke, ^{<4082>}**Luke 8:12**, he is called ο διαβολος, *the devil*, from διαβαλλειν, *to shoot*, or *dart through*. In allusion to this meaning of the name, St. Paul, ^{<4056>}**Ephesians 6:16**, speaks of *the fiery DARTS of the wicked one*. It is worthy of remark, that the *three* evangelists should use each a different appellative of this mortal enemy of mankind; probably to show that the devil, with all his *powers* and *properties*, opposes every thing that tends to the salvation of the soul.

Catcheth away] Makes the utmost *haste* to pick up the good seed, lest it should take root in the heart.

A careless inattentive hearer is compared to the *way side*-his heart is an *open road*, where evil affections, and foolish and hurtful desires, continually *pass* and *repass*, without either *notice* or *restraint*. "A heart where Satan has" (as one terms it) "*ingress, egress, regress, and progress*: in a word, the devil's *thoroughfare*."

Verse 20. But he that received the seed into stony places-is he] That is, is a fit emblem of that man who, hearing the Gospel, is affected with its beauty and excellency, and *immediately receiveth it with joy*-is glad to hear what God has done to make man happy.

Verse 21. Yet hath he not root in himself] His soul is not deeply convinced of its *guilt* and *depravity*; the fallow ground is not properly ploughed up, nor the rock broken. *When persecution, &c., ariseth*, which he did not expect, *he is soon stumbled*-seeks some pretext to abandon both the doctrine and followers of Christ. Having not felt his own sore, and the

plague of his heart, he has not properly discovered that this salvation is the only remedy for his soul: thus he has no motive in his heart strong enough to counteract the outward scandal of the cross; so he endureth only for the time in which there is no difficulty to encounter, no cross to bear.

Verse 22. He also that received seed among the thorns] In land *ploughed*, but not properly *cleared* and *seeded*. *Is he-* represents that person *who heareth the word, but the cares*, rather *the anxiety*, **ἡ μεριμνα**, the whole system of anxious carking cares. Lexicographers derive the word **μεριμνα** from **μεριζειν τον νοον**, *dividing*, or *distracting the mind*. Thus a poet,

Tot me impediunt curæ quæ meum animum diverse trahunt.

“So many cares hinder me which draw my mind different ways.”
Terence.

The deceitfulness of riches] Which promise *peace* and *pleasure*, but can never give them.

Choke the word] Or, *together choke the word*, **συμπνιγει** meaning, either that these *grow up together* with the word, overtop, and choke it; or that these *united together*, viz. carking worldly cares, with the delusive hopes and promises of riches, cause the man to abandon the great concerns of his soul, and seek, in their place, what he shall *eat, drink*, and wherewithal he shall be *clothed*. Dreadful stupidity of man, thus to barter spiritual for temporal good—a heavenly inheritance for an earthly portion! The seed of the kingdom can never produce much fruit in any heart, till the thorns and thistles of vicious affections and impure desires be plucked up by the roots and burned. The Persic translator renders it [Persic] *asle kalme-ra khube kund*, *chokes the root of the word*: for it appears the seed had taken *root*, and that these cares, &c., choked it in the *root*, before even the *blade* could show itself.

Verse 23. Good ground] That which had *depth of mould*, was *well ploughed*, and *well weeded*.

Is he that heareth] Who diligently attends the ministry of the *word*.

And understandeth it] Lays the subject to heart, deeply weighing its *nature, design*, and *importance*.

Which also beareth fruit] His fruitfulness being an almost necessary consequence of his thus laying the Divine message to heart. Let it be observed, that to *hear*, to *understand*, and to *bring forth fruit*, are the *three* grand evidences of a genuine believer. He who does not *hear* the word of wisdom cannot *understand* what makes for his peace; and he who does not *understand* what the Gospel requires him to *be* and to *perform*, cannot bring *forth fruit*; and he who is not *fruitful*, *very fruitful*, cannot be a *disciple* of Christ-see ~~4:15:8~~ **John 15:8**; and he who is not Christ's *disciple* cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

From the different portions of fruit produced by the good ground, a *hundred*, *sixty*, and *thirty*, we may learn that all sound believers are not equally fruitful; all hear, understand, and bring forth fruit, but not in the same degrees-occasioned, partly, by their situation and circumstances not allowing them such extensive opportunities of receiving and doing good; and, partly, by lack of mental capacity-for every mind is not equally improvable.

Let it be farther observed that the unfruitfulness of the different lands was not owing to *bad seed* or an *unskilful sower*-the *same sower* sows the *same seed* in all, and with the same gracious design-but it is unfruitful in many because they are *careless*, *inattentive*, and *worldly-minded*.

But is not the ground naturally bad in every heart? Undoubtedly. And can any but God make it good? None. But it is your business, when you hear of the *justice* and *mercy* of God, to implore him to work in you that which is pleasing in his sight. No man shall be condemned because he did not change his own heart, but because he did not cry to God to change it, who gave him his Holy Spirit for this very purpose, and which he, by his worldly-mindedness and impiety, quenched. *Whoso hath ears to hear let him hear*: and may the Lord save the reader from an impenitent and unfruitful heart!

Verse 24. The kingdom of heaven] God's method of managing the affairs of the world, and the concerns of his Church.

Is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field] In general, the world may be termed the field of God; and in particular, those who profess to believe in God through Christ are his field or farm; among whom God sows nothing but the pure unadulterated word of his truth.

Verse 25. But while men slept] When the professors were lukewarm, and the pastors indolent, *his enemy came and sowed tares*, ζιζανια *degenerate, or bastard wheat*. The righteous and the wicked are often mingled in the visible Church. Every Christian society, how pure soever its principles may be, has its *bastard wheat*-those who bear a *resemblance* to the good, but whose hearts are not right with God. He who sows this *bastard wheat* among God's people is here styled God's *enemy*; and he may be considered also as a *sower* of them who permits them to be sown and to spring up through his *negligence*. Wo to the indolent pastors, who permit the souls under their care to be corrupted by error and sin! This word does not, I believe, occur in any of the Greek classics, nor in *Dioscorides*; but it may be seen in the *Geoponica*, or Greek writers *Deuteronomy Revelation Rustica*: see the edition by *Niclas*, vol. i. lib. ii. c. 43, where το ζιζανιον is said to be the same which the Greeks call αιρα; and *Florentinus*, the author, says, το ζιζανιον, το λεγομενον αιρα, φθειρει ζος σιτον, αρτοις δε μιγνυμενη, σκοτοι τους εσθιοντας. "Zizanion, which is called αιρα, *darnel*, injures the wheat; and, mixed in the bread, causes dimness of the eyes to those who eat of it." And the author might have added *vertigo* also. But this does not seem to be the grain to which our Lord alludes.

The word ζιζανια, *zizania*, which is here translated *tares*, and which should rather be translated *bastard* or *degenerate wheat*, is a *Chaldee* word; and its meaning must be sought in the rabbinical writers. In a treatise in the *Mishna* called *Kelayim*, which treats expressly on different kinds of *seeds*, the word μυνωζ *zunim*, or ^ynwz *zunin*, is used for *bastard* or *degenerated wheat*; that which was wholly a right seed in the beginning, but afterwards became degenerate-the *ear* not being so *large*, nor the *grains* in such *quantity*, as formerly, nor the *corn* so *good* in quality. In ^{<BEB13>} **Psalm 144:13**, the words ^z l a ^zm *mizzan al zen*, are translated *all manner of store*; but they properly signify, *from species to species*: might not the Chaldee word ^ynwz *zunin*, and the Greek word ζιζανια, *zizania*, come from the psalmist's ^znz *zanzan*, which might have signified a *mixture of grain* of any kind, and be here used to point out the mixing *bastard* or *degenerate wheat* among good seed wheat? The *Persic* translator renders it [*Persic*] *telkh daneh, bitter grain*; but it seems to signify merely *degenerate wheat*. This interpretation throws much light on the scope and design of the whole passage. Christ seems to refer, first, to the *origin of evil*. God

sowed good seed in his field; made man in his own *image* and *likeness*: but the enemy, *the devil*, (^{<40130>}**Matthew 13:30**;) corrupted this good seed, and caused it to degenerate. Secondly, he seems to refer to the state of the Jewish people: God had sowed them, at first, wholly a *right seed*, but now they were become utterly *degenerate*, and about to be plucked up and destroyed by the Roman armies, which were the angels or messengers of God's justice, whom he had commissioned to sweep these rebellious people from the face of the land. Thirdly, he seems to refer also to the state in which the world shall be found, when he comes to judge it. The righteous and the wicked shall be permitted to grow together, till God comes to make a full and final *separation*.

Verse 26. When the blade was sprung up-then appeared the tares also.] Satan has a shoot of iniquity for every shoot of grace; and, when God revives his work, Satan revives his also. No marvel, therefore, if we find scandals arising suddenly to discredit a work of grace, where God has begun to pour out his Spirit.

Verse 27. So the servants-said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow] A faithful and vigilant minister of Christ fails not to discover the evil, to lament it, and to address himself to God by prayer, in order to find out the cause of it, and to receive from him proper information how to behave on the occasion.

Verse 28. An enemy hath done this] It is the interest of Satan to introduce hypocrites and wicked persons into religious societies, in order to discredit the work of God, and to favour his own designs.

Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up?] A zeal which is rash and precipitate is as much to be feared as the total lack of strict discipline.

Verse 29. But he said, Nay] God judges quite otherwise than men of this mixture of good and evil in the world; he knows the good which he intends to produce from it, and how far his patience towards the wicked should extend, in order to their conversion, or the farther sanctification of the righteous. Men often persecute a true Christian, while they intend only to prosecute an impious person. "A zeal for the extirpation of heretics and wicked men," said a pious Papist, "not regulated by these words of our blessed Saviour, allows no time for the one to grow strong in goodness, or to the other to forsake their evil courses. They are of a spirit very opposite to *his*, who care not if they root up the wheat, provided they can but gather

up the tares.” The zeal which leads persons to persecute others for religious opinions is not less a seed of the devil than a bad opinion itself is.

Verse 30. Let both grow together] Though every minister of God should separate from the Church of Christ every incorrigible sinner, yet he should proceed no farther: the man is not to be *persecuted* in his body or goods, because he is not sound in the faith-GOD *tolerates* him; so should *men*. False doctrines are against God-he alone is the judge and punisher of them-man has no right to interfere in this matter. They who burnt *Vanini* for *atheism* usurped the seat of judgment, and thus proved themselves to be not less a diabolical seed than the person they thus, without God’s leave, hurried into eternity. MARY, Queen of England, of execrable memory, and the inquisitorial tormentors she employed, were all of this diabolical sowing. See more on this parable at ^{<A1337>}**Matthew 13:37**, &c.

Verse 31. The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed] This parable is a representation of the progress of the Gospel in the world; and of the growth of grace in the soul. That grace which leads the soul to the fulness of glory may begin, and often does, in a *single good desire*-a *wish* to escape *hell*, or a *desire* to enjoy *God* in *heaven*.

Verse 32. Which indeed is the least of all seeds] That is, of all those seeds which produce plants, whose stems and branches, according to the saying of the botanists, are apt *δενδριζειν*, *arborescere*, to grow into a ligneous or *woody* substance.

Becometh a tree] That is, it is not only the largest of plants which are produced from such small seeds, but partakes, in its *substance*, the close *woody texture*, especially in warm climates, where we are informed it grows to an almost incredible size. The Jerusalem Talmud, tract *Peah*. fol. 20, says, “There was a stalk of mustard in Sichin, from which sprang out three boughs; one of which, being broken off, served to cover the tent of a potter, and produced three cabes of mustard seed. Rabbi Simeon ben Chalapha said, A stalk of mustard seed was in my field, into which I was want to climb, as men are wont to climb into a fig tree.” See Lightfoot and Schoettgen. This may appear to be extravagant; and it is probable that, in the case of the *three cabes of seed*, there is considerable exaggeration; but, if it had not been usual for this plant to grow to a very large size, such relations as these would not have appeared even in the Talmud; and the parable of our Lord sufficiently attests the fact. Some soils being more luxuriant than others, and the climate much warmer, raise the same plant to

a size and perfection far beyond what a poorer soil, or a colder climate, can possibly do. Herodotus says, he has seen wheat and barley in the country about Babylon which carried a blade full four fingers-breadth: and that the *millet* and *sesamum* grew to an incredible size. I have myself seen a field of common cabbages, in one of the Norman isles, each of which was from *seven* to *nine* feet in height; and one in the garden of a friend, which grew beside an apple-tree, though the latitude of the place is only about 48 deg. 13 min. north, was *fifteen* feet high, the stem of which is yet remaining, (September, 1798.) These facts, and several others which might be added, confirm fully the possibility of what our Lord says of the *mustard-tree*, however incredible such things may appear to those who are acquainted only with the productions of northern regions and cold climates.

Verse 33. The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven] On the nature and effects of leaven, see the note on ^{<12128>}**Exodus 12:8**. As the property of *leaven* is to change, or assimilate to its own nature, the meal or dough with which it is mixed, so the property of the grace of Christ is to change the whole soul into its own likeness; and God intends that this principle should continue in the soul till all is leavened-till the whole bear the image of the *heavenly*, as it before bore the image of the *earthly*. Both these parables are *prophetic*, and were intended to show, principally, how, from very small beginnings, the Gospel of Christ should pervade all the nations of the world, and fill them with righteousness and true holiness.

Verse 34. All these things spoke Jesus-in parables] Christ descends from Divine mysteries to parables, in order to excite us to raise our minds, from and through natural things, to the great God, and the operations of his grace and Spirit. Divine things cannot be taught to man but through the medium of earthly things. If God should speak to us in that language which is peculiar to heaven, clothing those ideas which angelic minds form, how little should we comprehend of the things thus described! How great is our privilege in being thus taught! Heavenly things, in the parables of Christ, assume to themselves a body, and thus render themselves *palpable*.

Verse 35. By the prophet] As the quotation is taken from ^{<1978D>}**Psalm 78:2**, which is attributed to *Asaph*, he must be the *prophet* who is meant in the text; and, indeed, he is expressly called a prophet, ^{<132D>}**1 Chronicles 25:2**. Several MSS. have $\eta\sigma\alpha\iota\omicron\upsilon$, *Isaiah*; but this is a manifest error. Jerome supposes that *Asaph* was first in the text, and that some ignorant

transcriber, not knowing who this *Asaph* was, inserted the word *Isaiah*; and thus, by attempting to remove an *imaginary* error, made a *real* one.

Verse 36. Jesus-went into the house: and his disciples came]

Circumstances of this kind should not pass unnoticed: they are instructive and important. Those who attend only to the *public* preaching of the Gospel of God are not likely to understand fully the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven. To understand *clearly* the purport of the Divine message, a man must come to God by frequent, fervent, secret prayer. It is thus that the word of God sinks into the heart, is watered, and brings forth much fruit.

Declare (**φρασον**, *explain*) **unto us the parable of the tares of the field.]** To what has already been spoken on this parable, the following general exposition may be deemed a necessary appendage:-

I. What is the *cause* of EVIL in the world?

1. We must allow that God, who is infinite in holiness, purity, and goodness, could not have done it. *Nothing can produce what is not in itself.* This is a maxim which every man subscribes to: God then could not have produced *sin*, forasmuch as his nature is infinite goodness and holiness. He made man at first in his own image, a transcript of his own purity: and, since sin entered into the world, He has done every thing consistent with his own perfections, and the freedom of the human mind, to drive it out, and to make and keep man holy.

2. After a thousand volumes are written on the *origin of evil*, we shall just know as much of it as Christ has told us here—*An enemy hath done it, and this enemy is the devil,* **Matthew 13:39.**

1. This *enemy* is represented as a *deceitful* enemy: a *friend* in appearance, soliciting to sin, by *pleasure, honour, riches, &c.*

2. A *vigilant* enemy. *While men sleep he watches,* **Matthew 13:25.**

3. A *hidden* or *secret* enemy. After having sown his seed, he disappears, **Matthew 13:25.** Did he appear as *himself*, few would receive solicitations to sin; but he is seldom discovered in *evil thoughts, unholy desires, flattering discourses, bad books, &c.*

II. *Why* was evil permitted to enter into the world?

1. There are doubtless sufficient reasons in the Divine Mind for its *permission*; which, connected with his infinite essence, and extending to eternity, are not only unfathomable by us, but also, from their nature, incommunicable to men.

2. But it may be justly said, that hereby many attributes of the Divine Nature become manifest, which otherwise could not have been known; such as *mercy, compassion, long-suffering, &c.* All of which endear the Deity to men, and perfect the felicity of those who are saved.

III. But *why* does he suffer this mixture of the good and bad seed *now*?

1. Because of the necessary dependence of one part of the creation on the other. Were the wicked all rooted up, society must fail-the earth be nearly desolated-noxious things greatly multiplied-and the small remnant of the godly, not being able to stand against the onsets of wild beasts, &c., must soon be extirpated; and then adieu to the economy of grace!

2. Did not the wicked exist, there would be no room for the exercise of many of the graces of the Spirit, on which our spiritual perfection greatly depends.

3. Nor could the grace of God be so manifest in supporting and saving the righteous; and consequently could not have that honour which now it justly claims.

4. Were not this evil tolerated, how could the wicked be converted? The *bastard wheat*, by being transplanted to a better soil, may become *good wheat*; so sinners may be engrafted in Christ, and become sons of God through faith in his name; for the *longsuffering* of God leads multitudes to repentance.

IV. Observe the *end* of the present state of things:

1. The wicked shall be punished, and the righteous rewarded.

The wicked are termed *bastard-wheat-the children of the wicked one*, <0138>**Matthew 13:38**, the very seed of the serpent.

Observe the *place* in which the wicked shall be punished,-a FURNACE. The *instrument* of this punishment, FIRE. This is an allusion to the punishment inflicted only on those supposed to be the very worst of criminals. See

<0106> **Daniel 3:6.** They were cast into a *burning fiery furnace*. The effect of it, DESPAIR; *weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth*, <0132> **Matthew 13:42.**

2. Observe the *character* and *state* of the righteous:

1. They are the *children of the kingdom*, a *seed of God's sowing*, <0138> **Matthew 13:38.**

2. As to their *persons*, they shall be *like the sun*.

3. The *place* of their felicity shall be the *kingdom of heaven*: and,

4. The *object* of it, GOD In the relation of FATHER, <0133> **Matthew 13:43.**
This is a reference to <0122> **Daniel 12:2, 3.**

Some learned men are of opinion that the whole of this parable refers to the Jewish state and people; and that the words *συντελεια του αιωνος*, which are commonly translated *the end of the world*, should be rendered *the end of the age*, viz. the end of the *Jewish polity*. That the words have this meaning in other places there can be no doubt; and this may be their primary meaning here; but there are other matters in the parable which agree far better with the consummation of all things than with the end of the Jewish dispensation and polity. See on <0109> **Mark 4:29.**

Verse 44. The kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field] *θησαυρω κεκρυμμενω*, to a *hidden treasure*. We are not to imagine that the *treasure* here mentioned, and to which the Gospel salvation is likened, means a *pot* or *chest* of money hidden in the field, but rather a gold or silver *mine*, which he who found out could not get at, or work, without turning up the field, and for this purpose he bought it. Mr. Wakefield's observation is very just: "There is no sense in the *purchase* of a field for a *pot* of money, which he might have carried away with him very *readily*, and as *honestly*, too, as by overreaching the owner by an unjust purchase."

He hideth-i.e. **he kept secret**, told the discovery to no person, till he had bought the field. From this view of the subject, the translation of this verse, given above, will appear proper-a *hidden treasure*, when applied to a *rich mine*, is more proper than a *treasure hid*, which applies better to a *pot of money* deposited there, which I suppose was our translators' opinion; and *kept secret*, or *concealed*, will apply better to the subject of his discovery till he made the purchase, than *hideth*, for which there could be no

occasion, when the pot was already *hidden*, and the place known only to himself.

Our Lord's meaning seems to be this:-

The kingdom of heaven-the salvation provided by the Gospel-*is like a treasure*-something of inestimable worth-*hidden in a field*; it is a rich mine, the veins of which run in all directions in the sacred Scriptures; therefore, the *field* must be *dug up*, the records of salvation diligently and carefully turned over, and searched. *Which, when a man hath found*-when a sinner is convinced that the promise of life eternal is to him, *he kept secret*-pondered the matter deeply in his heart; he examines the preciousness of the treasure, and counts the cost of purchase; *for joy thereof*-finding that this salvation is just what his needy soul requires, and what will make him presently and eternally happy, *went and sold all that he had*-renounces his sins, abandons his evil companions, and relinquishes all hope of salvation through his own righteousness; *and purchased that field*-not merely bought the book for the sake of the salvation it described, but, by the blood of the covenant, buys gold tried in the fire, white raiment, &c.; in a word, pardon and purity, which he receives from God for the *sake* of Jesus. We should consider the salvation of God, 1. As our only *treasure*, and value it above all the riches in the world. 2. Search for it in the Scriptures, till we fully understand its worth and excellence. 3. Deeply ponder it in the secret of our souls. 4. Part with all we have in order to get it. 5. Place our whole joy and felicity in it; and 6. Be always convinced that it must be *bought*, and that no price is accepted for it but the blood of the covenant; the sufferings and death of our only Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Verse 45. A merchant man, seeking goodly pearls] A story very like this is found in the Talmudical tract *Shabbath*: "Joseph, who sanctified the Sabbath, had a very rich neighbour; the Chaldeans said, All the riches of this man shall come to Joseph, who sanctifies the Sabbath. To prevent this, the rich man went and sold all that he had, and bought a pearl, and went aboard of a ship; but the wind carried the pearl away, it fell into the sea, and was swallowed by a fish. This fish was caught, and the day before the Sabbath it was brought into the market, and they proclaimed, Who wishes to buy this fish? The people said, Carry it to Joseph, the sanctifier of the Sabbath, who is accustomed to buy things of great value. They carried it to him, and he bought it, and when he cut it up he found the pearl, and sold it

for thirteen pounds weight of golden denarii!” From some tradition of this kind, our Lord might have borrowed the simile in this parable.

The meaning of this parable is the same with the other; and both were spoken to impress more forcibly this great truth on the souls of the people:—eternal salvation from sin and its consequences is the supreme good of man, should be sought after above all things, and prized beyond all that God has made. Those *merchants* who compass sea and land for temporal gain, condemn the slothfulness of the majority of those called Christians, who, though they confess that this salvation is the most certain and the most excellent of all treasures, yet seek worldly possessions in preference to it! Alas, for him who expects to find any thing more *amiable* than God, more *worthy* to fill his heart, and more *capable* of making him happy!

Verse 47. Is like unto a net] *A drag-net.* This is the proper meaning of ααγηνη, which the Latins translate *verriculum*, a *sweep net*; *Quod in aquam jacitur ad pisces comprehendendos; imprimis, cujus usus est extrahendis iis a fundo.* MARTINIUS. “Which is cast into the water to catch fish, and the particular use of which is to *drag them up from the bottom.*” As this is dragged along it keeps gathering all in its way, both good and bad, small and great; and, when it is brought to the shore, those which are proper for use are preserved, and those which are not are either destroyed or thrown back into the water.

By the *net* may be understood the preaching of the Gospel of the kingdom, which keeps drawing men into the profession of Christianity, and into the fellowship of the visible Church of Christ. By the *sea* may be represented that *abyss* of sin, error, ignorance, and wickedness in which men live, and out of which they are drawn, by the truth and Spirit of God, who cordially close in with the offers of salvation made to them in the preaching of the Gospel.

By *drawing to shore*, may be represented the consummation of all things, see ⲁⲓⲃⲁ **Matthew 13:49**, when a proper distinction shall be made between those who served God, and those who served him not; for many shall doubtless be found who shall bear the name without the *nature* of Christ. By *picking out the good, and throwing away the bad*, ⲁⲓⲃⲁ **Matthew 13:48**, is meant that separation which God shall make between false and true professors, casting the former into hell, and bringing the latter to heaven.

Instead of *τα καλα* *the good*, the Cod. Bezaë, and five copies of the old *Antehieronymian*, or *Itala* version, read *τα καλλιστα*, *the best*, the *very best*. Every reader would naturally hope that this is not the *true* reading, or that it is not to be understood *literally*, as it seems to intimate that only the *very best* shall be at last *saved*.

It is probable that this parable also refers, in its primary meaning, to the Jewish state, and that, when Christ should come to judge and destroy them by the Roman power, the genuine followers of Christ only should escape, and the rest be overwhelmed by the general destruction. See ^{<4B3>}Matthew 24:30, &c.

Verse 50. Into the furnace of fire] See the note on ^{<4B2>}Matthew 8:12.

Verse 51. Have ye understood all these things?] Divine truths must not be lightly passed over.—Our Lord's question here shows them to be matters of the utmost weight and importance; and that they should be considered again and again, till they be thoroughly understood.

Verse 52. Every scribe] Minister of Christ: *who is instructed*—taught of God; *in the kingdom of heaven*—in the mysteries of the Gospel of Christ: *out of his treasury*—his granary or store-house; *things new and old*—a Jewish phrase for *great plenty*. A small degree of knowledge is not sufficient for a preacher of the Gospel. The sacred writings should be his *treasure*, and he should properly understand them. His knowledge does not consist in being furnished with a great variety of human learning, (though of this he should acquire as much as he can;) but his knowledge consists in being *well instructed* in the things concerning the kingdom of heaven, and the art of conducting men thither. Again, it is not enough for a man to have these advantages in possession: he must *bring them forth*, and distribute them abroad. A good pastor will not, like a *miser*, keep these things to himself to please his fancy; nor, like a *merchant*, traffic with them, to enrich himself; but, like a bountiful *father* or *householder*, distribute them with a *liberal* through *judicious* hand, for the comfort and support of the whole heavenly family.

A preacher whose mind is well stored with Divine truths, and who has a sound judgment, will suit his discourses to the circumstances and states of his hearers. He who preaches the *same* sermon to *every* congregation, gives the fullest proof that, however well he may speak, he is not a *scribe* who is *instructed in the kingdom of heaven*. Some have thought that *old*

and new things here, which imply the produce of the *past* and the produce of the *present* year, may also refer to the *old* and *new* covenants—a proper knowledge of the *Old Testament* Scriptures, and of the doctrines of Christ as contained in the *New*. No man can properly understand the *Old Testament* but through the medium of the *New*, nor can the *New* be so forcibly or successfully applied to the conscience of a sinner as through the medium of the *Old*. The *law* is still a schoolmaster to lead men to Christ—by it is the *knowledge* of sin, and, without it, there can be no *conviction*—where it *ends*, the Gospel *begins*, as by the Gospel alone is *salvation* from sin. See the whole of the comment on the Pentateuch.

Verse 54. And when he was come into his own country] Probably *Nazareth*, where his parents lived, and where he had continued till his thirtieth year, though it appears he had a lodging in Peter's house at *Capernaum*.

They were astonished] It appears, hence, that our blessed Lord had lived in obscurity all the time above specified; for his countrymen appear not to have heard his doctrines, nor seen his miracles, until now. It is a melancholy truth, that those who should know Christ best are often the most ignorant of himself, the doctrines of his word, and the operations of his Spirit.

Verse 55. Is not this the carpenter's son?] Seven copies of the old *Itala* have, *Is not this the son of JOSEPH the carpenter?* But it is likely our Lord, during the thirty years of his abode at Nazareth, wrought at the same trade with Joseph; and perhaps this is what is intended, ^{<4125>} **Luke 2:51.** *He went down with them (his parents) to Nazareth, and was SUBJECT unto them.* An honest trade is no discredit to any man. He who spends his time in idleness is fit for any business in which the devil chooses to employ him.

Is not his mother-Mary, and his brethren, James, &c.] This insulting question seems to intimate that our Lord's family was a very *obscure one*; and that they were of small *repute* among their neighbours, except for their *piety*.

It is *possible* that *brethren* and *sisters* may mean here *near relations*, as the words are used among the Hebrews in this latitude of meaning; but I confess it does not appear to me likely. Why should the children of *another* family be brought in here to share a reproach which it is evident was designed for *Joseph the carpenter*, *Mary* his wife, *Jesus* their son, and their

other children? Prejudice apart, would not any person of plain common sense suppose, from this account, that these were the *children* of Joseph and Mary, and the *brothers* and *sisters* of our Lord, *according to the flesh*? It seems odd that this should be doubted; but, through an unaccountable prejudice, *Papists* and *Protestants* are determined to maintain as a doctrine, that on which the Scriptures are totally silent, viz. the *perpetual virginity* of the mother of our Lord. See ^{<40125>} **Matthew 1:25**.

Verse 57. And they were offended in him.] They took offence at him, *εσκανδαλιζοντο εν αυτω*, making the meanness of his family the reason why they would not receive him as a prophet, though they were astonished at his wisdom, and at his miracles, ^{<40154>} **Matthew 13:54**. So their *pride* and their *envy* were the causes of their destruction.

A prophet is not without honour] This seems to have been a proverbial mode of speech, generally true, but not without some exceptions. The apparent meanness of our Lord was one pretence why they rejected him; and yet, *God* manifested *in the flesh*, *humbling* himself to the *condition* of a *servant*, and to the *death* of the *cross*, is the *only foundation* for the salvation of a lost world. Perhaps our Lord means, by prophet, in this place, himself alone, as if he had said, My ministry is more generally reputed, and my doctrine better received, in any other part of the land than in my own country, among my own relatives; because, knowing the obscurity of my birth, they can scarcely suppose that I have these things from heaven.

Verse 58. And he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief] *δυναμεις*, *miracles*. So the word is used, ^{<4072>} **Matthew 7:22**; **11:20**; ^{<4191>} **Acts 19:11**; ^{<4128>} **1 Corinthians 12:28**; ^{<4185>} **Galatians 3:5**; ^{<804>} **Hebrews 2:4**. The Septuagint translates *l a twal pn niphleoth el*, *the miraculous works of God*, by *δυναμιν κυριου*.

Unbelief and contempt drive Christ out of the heart, as they did out of his own country. *Faith* seems to put the almighty power of God into the hands of men; whereas *unbelief* appears, to tie up even the hands of the Almighty. A man, generally speaking, can do but little good among his relatives, because it is difficult for them to look with the *eyes* of *faith* upon one whom they have been accustomed to behold with the *eyes* of the *flesh*.-QUESNEL.

**A DISSERTATION ON THE NATURE AND USE OF
PARABOLICAL WRITINGS.**

See Ancillary Writings

ST. MATTHEW

CHAPTER 14.

Herod, having heard the fame of Christ, supposes him to be John the Baptist, risen from the dead, 1, 2. A circumstantial account of the beheading of John the Baptist, 3-12. Five thousand men, besides women and children, fed with five loaves and two fishes, 13-21. The disciples take ship, and Jesus stays behind, and goes privately into a mountain to pray, 22, 23. A violent storm arises, by which the lives of the disciples are endangered, 24. In their extremity, Jesus appears to them, walking upon the water, 25-27. Peter, at the command of his Master, leaves the ship, and walks on the water to meet Christ, 28-31. They both enter the ship, and the storm ceases, 32, 33. They come into the land of Gennesaret, and he heals many diseased people, 34-36.

NOTES ON CHAP. 14.

Verse 1. Herod the tetrarch] This was Herod Antipas, the son of Herod the Great. See Clarke's note "^{<401>}Matthew 2:1", where an account is given of the Herod family. The word *tetrarch* properly signifies a person who rules over the *fourth part* of a country; but it is taken in a more general sense by the Jewish writers, meaning sometimes a *governor* simply, or a *king*; see ^{<404>}Matthew 14:9. The estates of Herod the Great were not, at his death, divided into *four* tetrarchies, but only into *three*: one was given by the Emperor *Augustus* to *Archelaus*; the second to *Herod Antipas*, the person in the text; and the third to *Philip*: all three, sons of *Herod the Great*.

Verse 2. This is John the Baptist] ον εγω απεκεφαλισα, *Whom I beheaded*. These words are added here by the Codex Bezae and several others, by the Saxon, and five copies of the Itala.—See the power of conscience! He is miserable because he is guilty; being continually under the dominion of self-accusation, reproach, and remorse. No need for the Baptist now: *conscience* performs the office of ten thousand accusers! But, to complete the misery, a guilty conscience offers no relief from God—points out no salvation from sin.

He is risen from the dead] From this we may observe: 1. That the *resurrection* of the dead was a common opinion among the Jews; and 2. That the *materiality* of the soul made no part of Herod's creed. Bad and profligate as he was, it was not deemed by him a thing impossible with God

to raise the dead; and the spirit of the murdered Baptist had a permanent resurrection in his guilty conscience.

Verse 3. For Herodias' sake] This infamous woman was the daughter of *Aristobulus* and *Bernice*, and grand-daughter of Herod the Great. Her first marriage was with Herod Philip, her *uncle*, by whom she had *Salome*: some time after, she left her husband, and lived publicly with Herod Antipas, her brother-in-law, who had been before married to the daughter of Aretas, king of Arabia Petræa. As soon as Aretas understood that Herod had determined to put away his daughter, he prepared to make war on him: the two armies met, and that of Herod was cut to pieces by the Arabians; and this, Josephus says, was supposed to be a judgment of God on him for the murder of John the Baptist. See the account in Josephus, *Antiq. lib. xviii. c. 7.*

Verse 4. For John said unto him, It is not lawful for thee to have her.] Here is an instance of zeal, fidelity, and courage, highly worthy of imitation. Plainness, mildness, and modesty, are qualifications necessary to be observed when we reprove the great. The best service a subject can render his prince is to lay before him, in the plainest but most respectful manner, what the *law* of God *requires* of him, and what it *forbids*. How unutterable must the punishment of those be who are chaplains to princes, or great men, and who either flatter them in their vices, or wink at their sins!

Verse 5. He feared the multitude] Miserable prince! who fears more to offend his people, than to sin against his God, by shedding innocent blood. When a man resists sin only by the help of human motives, he cannot long defend himself.

Verse 6. Herod's birth-day] Either the day in which he was *born*, or the day on which he *began to reign*; for both were termed *birth-days*. See ^{<913>}**1 Samuel 13:1**, and ^{<871B>}**Hosea 7:5**. The kings of Persia were accustomed to reject no petition that was preferred to them during the entertainment. See *Herodotus* in *Calliope*, and ^{<171B>}**Esther 5:3**.

The daughter-danced] This was *Salome*, mentioned before. *Danced*: by a literal rendering of the *saltavit* of the Vulgate, in my old MS. of the English Bible, the whole of this business seems to be treated with sovereign contempt: for thus says the translator, *Shee leped in the myddle*.

Verse 8. Give me here John Baptist's head in a charger.] The word charger formerly signified a large dish, bowl, or drinking cup: the Saxon has [Anglo-Saxon], a *dish*, Tindal, a *platter*; any thing is better than *charger*, which never conveyed much meaning, and now conveys none. The evangelist says she was instructed before, by her mother, to ask the Baptist's head! What a most infernal mother, to give such instructions to her child! and what a promising daughter to receive them! What a *present* for a young lady!-the bloody head of the murdered forerunner of Jesus! and what a gratification for an adulterous wife, and incestuous mother! The disturber of her illicit pleasures, and the troubler of her *brother-husband's* conscience, is no more! Short, however, was their glorying! **See Clarke on** **“^{<014B>}Matthew 14:3”**.

Verse 9. The king was sorry] He knew John to be a righteous man, and at first did many things gladly which John told him it was his duty to perform: **“^{<010A>}Mark 6:20.**

Nevertheless, for the oath's sake] *The* OATHS, *ορκους*-he had probably sworn again and again-one sin begets many.

And them which sat with him at meat] Who were probably such as himself, and would have considered it a breach of *honour* if he had not fulfilled his sworn promise: *he therefore commanded it to be given!*

Verse 11. His head was given to the damsel: and she brought it to her mother.] There is no person so revengeful as a lascivious woman when reproved and blamed. A preacher of the Gospel has most to fear from this quarter:-the first of this profession lost his life for the sake of truth and chastity; and others, especially those who have any thing to do with men in power who are profligates, may learn what they are to expect in return for a faithful discharge of their duty.

Verse 12. His disciples came, and took up the BODY] The HEAD was in the possession of *Herodias*, who, 'tis probable, took a diabolic pleasure in viewing that speechless mouth which had often been the cause of planting thorns in her criminal bed; and in offering indignities to that *tongue* from which she could no longer dread a reproof. Her character justifies every bad conjecture that can well be formed on this head: and St. Jerome positively says that, when she got it, she drew out the tongue, and thrust it through with her bodkin. On the whole we may observe:-

That the diversions of the world, *feasting* and *dancing*, are but too commonly the occasions of sin. After so fatal an example as this, can we doubt whether *balls* are not snares for souls; destructive of chastity, modesty, and sometimes even of humanity itself; and a pernicious invention to excite the most criminal passions! How many on such occasions have sacrificed their chastity, and then, to hide their shame, have stifled the feelings of the human being and the parent, and, by direct or indirect means, have put a period to the innocent offspring of their connections! Unhappy mother, who exposes her daughter to the same shipwreck herself has suffered, and makes her own child the instrument of her lust and revenge! Behold here, ye professedly religious parents, the fruits of what was doubtless called in those times, *elegant breeding* and *accomplished dancing*! Fix your eyes on that *vicious mother*, that *prostituted daughter*, and especially on that *murdered ambassador of God*, and then send your children to genteel boarding-schools, to learn the *accomplishment* of DANCING! where the fear of God makes no part of the education.

Verse 13. When Jesus heard of it, he departed thence] Had the blessed Jesus continued in that place, it is probable the hand of this impure female murderer would have been stretched out against him also: he *withdrew*, therefore, not through fear, but to teach his messengers rather to yield to the storm than expose themselves to destruction, where, from circumstances, the case is evidently *hopeless*.

The people-followed him on foot] πεζῆ, or, *by land*, which is a common acceptance of the word in the best Greek writers. See many examples in *Kypke*.

Verse 14. Jesus-was moved with compassion] εσπλαγγνισθε, he was moved with *tender compassion*, so I think the word should in general be translated: see **Clarke's note on "Matthew 9:36"**. As a *verb*, it does not appear to have been used by any but *ecclesiastical* writers. It always intimates *that motion of the bowels, accompanied with extreme tenderness and concern, which is felt at the sight of the miseries of another*.

Verse 15. Send the multitude away, that they may go-and buy] The disciples of Christ are solicitous for the people's temporal as well a spiritual welfare: and he is not worthy to be called a minister of Christ, who does not endeavour to promote both to the uttermost of his power. The preaching of Christ must have been accompanied with uncommon power to these people's souls, to have induced them to leave their homes to

follow him from village to village, for they could never hear enough; and to neglect to make use of any means for the support of their lives, so that they might still have the privilege of hearing him. When a soul is either well replenished with the bread of life, or hungry after it, the necessities of the body are, for the time, little regarded.

Verse 16. They need not depart.] He that seeks first the kingdom of heaven is sure to have every temporal requisite. When a man ensures the first, God always takes care to throw the other into the bargain. He who has an interest in Jesus has in him an inexhaustible treasure of spiritual and temporal good. Though the means by which man may help his fellows have failed, we are not to suppose that the bounty of God is exhausted. When we are about to give up all hope of farther supply, the gracious word of Christ still holds good-*They need not depart; give ye them to eat.*

Give ye them to eat.] Should we say, Lord, how shall thy poor, feeble ministering servants feed so many hungry souls as attend thy word! Begin at the command of Jesus-make the attempt-divide what you have-and the bread of God shall be multiplied in your hands, and all shall eat and be satisfied.

Verse 17. We have here but five loaves and two fishes.] When we are deeply conscious of our own necessities, we shall be led to depend on Jesus with a firmer faith. God often permits his servants to be brought *low*, that they may have repeated opportunities of proving the kindness and mercy of their gracious Lord and Master.

Verse 18. Bring them hither to me.] No creature of God should be considered as good or safe without the blessing of God in it. If thou have but even a handful of meal and a few herbs, bring them to Christ by prayer and faith, and he will make them a *sufficiency* for thy *body*, and a *sacrament* to thy *soul*. Let the minister of the Gospel attend also to this-let him bring all his *gifts* and *graces* to his Maker-let him ever know that his word can be of no use, unless the blessing of Christ be in it.

Verse 19. And took the five loaves, &c.] This was the act of the father of a family among the Jews-his business it was to take the bread into his hands, and render thanks to God, before any of the family was permitted to taste of it.

Looking up to heaven] To teach us to acknowledge GOD as the Supreme Good, and fountain of all excellence.

He blessed] The word *God* should, I think, be rather inserted here than the word *them*, because it does not appear that it was the *loaves* which Christ blessed, but *that* God who had provided them; and this indeed was the Jewish custom, not to bless the food, but the God who gave it. However, there are others who believe the *loaves* are meant, and that he blessed *them* in order to multiply them. The Jewish form of *blessing*, or what we term *grace*, before and after meat, was as follows:-

BEFORE MEAT.

:xrah ^m pj l axwmh μl w[h Ēl m wnyhl a hta Ēwrb

Barnuc attah Elohinoo melec haolam hamoise lechem min haarets:

*Blessed art thou, our God, King of the universe,
who bringest bread out of the earth!*

AFTER MEAT.

:^pgh yrp arwb μl w[h Ēl m wnyhl a Ēwrb

Barnuc Elohinoo melec haolam bore peri hagephen:

*Blessed art thou, our God, King of the universe,
the Creator of the fruit of the vine!*

And brake] We read often in the Scriptures of *breaking* bread, never of *cutting* it: because the Jews made their bread broad and thin like cakes, and to divide such, being very *brittle*, there was no need of a knife.

Verse 20. They did all eat, and were filled] Little or much is the same in the hands of Jesus Christ. Here was an incontestable miracle-*five thousand* men, besides women and children, fed with *five cakes* and *two fishes*! Here must have been a manifest *creation* of *substance*-the parts of the bread were not dilated to make them appear large, nor was there any delusion in the eating-for they all *ate*, and were all *filled*. Here then is one miracle of our Lord attested by at least *five thousand persons*! But did not this creation of bread prove the unlimited power of Jesus? Undoubtedly: and nothing less than eternal power and Godhead could have effected it.

They took up-twelve baskets] It was customary for many of the Jews to carry a basket with them at all times: and Mr. Wakefield's conjecture here is very reasonable:—"By the number here particularized, it should seem that each apostle filled *his own bread basket*." Some think that the Jews carried baskets in commemoration of their Egyptian bondage, when they were accustomed to carry the clay and stubble to make the bricks, in a basket that was hung about their necks. This seems to be what Sidonius Apollinaris refers to in the following words, Epist. vii. 6. *Ordinis res est, ut, (dum in allegorica versamur Ægypto) Pharaon incedat cum diademate, Israelita cum COPHINO.*

These words of *Alcimus Avitus*, lib. v. 30, are to the same effect:-

*Servitii longo lassatam pondere plebem,
Oppressos cophinis humeros, attritaque collo.*

It appears that a *basket about the neck*, and a *bunch of hay*, were the general characteristic of this long enslaved and oppressed people in the different countries where they sojourned.

Juvenal also mentions the *basket* and the *hay*:-

*Cum dedit ille locum, cophino fænoque relicto,
Arcanam Judæa tremens mendicat in aurem.
Sat vi. 542.*

*A gypsy Jewess whispers in your ear--
Her goods a basket, and old hay her bed,
She strolls, and telling fortunes, gains her bread.
Dryden.*

And again, Sat iii. 13:-

*Nunc sacri fontis nemus, et delubra locantur
Judæis, quorum cophinus, fænumque supellex.
Now the once hallowed fountain, grove, and fane,
Are let to Jews, a wretched, wandering train,
Whose wealth is but a basket stuff'd with hay.
Gifford.*

The simple reason why the Jews carried baskets with them appears to be this:-When they went into Gentile countries, they carried their own provision with them, as they were afraid of being polluted by partaking of

the meat of heathens. This also obliged them probably to carry *hay* with them to sleep on: and it is to this, in all likelihood, that Juvenal alludes.

After *five thousand* were fed, *twelve times* as much, at least, remained, as the whole multitude at first sat down to! See Clarke's note "^{<B916>}Luke 9:16".

Verse 22. Jesus constrained his disciples to get into a ship] Either they were afraid to return into the jurisdiction of Herod, or they were unwilling to embark without their Lord and Protector, and would not enter their boat till Christ had commanded them to embark.

From this verse it appears that Christ gave some advices to the multitudes after the departure of his disciples, which he did not wish them to hear.

Unto the other side] Towards Capernaum, ^{<O143>}Matthew 14:34. ^{<B316>}John 6:16, 17, or Bethsaida, see on ^{<H065>}Mark 6:45.

Verse 23. He went up into a mountain apart, to pray] He whom God has employed in a work of mercy had need to return, by prayer, as speedily, to his Maker, as he can, lest he should be tempted to value himself on account of that in which he has no merit—for the good that is done upon earth, the Lord doth it alone. Some make this part of our Lord's conduct emblematic of the spirit and practice of prayer, and observe that the proper dispositions and circumstances for praying well are: 1. *Retirement* from the world. 2. *Elevation* of the heart to God. 3. *Solitude*. 4. The *silence* and *quiet* of the night. It is certain that in this also Christ has left us an example that we should follow his steps. Retirement from the world is often a means of animating, supporting, and spiritualizing prayer. Other *society* should be shut out, when a soul comes to converse with God.

Verse 24. Tossed with waves] *Grievously agitated*. This is the proper meaning of the word βασιανιζομενον: but one MS. reads βαπιτιζομενον, *plunged* under the waves, frequently covered with them; the waves often breaking over the vessel.

Verse 25. The fourth watch] Anciently the Jews divided the night into *three* watches, consisting of *four* hours each. The *first* watch is mentioned, ^{<D19>}Lamentations 2:19: the *second*, ^{<O719>}Judges 7:19; and the *third*, ^{<D143>}Exodus 14:24; but a *fourth* watch is not mentioned in any part of the OLD Testament. This division the Romans had introduced in Judea, as also

the custom of dividing the day into *twelve* hours: see ^{<310>}**John 11:9**. The *first watch* began at *six* o'clock in the evening, and continued till *nine*; the *second* began at *nine*, and continued till *twelve*; the *third* began at *twelve*, and continued till *three* next morning; and the *fourth* began at *three*, and continued till *six*. It was therefore between the hours of *three* and *six* in the *morning* that Jesus made his appearance to his disciples.

Walking on the sea.] Thus suspending the laws of gravitation was a proper manifestation of unlimited power. Jesus did this by his own power; therefore Jesus showed forth his Godhead. In this one miracle we may discover *three*: -1. Though at a distance from his disciples, he *knew* their distress. 2. He found them out on the lake, and probably in the midst of darkness. 3. He *walked* upon the water. Job, speaking of those things whereby the omnipotence of God was demonstrated, says particularly, ^{<800>}**Job 9:8**, *He walketh upon the waves of the sea*: intimating that this was impossible to any thing but *Omnipotence*.

Verse 26. It is a spirit] That the spirits of the dead *might* and *did appear*, was a doctrine held by the greatest and holiest of men that ever existed; and a doctrine which the caviliers, *free-thinkers* and *bound-thinkers*, of different ages, have never been able to disprove.

Verse 27. It is I; be not afraid] Nothing but this voice of Christ could, in such circumstances, have given courage and comfort to his disciples: those who are grievously tossed with difficulties and temptations require a similar manifestation of his power and goodness. When he proclaims himself in the soul, all sorrow, and fear, and sin are at an end.

Verse 28. Bid me come unto thee on the water.] A weak faith is always wishing for signs and miracles. To *take Christ at his word*, argues not only the perfection of faith, but also the highest exercise of sound reason. He is to be credited on his *own word*, because he is the TRUTH, and therefore can neither *lie* nor *deceive*.

Verse 29. Peter-walked on the water] However impossible the thing commanded by Christ may appear, it is certain he will give power to accomplish it to those who receive his word by faith; but we must take care never to put Christ's power to the proof for the gratification of a vain curiosity; or even for the strengthening of our faith, when the *ordinary* means for doing that are within our reach.

Verse 30. When he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid] It was by faith in the power of Christ he was upheld; when that faith failed, by which the laws of gravitation were suspended, no wonder that those laws returned to their wonted action, and that he began to sink. It was not the violence of the winds, nor the raging of the waves, which endangered his life, but his *littleness of faith*.

Verse 31. Jesus stretched forth his hand] Every moment we stand in need of Christ: while we *stand*-we are upheld by his power only; and when we are *falling*, or have *fallen*, we can be saved only by his mercy. Let us always take care that we do not consider so much the danger to which we are exposed, as the power of Christ by which we are to be upheld; and then our mountain is likely to stand strong.

Verse 32. The wind ceased.] Jesus is the Prince of peace, and all is peace and calm where he condescends to *enter* and *abide*.

Verse 33. Thou art the Son of God.] It is probable that these words were spoken either by the *sailors* or *passengers*, and not by the *disciples*. Critics have remarked that, when this phrase is used to denominate the MESSIAH, both the articles are used, $\epsilon \nu \iota \omicron \varsigma \tau \omicron \upsilon \theta \epsilon \omicron \upsilon$, and that the words without the articles mean, in the common Jewish phrase, *a Divine person*. It would have been a strange thing indeed, if the disciples, after all the miracles they had seen Jesus work-after their having left all to follow him, &c., were only now persuaded that he was the promised *Messiah*. That they had not as yet *clear* conceptions concerning his *kingdom*, is evident enough; but that they had any doubts concerning his being the *promised Messiah* is far from being clear.

Verse 34. The land of Gennesaret.] It was from this country that the *sea* or *lake* of Gennesaret had its name. In this district, on the western side of the lake, were the cities of *Capernaum* and *Tiberias*.

Verse 35. The men of that place had knowledge of him] i.e. *They knew him again*. They had already seen his miracles; and now they collect all the diseased people they can find, that *he* may have the same opportunity of showing forth his marvellous power, and *they* of being the instruments of relieving their friends and neighbours.

They brought unto him all that were diseased] And Jesus received and healed every man and woman of them. And is not the soul, in the sight of

God, of more value than the body? and will he withhold his healing power from the former, and grant it so freely to the latter? This cannot be. Let a man come himself to Jesus, and he shall be saved and afterwards let him recommend this Christ to the whole circle of his acquaintance, and they, if they come, shall also find mercy.

Verse 36. That they might only touch the hem of his garment] What mighty influence must the grace and Spirit of Christ have in the soul, when even the *border or hem of his garment* produced such wonders in the bodies of those who touched it! Here is a man who has turned from sin to God through Christ, and the healing hand of Jesus is laid upon him. Then, no wonder that he knows and feels his sins forgiven, his soul purified, and his heart filled with the fulness of his Maker. Lord, increase our faith! and we shall see greater manifestations of thy power and glory! Amen.

ST. MATTHEW

CHAPTER 15.

The Pharisees accuse the disciples of eating with unwashed hands, 1, 2. Our Lord answers, and convicts them of gross hypocrisy, 3-9. Teaches the people and the disciples what it is that renders men unclean, 10-20. Heals the daughter of a Canaanitish woman, 21-28. Heals many diseased people on a mountain of Galilee, 29-31. With seven loaves, and a few little fishes, he feeds 4,000 men, besides women and children, 32-38. Having dismissed the multitudes, he comes to the coast of Magdala, 39

NOTES ON CHAP. 15.

Verse 1. The scribes and Pharisees-of Jerusalem] Our Lord was now in Galilee, ^{<4143>}**Matthew 14:34.**

Verse 2. Elders] Rulers and magistrates among the Jews.

For they wash not their hands] What frivolous nonsense! These Pharisees had nothing which their malice could fasten on in the conduct or doctrine of our blessed Lord and his disciples, and therefore they must dispute about washing of hands! All sorts of Pharisees are troublesome people in religious society; and the reason is, they take more pleasure in blaming others than in amending themselves.

The tradition of the elders] The word *παραδοσις*, *tradition*, has occupied a most distinguished place, both in the Jewish and Christian Church. Man is ever fond of mending the work of his Maker; and hence he has been led to put his finishing hand even to Divine revelation! This supplementary matter has been called *παραδοσις*, from *παραδιδομαι*, *to deliver from hand to hand-to transmit*; and hence the Latin term, *tradition*, from *trado*, *to deliver*, especially *from one to another;-to hand down*. Among the Jews TRADITION signifies what is also called the *oral law*, which they distinguish from the *written law*: this last contains the Mosaic precepts, as found in the Pentateuch: the former, the traditions of the elders, i.e. traditions, or doctrines, that had been successively handed down from Moses through every generation, but not committed to *writing*. The Jews feign that, when GOD gave *Moses* the *written law*, he gave him also the oral law, which is the interpretation of the former. This law, Moses at first delivered to Aaron then to his sons Eleazar and Ithamar; and, after

these to the seventy-two elders, who were six of the most eminent men chosen out of each of the twelve tribes. These seventy-two, with Moses and Aaron, delivered it again to all the heads of the people, and afterwards to the congregation at large. They say also that, before Moses died, he delivered this oral law, or system of traditions, to JOSHUA, and *Joshua* to the ELDERS which succeeded him-THEY to the *Prophets*, and the PROPHETS to each other, till it came to JEREMIAH, who delivered it to BARUCH his scribe, who repeated it to EZRA, who delivered it to the *men* of the *great synagogue*, the last of whom was SIMON *the Just*. By *Simon the Just* it was delivered to ANTIGONUS of *Socho*; by *him* to JOSE the son of *Jochanan*; by him to JOSE, the son of *Joezer*; by him to NATHAN the *Arbelite*, and *Joshua* the son of *Perachiah*; and by them to JUDAH the son of *Tabbai*, and Simeon, the son of *Shatah*; and by them to SHEMAIAH and ABTALION; and by them to HILLEL; and by *Hillel* to SIMEON his son, the same who took Christ in his arms when brought to the temple to be presented to the Lord: by SIMEON it was delivered to GAMALIEL his son, the preceptor of St. Paul, who delivered it to SIMEON his son, and he to *Rab*. JUDAH HAKKODESH his son, who compiled and digested it into the book which is called the MISHNA; to explain which the two *Talmuds*, called the *Jerusalem* and *Babylonish* Talmuds, were compiled, which are also called the *Gemera* or complement, because by these the *oral law* or *Mishnah* is fully explained. The *Jerusalem Talmud* was completed about A. D. 300; and the *Babylonish Talmud* about the beginning of the sixth century. This Talmud was printed at Amsterdam in 12 vols. folio. These contain the whole of the *traditions of the elders*, and have so explained, or rather frittered away, the words of God, that our Lord might well say, *Ye have made the word of God of no effect by your traditions*. In what estimation these are held by the Jews, the following examples will prove: “The words of the scribes are lovely beyond the words of the law: for the words of the law are *weighty* and *light*, but the words of the scribes are *all weighty*.” *Hierus. Berac.* fol. 3.

“He that shall say, There are no *phylacteries*, though he thus transgress the words of the law, he is not guilty; but he that shall say, There are *five* Totaphot, thus adding to the words of the scribes, he is guilty.”

“A *prophet* and an *elder*, to what are they likened! To a king sending two of his servants into a province; of one he writes thus: Unless he show you my seal, believe him not; for thus it is written

of the prophet: *He shall show thee a sign*; but of the elders thus: *According to the law which they shall teach thee, for I will confirm their words.*”-See *Prideaux. Con.* vol. ii. p. 465, and *Lightfoot’s Hor. Talmud.*

They wash not their hands] On washing of hands, before and after meat, the Jews laid great stress: they considered eating with unwashed hands to be no ordinary crime; and therefore, to induce men to do it, they feigned that an evil spirit, called *Shibta atbyv*, who sits on the hands by night, has a right to sit on the food of him who eats without washing his hands, and make it hurtful to him! They consider the person who undervalues this rite to be no better than a heathen, and consequently excommunicate him. See many examples of this doctrine in Schoettgen and Lightfoot.


Verse 3. Why do ye-transgress the commandment] Ye accuse my disciples of transgressing the *traditions* of the *elders*-I accuse you of transgressing the *commands* of God, and that too in favour of your own tradition; thus preferring the inventions of men to the positive precepts of God. Pretenders to zeal often prefer superstitious usages to the Divine law, and human inventions to the positive duties of Christianity.

Verse 4. Honour thy father and mother] This word was taken in great latitude of meaning among the Jews: it not only meant *respect* and *submission*, but also *to take care of a person, to nourish and support him, to enrich.* See ^{<0217>}**Numbers 22:17**; ^{<071317>}**Judges 13:17**; ^{<54517>}**1 Timothy 5:17**. And that this was the sense of the law, as it respected parents, see ^{<62716>}**Deuteronomy 27:16**, and see **Clarke’s note** “^{<02012>}**Exodus 20:12**”.


Verse 5. It is a gift] ^{ḥbrq} *korban*, ^{<40711>}**Mark 7:11**, an *offering of approach*; something consecrated to the service of God in the temple, by which a man had the privilege of *approaching* his Maker. This conduct was similar to the custom of certain persons who bequeath the inheritance of their children to Churches or religious uses; either through terror of conscience, thus striving to *purchase* the kingdom of glory; or through the persuasion of interested hireling priests. It was in this way that, in the days of popish influence, the principal lands in the nation had fallen into the hands of the Church. In those charters, multitudes of which have passed through my hands, a common form was, *pro salute meæ, et pro salute antecessorum meorum, et pro salute successorum meorum, et pro solute uxoris meæ, &c., &c., do, et concedo Deo et Ecclesiæ, &c.* “For my

salvation, and for the salvation of my predecessors, and for the salvation of my successors, and for the salvation of my wife, &c., &c., I give and bequeath to God and his Church, &c.”

Though a world of literature was destroyed, and fine buildings ruined, by the suppression of the monasteries in England, yet this step, with the *Stat.* 23 Hen. VIII. c. 10, together with the *Stat.* 9 Geo. II. c. 36, were the means of checking an evil that had arrived at a pitch of unparalleled magnitude; an evil that was supplanting the atonement made by the blood of the covenant, and putting death-bed grants of land, &c., in the place of Jesus Christ, and throwing the whole secular power of the kingdom into the hands of the pope and the priests. No wonder then that *they* cried out, when the monasteries were suppressed! It is sacrilege to dedicate that to God which is taken away from the necessities of our *parents* and *children*; and the good that this pretends to will doubtless be found in the catalogue of that unnatural man's crimes, in the judgment of the great day, who has thus deprived his own family of its due. To assist our *poor relatives*, is our first duty; and this is a work infinitely preferable to all *pious legacies* and *endowments*.

Verse 7. Hypocrites, well did Isaiah prophesy of you] In every place where the proper names of the Old Testament occur, in the New, the same mode of orthography should be followed: I therefore write *Isaiah* with the Hebrew, not *Esaias*, with the Greek. This prophecy is found  **Isaiah 29:13**. Our blessed Lord unmasks these hypocrites; and we may observe that, when a hypocrite is found out, he should be exposed to all; this may lead to his salvation: if he be permitted to retain his falsely acquired character, how can he escape perdition!

Verse 8. Their heart is far from me.] The true worship of God consists in the *union* of the heart to him—where this exists not, a particle of the spirit of devotion cannot be found.

This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth] This clause, which is taken from  **Isaiah 29:13**, is omitted by several excellent MSS., and by several versions and fathers. Erasmus, Mill, Drusius, and Bengel, approve of the omission, and Griesbach has left it out of the text; but as I find it in the prophet, the place from which it is quoted, I dare not omit it, howsoever respectable the above authorities may appear.

Verse 9. In vain they do worship me, &c.] By the traditions of the elders, not only the word of God was perverted, but his worship also was greatly corrupted. But the Jews were not the only people who have acted thus: whole Christian Churches, as well as sects and parties, have acted in the same way. Men must not mould the worship of God according to their fancy-it is not what they think *will do-is proper, innocent, &c.*, but what God himself *has prescribed*, that he will acknowledge as his worship. However *sincere* a man may be in a worship of his own invention, or of *man's commandment*, yet it profits him nothing. Christ himself says it is *in vain*. To condemn such, may appear to some illiberal; but whatever may be said in behalf of sincere heathens, and others who have not had the advantages of Divine Revelation, there is no excuse for the man who has the BIBLE before him.

Verse 10. Hear and understand] A most important command. *Hear*-make it a point of conscience to attend to the ministry of the word. *Understand*-be not satisfied with attending places of public worship merely; see that the *teaching* be of God, and that you *lay it to heart*.

Verse 11. Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth] This is an answer to the carping question of the Pharisees, mentioned ~~<OISE>~~ **Matthew 15:2**, *Why do thy disciples eat with unwashed hands?* To which our Lord here replies, *That what goes into the mouth defiles not the man*; i.e. that if, in eating with unwashed hands, any particles of dust, &c., cleaving to the hands, might happen to be taken into the mouth with the food, this did not *defile*, did not constitute a man *a sinner*; for it is on this alone the question hinges: *thy disciples eat with unwashed hands*; therefore they are *sinner*s; for they transgress the tradition of the elders, i.e. the *oral law*, which they considered equal in authority to the *written law*; and, indeed, often preferred the former to the latter, so as to make it of *none effect*, totally to destroy its nature and design, as we have often seen in the preceding notes.

That which cometh out of the mouth] That is, what springs from a corrupt unregenerate heart-a perverse will and impure passions- *these defile*, i.e. make him a sinner.

Verse 12. The Pharisees were offended] None so liable to take offence as *formalists* and *hypocrites*, when you attempt to take away the false props from the one, and question the sincerity of the other. Besides, a Pharisee must never be suspected of *ignorance*, for they are the men, and wisdom must die with them!

Verse 13. Every plant] *Every plantation.* So I render φυτεια, and so it is translated in the *Itala* version which accompanies the Greek text in the *Codex Bezae*, *omnis plantatio*, and so the word is rendered by Suidas. This gives a different turn to the text. The Pharisees, as a *religious body*, were now a *plantation* of trees, which God did not plant, water, nor own: therefore, they should be rooted up, not left to *wither and die*, but the *fellers*, and those who *root up*, (the Roman armies,) should come against and destroy them, and the Christian Church was to be planted in their place. Since the general dispersion of the Jews, this *sect*, I believe, has ceased to exist as a separate body, among the descendants of Jacob. The first of the apostolical constitutions begins thus: θεου φυτεια η καθολικη εκκλησια, και αμπελων αυτου εκλεκτος. The Catholic Church is the *plantation* of God, and his chosen *vineyard*.

Verse 14. Let them alone] αφετε αυτους, *give them up*, or *leave them*. These words have been sadly misunderstood. Some have quoted them to prove that blind and deceitful teachers should not be pointed out to the people, nor the people warned against them; and that men should abide in the communion of a corrupt Church, because that Church had once been the Church of God, and in it they had been brought up; and to prove this they bring Scripture, for, in our present translation, the words are rendered, *let them alone*: but the whole connection of the place evidently proves that our blessed Lord meant, *give them up*, have no kind of religious connection with them, and the strong reason for which he immediately adds, because they are *blind leaders*. This passage does not at all mean that blind leaders should not be pointed out to the people, that they may avoid being deceived by them; for this our Lord does frequently, and warns his disciples, and the people in general, against all such false teachers as the scribes and Pharisees were; and though he bids men *do that they heard those say, while they sat in the chair of Moses*, yet he certainly meant no more than that they should be observant of the moral law when read to them out of the sacred book: yet neither does he tell them to *do all* these false teachers said; for he testifies in ^{<D156>} **Matthew 15:6**, that they had put such false glosses on the law, that, if followed, would endanger the salvation of their souls. The *Codex Bezae*, for αφετε αυτους, has αφετε τους τυφλους, *give up these blind men*. Amen! A literal attention to these words of our Lord produced the *Reformation*.

Probably the words may be understood as a sort of proverbial expression for-*Don't mind them: pay no regard to them.*-“They are altogether unworthy of notice.”

And if the blind lead the blind] This was so self-evident a case that an apter parallel could not be found-*if the blind lead the blind, both must fall into the ditch.* Alas, for the blind teachers, who not only destroy their own souls, but those also of their flocks! Like priest, like people. If the minister be ignorant, he cannot teach what he does not know; and the people cannot become wise unto salvation under such a ministry-he is ignorant and wicked, and they are profligate. They who even wish such God speed; are partakers of their evil deeds. But shall not the poor deceived people escape? No: both shall fall into the pit of perdition together; for they should have searched the Scriptures, and not trusted to the ignorant sayings of corrupt men, no matter of what sect or party. He who has the Bible in his hand, or within his reach, and can read it, has no excuse.

Verse 15. Declare unto us this parable.] Is it not strange to hear the disciples asking for the explanation of such a parable as this! The true knowledge of the *spirit* of the Gospel is a thing more uncommon than we imagine, among the generality of Christians, and even of the learned.

Verse 16. Are ye also yet without understanding?] The word *ακη*, which we translate *yet*, should be here rendered *still*: Are ye still void of understanding? and the word is used in this sense by several Greek writers. The authorities which have induced me to prefer this translation may be seen in *Kypke*.

Verse 17. Cast out into the draught] *εις αφεδωνα*, [Anglo-Saxon]. *And beeth into the forthgoing a sent*-what is not fit for nourishment is evacuated; is thrown into the sink. This I believe to be the *meaning* of this difficult and variously translated word, *αφεδρων*. Diodati translates it properly, *nella latrina, into the privy*. And the Persian translator has given a good paraphrase, and appears to have collected the general meaning [Persian] *her teche der dehen ander ayeed, az nusheeb beeroon rood, we ber zemeen aftad*: “Whatsoever enters into the mouth goes downward, and falls upon the ground.” Michaelis, and his annotator, Dr. Marsh, have been much perplexed with this perplexing passage. See *Michaelis's Introduction*, vol. i. note 35. p. 458.

Verse 19. Out of the heart] In the heart of an unregenerate man, the *principles* and *seeds* of all sin are found. And iniquity is always conceived in the heart before it be *spoken* or *acted*. Is there any hope that a man *can* abstain from *outward* sin till his *heart*, that abominable fountain of corruption, be thoroughly cleansed? *I trow not*.

Evil thoughts] διαλογισμοι πονηροι, wicked dialogues-for in all evil surmisings the heart holds a conversation, or dialogue, with itself. For φονοι, *murders*, two MSS. have φθονοι, *envyings*, and three others have both. *Envy* and *murder* are nearly allied: the *former* has often led to the *latter*.

Blasphemies] I have already observed, ^{<4008>}Matthew 9:3, that the verb βλασφημew, when applied to men, signifies *to speak* INJURIOUSLY *of their persons, characters, &c.*, and, when applied to God, it means to *speak* IMPIOUSLY *of his nature, works, &c.*

Verse 20. These-defile a man] Our Lord's argument is very plain. What goes into the mouth descends into the stomach and other intestines;-part is retained for the nourishment of the body, and part is ejected, as being improper to afford nourishment. Nothing of this kind defiles the soul, because it does not enter into it; but the evil principles that are in it, producing evil thoughts, murders, &c., these defile the soul, because they have their seat and operation in it.

Verse 21. Departed into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon.] εις τα μερη, *towards* the coasts or confines. It is not clear that our Lord ever left the land of the Hebrews; he was, as the apostle observes, ^{<5158>}Romans 15:8, *the minister of the circumcision according to the truth of God*. Tyre and Sidon are usually joined together, principally because they are but a few miles distant from each other.

Verse 22. A woman of Canaan] Matthew gives her this name because of the *people* from whom she sprung-the descendants of Canaan, ^{<07013>}Judges 1:31, 32; but Mark calls her a *Syrophenician*, because of the *country* where she dwelt. The *Canaanites* and *Phoenicians* have been often confounded. This is frequently the case in the Septuagint. Compare ^{<04460>}Genesis 46:10, with ^{<01615>}Exodus 6:15, where the same person is called a *Phoenician* in the one place, and a *Canaanite* in the other. See also the same version in ^{<02165>}Exodus 16:35; ^{<01512>}Joshua 5:12.

The state of this woman is a proper emblem of the state of a sinner, deeply conscious of the misery of his soul.

Have mercy an me, &c.] How proper is this prayer for a penitent! There are many excellencies contained in it; 1. It is short; 2. humble; 3. full of faith; 4. fervent; 5. modest; 6. respectful; 7. rational; 8. relying only on the mercy of God; 9. persevering. Can one who sees himself a slave of the devil, beg with too much earnestness to be delivered from his thralldom?

Son of David] An essential character of the true Messiah.

Verse 23. He answered her not a word.] Seemed to take time to consider her request, and to give her the opportunity of *exercising* her *faith*, and *manifesting* her *fervour*.

Verse 24. I am not sent but unto the lost sheep] By the Divine appointment, I am come to preach the Gospel to the Jews only. There are certain preachers who should learn a lesson of important instruction from this part of our Lord's conduct. As soon as they hear of a lost sheep being found by *other ministers*, they give all diligence to get that one into *their* fold: but display little earnestness in seeking in the wilderness for those that are lost. This conduct, perhaps, proceeds from a consciousness of their inability to perform the work of an evangelist; and leads them to sit down in the labours of others, rather than submit to the reproach of presiding over empty chapels. Such persons should either *dig* or *beg* immediately, as they are a reproach to the pastoral office; for, not being sent of God, they cannot profit the people.

The wilderness of this world is sufficiently wide and uncultivated. Sinners abound every where; and there is ample room for all truly religious people, who have zeal for God, and love for their perishing fellow creatures, to put forth all their strength, employ all their time, and exercise all their talents, in proclaiming the Gospel of God; not only to the *lost sheep of the house of Israel*, but to a *lost* WORLD. Nor can such exertions be unsuccessful. Where the pure truth of God is preached, *many* will be converted. Where that truth is preached, though with a mixture of error, *some* will be converted, for God will bless his own truth. But where nothing but *false doctrine* is preached, no soul is converted: for God will never sanction error by a miracle of his mercy.

Verse 25. Lord, help me.] Let me also share in the deliverance afforded to Israel.

Verse 26. The children's bread] The salvation provided for the Jews, who were termed *the children of the kingdom*. And cast it to the **κυναρτις**, *little dogs-to the curs*; such the *Gentiles* were reputed by the Jewish people, and our Lord uses that form of speech which was common among his countrymen. What terrible repulses! and yet she still perseveres!

Verse 27. Truth, Lord] **ναι κυριε**, *Yes, Lord*. This appears to be not so much an assent, as a bold reply to our Lord's reason for apparently rejecting her suit.

The little dogs share with the children, for they eat the crumbs which fall from their masters' table. I do not desire what is provided for these highly favoured children, only what they *leave*: a single exertion of thy almighty power, in the healing of my afflicted daughter, is all that I wish for; and this the highly favoured Jews can well spare, without lessening the provision made for themselves. Is not this the sense of this noble woman's reply?

Verse 28. O woman, great is thy faith] The hinderances thrown in this woman's way only tended to increase her faith. Her faith resembles a river, which becomes enlarged by the dykes opposed to it, till at last it sweeps them entirely away with it,

Her daughter was made whole] Persevering faith and prayer are next to omnipotent. No person can thus pray and believe, without receiving all his soul requires. This is one of the finest lessons in the book of God for a penitent, or for a discouraged believer. Look to Jesus! As sure as God is in heaven, so surely will he hear and answer *thee* to the eternal salvation of thy soul! Be not discouraged at a little delay: when thou art properly prepared to receive the blessing, then thou shalt have it. Look up; thy salvation is at hand. Jesus admires this faith, to the end that we may admire and imitate it, and may reap the same fruits and advantages from it.

Verse 29. Went up into a mountain] **το ορος**, THE *mountain*.

"Meaning," says Wakefield, "some *particular* mountain which he was accustomed to frequent; for, whenever it is spoken of at a time when Jesus is in *Galilee*, it is always discriminated by the *article*. Compare

Matthew 4:18, with **Matthew 5:1**; and **Matthew 13:54**, with

◀0142▶ **Matthew 14:23**; and ▶01816▶ **Matthew 28:16**. I suppose it was mount *Tabor*.”

Verse 30. Those that were-**maimed**] **κυλλους**. Wetstein has fully proved that those who had lost a hand, foot, &c., were termed **κυλλοι** by the Greeks. Kypke has shown, from *Hippocrates*, that the word was also used to signify those who had distorted or dislocated legs, knees, hands, &c. Mr. Wakefield is fully of opinion that it means here those who *had lost a limb*, and brings an incontestable proof from ▶01808▶ **Matthew 18:8**; ▶01903▶ **Mark 9:43**. “If thy hand cause thee to offend, CUT IT OFF; it is better for thee to enter into life (**κυλλος**) WITHOUT A LIMB, than, having thy TWO hands, to go away into hell.” What an astonishing manifestation of *omnific* and *creative* energy must the *reproduction* of a hand, foot, &c., be at the *word* or *touch* of Jesus! As this was a mere act of *creative* power, like that of multiplying the bread, those who allow that the above is the meaning of the word will hardly attempt to doubt the proper Divinity of Christ. *Creation*, in any sense of the word, i.e. causing something to exist that had no existence before, can belong only to God, because it is an effect of an unlimited power; to say that such power could be delegated to a person is to say that the person to whom it is delegated becomes, for the time being, the *omnipotent God*; and that God, who has thus clothed a creature with his omnipotence, ceases to be omnipotent himself; for there cannot be *two omnipotents*, nor can the Supreme Being *delegate* his omnipotence to another, and *have it at the same time*. I confess, then, that this is to *me* an unanswerable argument for the Divinity of our blessed Lord. Others may *doubt*; I can't help *believing*.

Verse 31. The multitude wondered] And well they might, when they had such proofs of the miraculous power and love of God before their eyes. Blessed be God! the same miracles are continued in their *spiritual* reference. All the disorders of the soul are still cured by the power of Jesus.

Verse 32. I have compassion, &c.] See a similar transaction explained, ▶01414▶ **Matthew 14:14-22**.

Verse 33. Whence should we have so much bread in the wilderness, &c.] Human *foresight*, even in the followers of Christ, is very short. In a thousand instances, if we supply not its deficiency by *faith*, we shall be always embarrassed, and often miserable. This world is a *desert*, where

nothing can be found to satisfy the soul of man, but the salvation which Christ has procured.

Verse 37. They did all eat, and were filled] *εχορτασθησαν*-they were satisfied. The husks of worldly pleasures may fill the man, but cannot satisfy the soul. A man may eat, and not be satisfied: it is the interest therefore of every follower of Christ to follow him till he be fed, and to feed on him till he be satisfied.

Verse 38. Four thousand] Let the poor learn from these miracles to trust in God for support. Whatever his ordinary providence denies, his miraculous power will supply.

Verse 39. He sent away the multitude] But not before he had instructed their souls, and fed and healed their bodies.

The coasts of Magdala.] In the parallel place, ^{<40810>}**Mark 8:10**, this place is called *Dalmanutha*. Either *Magdala* was formed by a transposition of letters from *Dalman*, to which the Syriac termination *atha* had been added, or the one of these names refers to the *country*, and the other to a *town* in that neighbourhood. Jesus went into the *country*, and proceeded till he came to the chief *town* or *village* in that district. Whitby says, “Magdala was a city and territory beyond Jordan, on the banks of *Gadara*. It readied to the bridge above Jordan, which joined it to the other side of Galilee, and contained within its precincts *Dalmanutha*.” The MSS. and VV. read the name variously-*Magada*, *Madega*, *Magdala*; and the Syriac has *Magdu*. In Mark, *Dalmanutha* is read by many MSS. *Melagada*, *Madegada*, *Magada*, *Magidan*, and *Magedam*. *Magdala*, variously pronounced, seems to have been the place or country; *Dalmanutha*, the chief town or capital.

In this chapter a number of interesting and instructive particulars are contained.

1. We see the extreme superstition, envy, and incurable ill nature of the Jews. While totally lost to a proper sense of the spirituality of God’s law, they are ceremonious in the extreme. They will not eat without washing their hands, because this would be a transgression of one of the traditions of their elders; but they can harbour the worst temper and passions, and thus break the law of God! The word of man weighs more with them than the testimony of Jehovah; and yet they pretend the highest respect for their God and sacred things, and will let their parents perish for lack of the

necessaries of life, that they may have goods to vow to the service of the sanctuary! Pride and envy blind the hearts of men, and cause them often to act not only the most wicked, but the most ridiculous, parts. He who takes the book of God for the rule of his faith and practice can never go astray: but to the mazes and perplexities produced by the traditions of elders, human creeds, and confessions of faith, there is no end. These evils existed in the Christian as well as in the Jewish Church; but the Reformation, thank God! has liberated us from this endless system of uncertainty and absurdity, and the Sun of righteousness shines now unclouded! The plantation, which God did not plant, in the course of his judgments, he has now swept nearly away from the face of the earth! Babylon is fallen!

2. We wonder at the dulness of the disciples, when we find that they did not fully understand our Lord's meaning, in the very obvious parable about *the blind leading the blind*. But should we not be equally struck with their prying, inquisitive temper? They did not understand, but they could not rest till they did. They knew that their Lord could say nothing that had not the most important meaning in it: this meaning, in the preceding parable, they had not apprehended, and therefore they wished to have it farther explained by himself. Do we imitate their docility and eagerness to comprehend the truth of God? Christ presses every occurrence into a means of instruction. The dulness of the disciples in the present case, has been the means of affording us the fullest instruction on a point of the utmost importance-the state of a sinful heart, and how the thoughts and passions conceived in it defile and pollute it; and how necessary it is to have the fountain purified, that it may cease to send forth those streams of death.

3. The case of the Canaanitish woman is, in itself, a thousand sermons. Her faith-her prayers-her perseverance-her success-the honour she received from her Lord, &c., &c. How instructively-how powerfully do these speak and plead! What a profusion of light does this single case throw upon the manner in which Christ sometimes exercises the faith and patience of his followers! *They that seek shall find*, is the great lesson inculcated in this short history: God is ever the same. Reader, follow on after God-cry, pray, plead-all in Him is for thee!-Thou canst not perish, if thou continuest to believe and pray. The *Lord* will *help* THEE.

ST. MATTHEW

CHAPTER 16.

The Pharisees insidiously require our Lord to give them a sign, 1. They are severely rebuked for their hypocrisy and wickedness, 2-5. The disciples are cautioned to beware of them and their destructive doctrine, 6-12. The different opinions formed by the people of Christ, 13, 14. Peter's confession, and our Lord's discourse on it, 15-20. He foretells his sufferings, and reproves Peter, 21-23. Teaches the necessity of self-denial, and shows the reasons on which it is founded, 24-26. Speaks of a future judgment, 27. And promises the speedy opening of the glory of his own kingdom on earth, 28.

NOTES ON CHAP. 16.

Verse 1. The Pharisees also with the Sadducees] Though a short account of these has been already given in a note on ~~4187~~ **Matthew 3:7**, yet, as one more detailed may be judged necessary, I think it proper to introduce it in this place.

The PHARISEES were the most considerable sect among the Jews, for they had not only the scribes, and all the learned men of the law of their party, but they also drew after them the bulk of the people. When this sect arose is uncertain. Josephus, *Antiq. lib. v. c. xiii. s. 9*, speaks of them as existing about 144 years before the Christian era. They had their appellation of *Pharisees*, from **vrp** *parash*, *to separate*, and were probably, in their rise, the most holy people among the Jews, having *separated* themselves from the national corruption, with a design to restore and practice the pure worship of the most High. That they were greatly *degenerated* in our Lord's time is sufficiently evident; but still we may learn, from their external purity and exactness, that their principles in the beginning were holy. Our Lord testifies that they had cleansed the *outside* of the cup and the platter, but within they were full of abomination. They still kept up the *outward* regulations of the *institution*, but they had utterly lost its *spirit*; and hypocrisy was the only substitute now in their power for that *spirit of piety* which I suppose, and not unreasonably, characterized the origin of this sect.

As to their religious opinions, they still continued to credit the being of a God; they received the *five books of Moses*, the writings of the *prophets*,

and the *hagiographa*. The *hagiographa* or *holy writings*, from *αγιος* *holy*, and *γραφω* *I write*, included the twelve following books-Psalms, Proverbs, Job, Canticles, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther, Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah, and Chronicles. These, among the Jews, occupied a middle place between the *law* and the *prophets*, as divinely inspired. The Pharisees believed, in a confused way, in the resurrection, though they received the Pythagorean doctrine of the *metempsychosis*, or transmigration of souls. Those, however, who were notoriously wicked, they consigned, on their death, immediately to hell, without the benefit of transmigration, or the hope of future redemption. They held also the predestinarian doctrine of necessity, and the government of the world by *fate*; and yet, inconsistently, allowed some degree of liberty to the human will. See *Prideaux*.

The SADDUCEES had their origin and name from one *Sadoc*, a disciple of *Antigonus* of *Socho*, president of the Sanhedrin, and teacher of the *law* in one of the great divinity schools in Jerusalem, about 264 years before the incarnation.

This *Antigonus* having often in his lectures informed his scholars, that they should not serve God through expectation of a *reward*, but through *love* and *filial* reverence only, *Sadoc* inferred from this teaching that there were neither rewards nor punishments after this life, and, by consequence, that there was no resurrection of the dead, nor angel, nor spirit, in the invisible world; and that man is to be rewarded or punished *here* for the good or evil he does.

They received only the five books of Moses, and rejected all unwritten traditions. From every account we have of this sect, it plainly appears they were a kind of mongrel deists, and professed *materialists*. See *Prideaux*, and the authors he quotes, *Connex.* vol. iii. p. 95, and 471, &c., and see **Clarke's note** "~~4187~~ **Matthew 3:7**".

In ~~41216~~ **Matthew 22:16**, we shall meet with a third sect, called HERODIANS, of whom a few words may be spoken here, It is allowed on all hands that these did not exist before the time of *Herod the Great*, who died only three years after the incarnation of our Lord. What the opinions of these were is not agreed among the learned. Many of the primitive fathers believed that their distinguishing doctrine was, that they held Herod to be the *Messiah*; but it is not likely that such an opinion could prevail in our Saviour's time, *thirty years after Herod's death*, when not one characteristic of Messiahship had appeared in him during his life. Others suppose that they

were Herod's *courtiers*, who flattered the passions of their master, and, being endowed with a *convenient* conscience, changed with the *times*; but, as *Herod* was now dead upwards of thirty years, such a sect could not exist in reference to *him*; and yet all allow that they derived their origin from *Herod the Great*.

Our Lord says, ^{<410815>}**Mark 8:15**, that they had the *leaven of Herod*, i.e. a bad doctrine, which they received from him. What this was may be easily discovered: 1. Herod subjected himself and his people to the dominion of the Romans, in opposition to that law, ^{<61715>}**Deuteronomy 17:15**, *Thou shalt not set a king over thee-which is not thy brother*, i.e. one out of the twelve tribes. 2. He built temples, sat up images, and joined in heathenish worship, though he professed the Jewish religion; and this was in opposition to all the law and the prophets. From this we may learn that the *Herodians* were such as, first, held it lawful to transfer the Divine government to a heathen ruler; and, secondly, to conform occasionally to heathenish rites in their religious worship. In short, they appear to have been persons who *trimmed* between God and the world-who endeavoured to reconcile his service with that of mammon-and who were religious just as far as it tended to secure their secular interests. It is probable that this sect was at last so blended with, that it became lost in, the sect of the Sadducees; for the persons who art called Herodians, ^{<410815>}**Mark 8:15**, are styled *Sadducees* in ^{<01616>}**Matthew 16:6**. See *Prideaux*, Con. vol. iii. p. 516, &c., and *Josephus*, Antiq. b. xv. c. viii. s. i. and x. s. iii. But it is very likely that the Herodians, mentioned c. xxii. 10, were *courtiers* or *servants* of Herod king of Galilee. See the note there.

Show them a sign] These sects, however opposed among themselves, most cordially unite in their opposition to Christ and his truth. That the kingdom of Satan may not fall, all his subjects must fight against the doctrine and maxims of the kingdom of Christ.

Tempting-him] Feigning a desire to have his doctrine fully proved to them, that they might credit it, and become his disciples; but having no other design than to betray and ruin him.

Verse 2. When it is evening] There are certain signs of fair and foul weather, which ye are in the constant habit of observing, and which do not fail.-*The signs of the times*: the doctrine which I preach, and the miracles which I work among you, are as sure signs that the day-spring from on high has visited you for your salvation; but if ye refute to hear, and

continue in darkness, the red and gloomy cloud of vindictive justice shall pour out such a storm of wrath upon you as shalt sweep you from the face of the earth.

Verse 3. The sky is red and lowering.] The signs of fair and foul weather were observed in a similar manner among the Romans, and indeed among most other people. Many treatises have been written on the subject: thus a poet:-

*Cæruleus pluviam denunciant, IGNEUS euros.
Sin MACULÆ incipient RUTILO immiscerier IGNI,
Omnia tunc pariter VENTO NIMBISQUE videbis
Fervere — VIRG. Geor. i. l. 453.*

*“If fiery red his glowing globe descends,
High winds and furious tempests he portends:
But if his cheeks are swoll’n with livid blue,
He bodes wet weather, by his watery hue*

*If dusky spots are varied on his brow,
And streak’d with red a troubled colour show,
That sullen mixture shall at once declare,
Wind, rain, and storms, and elemental war.”
DRYDEN.*

Verse 4. Wicked and adulterous generation] The Jewish people are represented in the Sacred Writings as *married* to the Most High; but, like a disloyal wife, forsaking their true husband, and uniting themselves to Satan and sin. *Seeketh after a sign, σημειον επιζητει, seeketh sign upon sign,* or, still *another sign*. Our blessed Lord had already wrought miracles sufficient to demonstrate both his Divine mission and his divinity; only *one* was farther necessary to take away the scandal of his cross and death, to fulfil the Scriptures, and to establish the Christian religion; and that was, his *resurrection from the dead*, which, he here states, was typified in the case of *Jonah*.

Verse 5. Come to the other side] Viz. the coast of Bethsaida, by which our Lord passed, going to Cæsarea, for he was now on his journey thither. See ^{<401613>}Matthew 16:13, and ^{<41082>}Mark 8:22, 27.

Verse 6. Beware of the leaven] What the leaven of Pharisees and Sadducees was has been already explained, see ^{<40161>}Matthew 16:1. Bad doctrines act in the soul as leaven does in meal; they *assimilate* the whole

Spirit to their own nature. A man's particular *creed* has a greater influence on his *tempers* and *conduct* than most are aware of. *Pride*, *hypocrisy*, and *worldly-mindedness*, which constituted the *leaven* of the Pharisees and Sadducees, ruin the major part of the world.

Verse 7. They reasoned] For, as Lightfoot observes, the term leaven was very rarely used among the Jews to signify *doctrine*, and therefore the disciples did not immediately apprehend his meaning. In what a lamentable state of blindness is the human mind? Bodily wants are perceived with the utmost readiness, and a supply is sought with all speed. But the necessities of the soul are rarely discovered, though they are more pressing than those of the body, and the supply of them of infinitely more importance.

Verse 8. When Jesus perceived, he said] *αὐτοῖς*, *unto them*, is wanting in BDKLMS, and twenty others; one of the Syriac, the Armenian, Ethiopic, Vulgate, and most of the Itala; also in Origen, Theophylact, and Lucifer Calaritanus. Mill approves of the omission, and Griesbach has left it out of the text.

O ye of little faith] There are degrees in *faith*, as well as in the other graces of the Spirit. *Little faith* may be the seed of *great faith*, and therefore is not to be despised. But many who should be strong in faith have but a small measure of it, because they either give way to sin, or are not careful to improve what God has already given.

Verses 9. - 10. Do ye not yet understand-the five loaves-neither the seven] See Clarke's notes on "~~4044~~ Matthew 14:14", &c. How astonishing is it that these men should have any fear of lacking bread, after having seen the two miracles which our blessed Lord alludes to above! Though men quickly perceive their bodily wants, and are querulous enough till they get them supplied, yet they as quickly forget the mercy which they had received; and thus God gets few returns of gratitude for his kindnesses. To make men, therefore, deeply sensible of his favours, he is induced to suffer them often to be in want, and then to supply them in such a way as to prove that their supply has come immediately from the hand of their bountiful Father.

Verse 11. How is it that ye do not understand] We are not deficient in spiritual knowledge, because we have not had sufficient opportunities of acquainting ourselves with God; but because we did not improve the advantages we had. How deep and ruinous must our ignorance be, if God

did not give line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little! They now perceived that he warned them against the superstition of the Pharisees, which produced hypocrisy, pride, envy, &c., and the false doctrine of the Sadducees, which denied the existence of a spiritual world, the immortality of the soul, the resurrection of the body, and the providence of God.

Verse 13. Cæsarea Philippi] A city, in the tribe of Naphtali, near to Mount Libanus, in the province of *Iturea*. Its ancient name was *Dan*, ^{<01144>}**Genesis 14:14**; afterwards it was called *Lais*, ^{<071807>}**Judges 18:7**. But Philip the tetrarch, having rebuilt and beautified it, gave it the name of *Cæsarea*, in honour of Tiberius Cæsar, the reigning emperor: but to distinguish it from another Cæsarea, which was on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea, and to perpetuate the fame of him who rebuilt it, it was called *Cæsarea Philippi*, or *Cæsarea of Philip*.

When Jesus came] ελθων δε ο ιησους-when *Jesus was coming*. Not, when *Jesus came*, or *was come*, for Mark expressly mentions that it happened εν τη οδω, in the way to *Cæsarea Philippi*, ^{<40827>}**Mark 8:27**, and he is Matthew's best interpreter.-WAKEFIELD.

Whom do men say] He asked his disciples this question, not because he was ignorant what the people thought and spoke of him; but to have the opportunity, in getting an express declaration of their faith from themselves, to confirm and strengthen them in it: but see on ^{<40320>}**Luke 9:20**. *Some, John the Baptist, &c.* By this and other passages we learn, that the Pharisaic doctrine of the *Metempsychosis*, or transmigration of souls, was pretty general; for it was upon this ground that they believed that the soul of the *Baptist*, or of *Elijah*, *Jeremiah*, or some of the prophets, had come to a *new life* in the body of *Jesus*.

Verse 16. Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.] Every word here is emphatic-a most *concise*, and yet *comprehensive*, confession of faith.

The Christ, or *Messiah*, points out his divinity, and shows his *office*; *the Son*-designates his person: on this account it is that both are joined together so frequently in the new covenant. *Of the living God* του θεου, του ζωντος, literally, of God the Living One. The C. Bezae has for του ζωντος *the Living One*, του σωζοντος, *the Saviour*, and the *Cant. Dei Salvatoris*, of God the Saviour.

Living-a character applied to the Supreme Being, not only to distinguish him from the *dead* idols of paganism, but also to point him out as the source of life, *present*, *spiritual*, and *eternal*. Probably there is an allusion here to the great name **hw̄y** *Yeve*, or *Yehovah*, which properly signifies *being* or *existence*.

Verse 17. Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona] Or *Simon, son of Jonah*; so *Bar-jonah* should be translated, and so it is rendered by our Lord, ^{<8014>}**John 1:42.** *Flesh and blood*-i.e. MAN;-no human being hath revealed this; and though the text is literal enough, yet every body should know that this is a Hebrew *periphrasis* for *man*; and the literal translation of it here, and in ^{<8016>}**Galatians 1:16**, has misled thousands, who suppose that *flesh and blood* signify *carnal reason*, as it is termed, or the *unregenerate principle* in man. Is it not evident, from our Lord's observation, that it requires an express revelation of God in a man's soul, to give him a saving acquaintance with Jesus Christ; and that not even the miracles of our Lord, wrought before the eyes, will effect this? The *darkness* must be removed from the heart by the Holy Spirit, before a man can become wise unto salvation.

Verse 18. Thou art Peter] This was the same as if he had said, *I acknowledge thee for one of my disciples*-for this name was given him by our Lord when he first called him to the apostleship. See ^{<8014>}**John 1:42.**

Peter, **πετρος**, signifies a stone, or fragment of a *rock*; and our Lord, whose constant custom it was to rise to *heavenly* things through the medium of *earthly*, takes occasion from the name, the *metaphorical* meaning of which was *strength* and *stability*, to point out the solidity of the confession, and the *stability* of that cause which should be founded on THE CHRIST, the SON of the LIVING GOD. See Clarke's notes at "^{<8012>}**Luke 9:62**".

Upon this very rock, **επι ταυτη τη πετρα**-this true confession of thine-that I am THE MESSIAH, that am come to reveal and communicate THE LIVING GOD, that the *dead*, *lost* world may be saved-upon this very rock, myself, thus confessed (alluding probably to ^{<9182>}**Psalm 118:22**, *The STONE which the builders rejected is become the HEAD-STONE of the CORNER*: and to ^{<23816>}**Isaiah 28:16**, *Behold I lay a STONE in Zion for a FOUNDATION*)-will I build my Church, **μον την εκκλησιαν**, *my assembly*, or *congregation*, i.e. of persons who are made partakers of this precious

faith. That *Peter* is not designed in our Lord's words must be evident to all who are not blinded by prejudice. Peter was only *one* of the builders in this sacred edifice, ~~4021~~ **Ephesians 2:20** who himself tells us, (with the rest of the believers,) was built on this living foundation stone: ~~4004~~ **1 Peter 2:4, 5**, therefore Jesus Christ did not say, *on thee, Peter*, will I build my Church, but *changes* immediately the expression, and says, *upon that very rock*, **επι ταυτη τη πετρα**, to show that he neither addressed *Peter*, nor any other of the *apostles*. So, the supremacy of Peter, and the infallibility of the Church of Rome, must be sought in some other scripture, for they certainly are not to be found in this. On the meaning of the word *Church*, see at the conclusion of this chapter.

The gates of hell, **πυλαι αδου** i. e, the *machinations* and *powers* of the invisible world. In ancient times the gates of fortified cities were used to hold councils in, and were usually places of great strength. Our Lord's expression means, that neither the *plots*, *stratagems*, nor *strength* of Satan and his angels, should ever so far prevail as to destroy the sacred truths in the above confession. Sometimes the *gates* are taken for the *troops* which issue out from them: we may firmly believe, that though hell should open her gates, and vomit out her devil and all his angels, to fight against Christ and his saints, ruin and discomfiture must be the consequence on their part; as the arm of the Omnipotent *must* prevail.

Verse 19. The keys of the kingdom] By the *kingdom of heaven*, we may consider the true Church, that house of God, to be meant; and by the *keys*, the power of admitting into that house, or of preventing any improper person from coming in. In other words, the doctrine of salvation, and the full declaration of the way in which God will save sinners; and who they are that shall be finally excluded from heaven; and on what account. When the Jews made a man a *doctor* of the *law*, they put into his hand the key of the closet in the temple where the sacred books were kept, and also tablets to write upon; signifying, by this, that they gave him authority to teach, and to explain the Scriptures to the people.-*Martin*. This prophetic declaration of our Lord was literally fulfilled to Peter, as he was made the *first* instrument of *opening*, i.e. preaching the doctrines of the kingdom of heaven to the *Jews*, ~~4104~~ **Acts 2:41**; and to the *Gentiles*, ~~4104~~ **Acts 10:44-47; 11:1; 15:7**.

Whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth] This mode of expression was frequent among the Jews: they considered that every thing that was done

upon earth, according to the order of God, was at the same time done in heaven: hence they were accustomed to say, that when the priest, on the day of atonement, offered the two goats upon earth, the same were offered in heaven. As one goat therefore is permitted to escape on earth, one is permitted to escape in heaven; and when the priests cast the lots on earth, the priest also casts the lots in heaven. See *Sohar. Lev.* fol. 26; and see Lightfoot and Schoettgen. These words will receive considerable light from

^{<B13B>}**Leviticus 13:3, 23:** *The priest shall look upon him (the leper) and pronounce him unclean.* Hebrew **wta amcw** vetime otho, *he shall pollute him*, i.e. shall declare him polluted, from the evidences mentioned before. And in ^{<B13Z>}**Leviticus 13:23:** *The priest shall pronounce him clean,* **hkh wrhcw** vetiharo hacohen, *the priest shall cleanse him*, i.e. *declare he is clean*, from the evidences mentioned in the verse. In the one case the priest *declared* the person infected with the leprosy, and *unfit* for civil society; and, in the other, that the suspected person was *clean*, and might safely associate with his fellows in civil or religious assemblies. The disciples of our Lord, from having the *keys*, i.e. the true knowledge of the doctrine of the kingdom of heaven, should be able at all times to distinguish between the clean and the unclean, and pronounce infallible judgment; and this *binding* and *loosing*, or pronouncing *fit* or *unfit* for *fellowship* with the *members* of Christ, being always according to the doctrine of the Gospel of God, should be considered as proceeding immediately from heaven, and consequently as *Divinely ratified*.

That *binding* and *loosing* were terms in frequent use among the Jews, and that they meant *bidding* and *forbidding*, *granting* and *refusing*, declaring *lawful* or *unlawful*, &c., Dr. Lightfoot, after having given *numerous instances*, thus concludes:-

“To these may be added, if need were, the frequent (shall I say?) or infinite use of the phrases, **rtwmw rwsa** *bound* and *loosed*, which we meet with *thousands* of times over. But from these allegations the reader sees, abundantly enough, both the *frequency* and the common use of this phrase, and the *sense* of it also; namely, first, that it is used in *doctrine*, and in *judgments*, concerning things *allowed* or *not allowed* in the law. Secondly, that *to bind* is the same with, *to forbid*, or to *declare forbidden*. To think that *Christ*, when he used the common phrase, was not understood by his

hearers in the *common* and *vulgar sense*, shall I call it a matter of laughter, or of madness?

To this, therefore, do these words amount: When the time was come wherein the *Mosaic* law, as to some part of it, was to be abolished, and left off, and, as to another part of it, was to be continued and to last for ever, he granted *Peter* here, and to the rest of the apostles, ~~<401818>~~ **Matthew 18:18**, a power to *abolish* or *confirm* what they thought good, and as they thought good; being taught this, and led by the Holy Spirit: as if he should say, Whatsoever ye shall *bind* in the law of *Moses*, that is, *forbid*, it shall be *forbidden*, the Divine authority confirming it; and whatsoever ye shall *loose*, that is, *permit*, or shall *teach* that it is *permitted* and *lawful*, shall be *lawful* and *permitted*. Hence they *bound*, that is *forbade*, circumcision to the believers; eating of things offered to idols, of things strangled, and of blood, for a time, to the *Gentiles*; and that which they *bound on earth* was *confirmed in heaven*. They *loosed*, that is, allowed purification to *Paul*, and to four other *brethren*, for the shunning of scandal; ~~<4212>~~ **Acts 21:24** and, in a word, by these words of *Christ* it was committed to them, the Holy Spirit directing, that they should make decrees concerning religion, as to the use or rejection of *Mosaic* rites and judgments, and that either for a time, or for ever.

“Let the words be applied by way of paraphrase to the matter that was transacted at present with *Peter*: ‘I am about to build a *Gentile* Church,’ saith *Christ*, and to thee, O *Peter*, do I give the *keys* of the kingdom of heaven, that thou mayest *first open the door of faith to them*; but if thou askest by what rule that Church is to be governed, when the *Mosaic* rule may seem so improper for it, thou shalt be so guided by the Holy Spirit, that whatsoever of the law of *Moses* thou shalt *forbid* them shall be *forbidden*; whatsoever thou *grantest* them shall be *granted*; and that under a sanction made in heaven.’ Hence, in that instant, when he should use his *keys*, that is, when he was now ready to open the gate of the Gospel to the *Gentiles*, Acts 10, he was taught from heaven that the consorting of the *Jew* with the *Gentile*, which before had been *bound*, was now *loosed*; and the eating of any creature convenient for food was now *loosed*, which before had been *bound*; and he in like manner *looses* both these.

“Those words of our Saviour, ~~John 20:23~~ **John 20:23**, *Whose sins ye remit, they are remitted to them*, for the most part are forced to the same sense with these before us, when they carry quite another sense. Here the business is of *doctrine* only, not of *persons*; there of *persons*, not of *doctrine*. Here of *things lawful* or *unlawful* in religion, to be determined by the apostles; there of *persons obstinate* or *not obstinate*, to be *punished* by them, or *not* to be *punished*.

“As to *doctrine*, the apostles were doubly instructed. 1. So long sitting at the feet of their Master, they had imbibed the evangelical doctrine.

“2. The Holy Spirit directing them, they were to determine concerning the legal doctrine and practice, being completely instructed and enabled in both by the Holy Spirit descending upon them. As to the *persons*, they were endowed with a peculiar gift, so that, the same Spirit directing them, if they would retain and punish the sins of any, a power was delivered into their hands of *delivering to Satan*, of punishing with *diseases, plagues, yea, death* itself, which *Peter* did to *Ananias* and *Sapphira*; *Paul* to *Elymas, Hymeneus, and Philetus, &c.*”

After all these evidences and proofs of the proper use of these terms, to attempt to press the word, into the service long assigned them by the Church of Rome, would, to use the words of Dr. Lightfoot, be “a matter of laughter or of madness.” No Church can use them *in the sense thus imposed upon them*, which was done merely to serve secular ends; and least of all can that very Church that thus abuses them.

Verse 20. Then charged he his disciples] *διστευλατο*, *he strictly charged them*. Some very good MSS. have *επειμησεν*, *he severely charged-comminatus est, -he threatened*. These are the readings of the *Cod. Bezae*, both in the *Greek* and *Latin*.

The Christ.] The common text has *Jesus the Christ*; but the word *Jesus* is omitted by fifty-four MSS., some of which are not only of the greatest *authority*, but also of the greatest *antiquity*. It is omitted also by the *Syriac*, later *Persic*, later *Arabic*, *Slavonic*, six copies of the *Itala*, and several of the fathers. The most eminent critics approve of this omission, and Griesbach has left it out of the text in both his editions. I believe the

insertion of it here to be wholly superfluous and improper; for the question is, Who is this *Jesus*? Peter answers, He is, **ο χριστος**, the *Messiah*. The word *Jesus* is obviously improper. What our Lord says here refers to Peter's testimony in ^{<01616>}**Matthew 16:16**: *Thou art the Christ-Jesus* here says, Tell no man that *I am the Christ*, i.e. the MESSIAH; as the time for his full manifestation was not yet come; and he was not willing to provoke the Jewish malice, or the Roman envy, by permitting his disciples to announce him as the Saviour of a lost world. He chose rather to wait, till his resurrection and ascension had set this truth in the clearest light, and beyond the power of successful contradiction.

Verse 21. From that time forth began Jesus, &c.] Before this time our Lord had only spoken of his death in a *vague* and *obscure* manner, see ^{<01240>}**Matthew 12:40**, because he would not afflict his disciples with this matter sooner than necessity required; but now, as the time of his crucifixion drew nigh, he spoke of his sufferings and death in the most express and clear terms. *Three* sorts of persons, our Lord intimates, should be the cause of his death and passion: the *elders*, the *chief priests*, and the *scribes*. Pious *Quesnel* takes occasion to observe from this, that Christ is generally persecuted by these three descriptions of men: *rich men*, who *have* their portion in this life; *ambitious and covetous ecclesiastics*, who *seek* their portion in this life; and *conceited scholars*, who set up their wisdom against the wisdom of God, being more intent on criticising *words* than in providing for the salvation of their souls. The spirit of Christianity always enables a man to bear the ills of life with patience; to receive death with joy; and to expect, by faith, the resurrection of the body, and the life of the world to come.

Verse 22. Then Peter took him] **προσλαβομενος**-took him up-suddenly interrupted him, as it were calling him to order-see *Wakefield*. Some versions give **προσλαβομενος** the sense of *calling him aside*. The word signifies also to *receive in a friendly manner-to embrace*; but Mr. *Wakefield*'s translation agrees better with the scope of the place. A man like Peter, who is of an impetuous spirit, and decides without consideration upon every subject, must of necessity be often in the *wrong*.

Be it far from thee Lord] **ιλεως σοι κυριε**. *Be merciful to thyself Lord*: see the *margin*. {Pity thyself} So I think the original should be rendered. Peter knew that Christ had power sufficient to preserve himself from all the power and malice of the Jews; and wished him to exert that in his *own*

behalf which he had often exhorted in the behalf of *others*. Some critics of great note think the expression elliptical, and that the word **θεος**, *God*, is necessarily understood, as if Peter had said, *God be merciful to thee!* but I think the *marginal* reading is the sense of the passage. The French, Italian, and Spanish, render it the same way. Blind and ignorant man is ever finding fault with the conduct of God. Human reason cannot comprehend the incarnation of the *Almighty's fellow*, (^{<3137>}**Zechariah 13:7**.) nor reconcile the belief of his divinity with his sufferings and death. How many *Peters* are there now in the world, who are in effect saying, *This cannot be done unto thee-thou didst not give thy life for the sin of the world-it would be injustice to cause the innocent to suffer thus for the guilty. But what saith God? His soul shall be made an offering for sin-he shall taste death for every man-the iniquities of us all were laid upon him.* Glorious truth! May the God who published it have eternal praises!

Verse 23. Get thee behind me, Satan] **υπαγε οπισω μου σατανα.** *Get behind me, thou adversary.* This is the proper translation of the Hebrew word **שָׂטָן** *Satan*, from which the Greek word is taken. Our blessed Lord certainly never designed that men should believe he called Peter, **DEVIL**, because he, through erring *affection*, had wished him to avoid that death which he predicted to himself. This translation, which is literal, takes away that *harshness* which before appeared in our Lord's words.

Thou art an offence unto me] **σκανδαλον μου ει** *Thou art a stumbling-block* in my way, to impede me in the accomplishment of the great design.

Thou savourest not] That is, *dost not relish*, **ου φρονεις**, or, thou dost not *understand* or *discern* the things of God-thou art wholly taken up with the vain thought that my kingdom is of this world. He who opposes the doctrine of the *atonement* is an adversary and offence to Christ, though he be as sincere in his profession as *Peter* himself was. Let us beware of false friendships. Carnal relatives, when listened to, may prove the ruin of those whom, through their mistaken tenderness, they wish to save. When a man is intent on saving his own soul, his *adversaries* are often those of his own household.

Verse 24. Will come after me] i.e. to be my disciple. This discourse was intended to show Peter and the rest of the disciples the nature of his

kingdom; and that the honour that cometh from the world was not to be expected by those who followed Christ.

The principles of the Christian life are: First. To have a sincere desire to belong to Christ-*If any man be WILLING to be my disciple, &c.* Secondly. To renounce self-dependence, and selfish pursuits-*Let him deny HIMSELF.* Thirdly. To embrace the condition which God has appointed, and bear the troubles and difficulties he may meet with in walking the Christian road-*Let him take up HIS CROSS.* Fourthly. To imitate Jesus, and do and suffer all in his spirit-*Let him FOLLOW ME.*

Let him deny himself] **απαρνησασθω** may well be interpreted, *Let him deny, or renounce, himself fully-in all respects- perseveringly.* It is a compounded word, and the preposition **απο** abundantly increases the meaning. A follower of Christ will need to observe it in its utmost latitude of meaning, in order to be happy *here*, and glorious *hereafter*. A man's *self* is to him the prime cause of most of his miseries. **See Clarke's note** **“~~4034~~Mark 8:34”**.

Verse 25. For whosoever will save his life] That is, *shall wish to save his life-at the expense of his conscience, and casting aside the cross, he shall lose it-the very evil he wishes to avoid shall overtake him; and he shall lose his soul into the bargain.* See then how necessary it is to renounce one's self! But whatsoever a man loses in this world, for his steady attachment to Christ and his cause, he shall have amply made up to him in the eternal world.

Verse 26. Lose his own soul] Or, *lose his life, την ψυχην αυτου.* On what authority many have translated the word **ψυχη**, in the 25th verse, *life*, and in this verse, *soul*, I know not, but am certain it means *life* in both places. If a man should gain the whole world, its riches, honours, and pleasures, and lose his *life*, what would all these profit him, seeing they can only be enjoyed during *life*? But if the words be applied to the *soul*, they show the *difficulty-the necessity-and importance* of salvation. The world, the devil, and a man's own heart are opposed to his salvation; therefore it is *difficult*. The soul was made for God, and can never be united to him, nor be happy, till saved from sin: therefore it is *necessary*. He who is saved from his sin, and united to God, possesses the utmost felicity that the human soul can enjoy, either in this or the coming world: therefore, this salvation is *important*. **See also Clarke's note on** **“~~4025~~Luke 9:25”**.

Verse 27. For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father]

This seems to refer to ²⁰⁷¹³**Daniel 7:13, 14.** “Behold, one like the Son of man came to the ancient of Days and there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, and nations, and languages should serve him.” This was the glorious Mediatorial kingdom which Jesus Christ was now about to set up, by the destruction of the Jewish nation and polity, and the diffusion of his Gospel through the whole world. If the words be taken in this sense, the *angels* or messengers may signify the apostles and their successors in the sacred ministry, preaching the Gospel in the power of the Holy Ghost. It is very likely that the words do not apply to the final judgment, to which they are generally referred; but to the wonderful display of God’s grace and power after the day of pentecost.

Verse 28. There be some-which shall not taste of death] This verse seems to confirm the above explanation, as our Lord evidently speaks of the establishment of the Christian Church after the day of pentecost, and its final triumph after the destruction of the Jewish polity; as if he had said, “Some of you, my disciples, shall continue to live until these things take place.” The destruction of Jerusalem, and the Jewish economy, which our Lord here predicts, took place about forty-three years after this: and some of the persons now with him doubtless survived that period, and witnessed the extension of the Messiah’s kingdom; and our Lord told them these things before, that when they came to pass they might be confirmed in the faith, and expect an exact fulfilment of all the other promises and prophecies which concerned the extension and support of the kingdom of Christ.

To his kingdom, or in his kingdom. Instead of βασιλεια, *kingdom*, four MSS., later *Syriac, Coptic, Ethiopic, Saxon*, and one copy of the *Itala*, with several of the primitive fathers, read δοξη, *glory*: and to this is added, του πατρος αυτου, *of his Father*, by three MSS. and the versions mentioned before. This makes the passage a little more conformable to the passage already quoted from Daniel; and it must appear, very clearly, that the whole passage speaks not of a future judgment, but of the destruction of the Jewish polity, and the glorious spread of Christianity in the earth, by the preaching of *Christ crucified* by the apostles and their immediate successors in the Christian Church.

1. THE disciples, by being constantly with their Master, were not only guarded against error, but were taught the whole truth: we should neglect

no opportunity of waiting upon God; while Jesus continues to teach, our ear and heart should be open to receive his instructions. That what we have already received may be effectual, we must continue to hear and pray on. Let us beware of the error of the Pharisees! They minded only external performances, and those things by which they might acquire esteem and reputation among men; thus, humility and love, the very soul of religion, were neglected by them: they *had their reward*-the approbation of those who were as destitute of vital religion as themselves. Let us beware also of the error of the Sadducees, who, believing no other felicity but what depended on the good things of this world, became the flatterers and slaves of those who could bestow them, and so, like the Pharisees, had their portion only in this life. All false religions and false principles conduct to the same end, however contrary they appear to each other. No two sects could be more opposed to each other than the Sadducees and Pharisees, yet their doctrines lead to the same end-they are both *wedded to this world*, and *separated* from God in the *next*.

2. From the circumstance mentioned in the conclusion of this chapter, we may easily see the nature of the kingdom and reign of Christ: it is truly spiritual and Divine; having for its object the present holiness and future happiness of mankind. Worldly pomp, as well as worldly maxims, were to be excluded from it. Christianity forbids all worldly expectations, and promises blessedness to those alone who *bear the cross*, leading a life of *mortification* and *self-denial*. Jesus Christ has left us an example that we should follow his steps. How did he live?-What views did he entertain?-In what light did he view worldly pomp and splendour? These are questions which the most superficial reader may, without difficulty, answer to his immediate conviction. And has not Christ said that the *disciple is not ABOVE the Master*? If HE *humbled himself*, how can he look upon those who, professing faith in his name, are *conformed to the world* and *mind earthly things*? These disciples affect to be *above* their Lord; and as they neither bear his cross, nor follow him in the regeneration, they must look for another heaven than that in which he sits at the right hand of God. This is an awful subject; but how few of those called Christians lay it to heart!

3. The term CHURCH in Greek **ἐκκλησία**, occurs for the *first* time in <orig>**Matthew 16:18**. The word simply means an *assembly* or *congregation*, the *nature* of which is to be understood from connecting circumstances; for the word **ἐκκλησία**, as well as the terms *congregation* and *assembly*, may be applied to any concourse of people, *good* or *bad*; gathered together for

lawful or *unlawful* purposes. Hence, it is used, ^{<4192>}**Acts 19:32**, for the *mob*, or *confused rabble*, gathered together against Paul, **ἐκκλησία συγκεχυμένη**, which the town-clerk distinguished, ^{<4193>}**Acts 19:39**, from a *lawful assembly*, **ἐννομῶ ἐκκλησία**. The Greek word **ἐκκλησία** seems to be derived from **ἐκκαλεῶ**, to *call out* of, or *from*, i.e. an assembly gathered out of a multitude; and must have some other word joined to it, to determine its nature: viz. the *Church of God*; the congregation collected by God, and devoted to his service. The *Church of Christ*: the whole company of Christians wheresoever found; because, by the preaching of the Gospel, they are *called out* of the spirit and maxims of the world, to live according to the precepts of the Christian religion. This is sometimes called the *Catholic* or *universal Church*, because constituted of all the *professors of Christianity* in the world, to whatever *sects* or *parties* they may belong: and hence the absurdity of applying the term *Catholic*, which signifies *universal*, to that very *small portion* of it, the *Church of Rome*. In primitive times, before Christians had any stated *buildings*, they worshipped in *private houses*; the people that had been converted to God meeting together in some one dwelling-house of a fellow-convert, more convenient and capacious than the rest; hence *the Church that was in the house of Aquila and Priscilla*, ^{<5143>}**Romans 16:3, 5**, and ^{<5169>}**1 Corinthians 16:19**, and *the Church that was in the house of Nymphas*, ^{<5145>}**Colossians 4:15**. Now, as these houses were dedicated to the worship of God, each was termed **κυρίου οἶκος** *kuriou oikos*, the *house of the Lord*; which word, in process of time, became contracted into **κυριοικ** *kurioik*, and **κυριακη**, *kuriake*; and hence the *kirk* of our northern neighbours, and [Anglo-Saxon] *kirik* of our Saxon ancestors, from which, by corruption, changing the hard Saxon *c* into *ch*, we have made the word *church*. This term, though it be generally used to *signify* the *people* worshipping in a particular place, yet by a metonymy, the *container* being put for the *contained*, we apply it, as it was originally, to the *building* which contains the worshipping people.

In the proper use of this word there can be no such thing as **THE church**, exclusively; there may be **A church**, and **the CHURCHES**, signifying a *particular* congregation, or the different assemblies of religious people: and hence, the *Church of Rome*, by applying it exclusively to itself, abuses the term, and acts as ridiculously as it does absurdly. *Church* is very properly defined in the 19th article of the Church of England, to be “a congregation of faithful men, in the which the pure word of God is

preached, and the sacraments duly administered, according to Christ's ordinance."

ST. MATTHEW

CHAPTER 17.

The transfiguration of Christ, 1-8. Christ's discourse with his disciples on the subject, 9-13. He heals a lunatic, 14-18. His discourse with his disciples on this subject also, 19-21. He foretells his own sufferings and death, 22, 23. He is required to pay tribute at Capernaum, 24-26; and provides the money by a miracle, 27.

NOTES ON CHAP. 17.

Verse 1. After six days] ^{<4002>}Mark 9:2, has the same number; but Luke says, ^{<4028>}Luke 9:28, after *eight* days. The reason of this difference seems to be the following: Matthew and Mark reckon the days *from* that mentioned in the preceding chapter, *to* that mentioned in this; Luke includes *both* days, as well as the *six* intermediate: hence, the one makes *eight*, the other *six*, without any contradiction.

Peter, James, and John] He chose those that they might be witnesses of his transfiguration: two or three witnesses being required by the Scripture to substantiate any fact. Eminent communications of the Divine favour *prepare* for, and *entitle* to, great *services* and great *conflicts*. The same three were made witnesses of his *agony* in the garden, ^{<4057>}Matthew 26:37.

A high mountain] This was one of the mountains of *Galilee*; but whether Mount *Tabor* or not, is uncertain. Some think it was Mount *Hermon*. St. Luke says, Christ and his disciples went up into the mountain to *pray*, ^{<4028>}Luke 9:28.

Verse 2. Was transfigured] That fulness of the Godhead, which dwelt bodily in Christ, now shone forth through the human nature, and manifested to his disciples not only that *Divinity* which Peter had before confessed, ^{<4016>}Matthew 16:16, but also the glorious resurrection body, in which they should exist in the presence of God to eternity.

White as the light.] But the Cod. Bezae, some of the ancient versions, and several of the fathers, read $\omega\varsigma \chi\lambda\omega\nu$, *as snow*; and this is the reading in ^{<4003>}Mark 9:3.

Verse 3. Moses and Elias] Elijah came from heaven in the same body which he had upon earth, for he was *translated*, and did not see death, ^{<1211>}**2 Kings 2:11**. And the body of Moses was probably raised again, as a pledge of the *resurrection*; and as Christ is to come to judge the *quick* and the *dead*, for we shall not all *die*, but all shall be *changed*, ^{<6155>}**1**

Corinthians 15:51, he probably gave the full representation of this in the person of Moses, who *died*, and was thus raised to life, (or appeared now as he shall appear when raised from the dead in the last day,) and in the person of Elijah, who never *tasted death*. Both their bodies exhibit the same appearance, to show that the bodies of glorified saints are the same, whether the person had been *translated*, or whether he had *died*. It was a constant and prevalent tradition among the Jews, that both Moses and Elijah should appear in the times of the Messiah, and to this very tradition the disciples refer, ^{<0170>}**Matthew 17:10**.

We may conceive that the *law* in the person of *Moses*, the great Jewish legislator, and the *prophets* in the person of *Elijah*, the chief of the prophets, came now to do homage to Jesus Christ, and to render up their authority into his hands; as he was the **END** of the law, and the grand *subject* of the predictions of the prophets. This appears more particularly from what St. Luke says, ^{<4083>}**Luke 9:31**, that *Moses* and *Elijah* conversed with our Lord on his *death*, which he was about to *accomplish*, (**πληρουσιν** to *fulfil*;) because in it, all the *rites*, *ceremonies*, and *sacrifices* of the law, as well as the *predictions* of the prophets, were *fulfilled*.

Verse 4. Peter said-let us make, &c.] That is, when he saw Moses and Elijah ready to depart from the mount, ^{<4083>}**Luke 9:33**, he wished to detain them, that he might always enjoy their company with that of his Lord and Master, still supposing that Christ would set up a temporal kingdom upon earth.

Verse 5. A bright cloud overshadowed them] Or as six MSS. and *Ephraim* read it, *a cloud of light*, **νεφελη φωτος**; which reading GRIESBACH has admitted into the text. As a *bright* cloud, or a cloud of *light* could not *overshadow*, or cast any kind of *shade*, the word **πεσκιασειν** should be translated, *surrounded* them. A *cloud* was frequently the symbol of the Divine presence; but such a cloud had always something very remarkable in its appearance. *Ezekiel*, ^{<2004>}**Ezekiel 1:4**, represents it as a *great* cloud, and a *fire unfolding itself*, and a *brightness* about it, and out of the midst thereof, as the *colour* of *amber* out of the

midst of the *fire*; and in ^{<3012>}**Ezekiel 1:28**, he tells us that this was the *appearance* of the *likeness* of the *glory* of the Lord. See also ^{<0260>}**Exodus 16:10; 40:33**, &c.; ^{<2682>}**Ezekiel 43:2**, and ^{<13514>}**1 Chronicles 5:14**. But it was generally in a *thick, dark cloud*, that God manifested himself under the law; see ^{<0219>}**Exodus 19:9; 20:21**. This might be designed as emblematical of the *old covenant*, which was but the *shadow* of the good things which were to come, ^{<8101>}**Hebrews 10:1**; and the *cloud of light* mentioned here, the emblem of that *glorious display of God*, in his Gospel, by which life and immortality were brought to *light*, ^{<5010>}**2 Timothy 1:10**.

This is my beloved Son] οὗτος ἐστὶν ὁ υἱὸς μου ὁ ἀγαπητός, ἐν ᾧ εὐδοκῆσα, *This is my Son, the beloved one, in who I have delighted, or, been well pleased.* God adds his testimony of approbation to what was spoken of the sufferings of Christ by *Moses* and *Elijah*; thus showing that the sacrificial economy of the old covenant was in itself of no worth, but as it *referred* to the grand atonement which Jesus was about to make; therefore he says, *In him* HAVE I *delighted*, (εὐδοκῆσα,) intimating that it was in *him alone*, as typified by those sacrifices, that he HAD *delighted* through the whole course of the legal administration; and that it was only in *reference* to the death of his Son that he accepted the offerings and oblations made to him under the old covenant. *Hear HIM*. The disciples wished to detain *Moses* and *Elijah* that they might hear *them*: but God shows that the *law* which had been in *force*, and the *prophets* which had *prophesied*, until now, must all give place to Jesus; and he alone must now be attended to, as the *way*, the *truth*, and the *life*; for no man could now come unto the Father but *through him*. This voice seems also to refer to that prediction in ^{<051815>}**Deuteronomy 18:15**. The Lord shall raise up a Prophet like unto me: HIM SHALL YE HEAR. Go no more to the law, nor to the prophets, to seek for a *coming* Messiah; for behold he IS *come*! Hear and obey him, and *him* only.

This transfiguration must have greatly confirmed the disciples in the belief of a *future state*, and in the doctrine of the *resurrection*; they saw *Moses* and *Elijah* still EXISTING, though the former had been gathered to his fathers upwards of 1400 years, and the latter had been *translated* nearly 900.

Verse 6. Fell on their face] Dismayed by the *voice*, and dazzled by the glory of the *cloud*. So *Daniel*, ^{<27817>}**Daniel 8:17**, and *Saul of Tarsus*, ^{<4094>}**Acts 9:4**.

Verse 7. Jesus came and touched them] Exactly parallel to this account is ^{<27018>}**Daniel 8:18**, *I was in a deep sleep, i. e. (a trance) on my face towards the ground; but he TOUCHED me, and set me upright.* From Jesus alone are we to expect Divine communications, and by his *power* only are we able to *bear* and *improve* them. It is very likely that this transfiguration took place in the *night*, which was a more proper season to show forth its *glory* than the *day* time, in which a part of the *splendour* must necessarily be lost by the presence of the *solar light*. Besides, St. Luke, ^{<4137>}**Luke 9:37**, expressly says, that it was on the *next day* after the transfiguration that our Lord came down from the mount.

Verse 9. Tell the vision to no man] See the note on ^{<4161>}**Matthew 16:20**; and farther observe, that as this transfiguration was intended to show forth the final abolition of the whole ceremonial law, it was necessary that a matter which could not fail to irritate the Jewish rulers and people should be kept secret, till Jesus had accomplished vision and prophecy by his death and resurrection.

The whole of this emblematic transaction appears to me to be intended to prove, 1st. The *reality* of the *world of spirits*, and the *immortality* of the *soul*. 2dly. The *resurrection* of the body, and the doctrine of *future rewards* and *punishments*, see ^{<41627>}**Matthew 16:27**. 3dly. The *abolition* of the *Mosaic institutions*, and, the *fulfilment* of the *predictions* of the *prophets* relative to the *person, nature, sufferings, death, and resurrection* of Christ, and the *glory* that should *follow*. 4thly. The establishment of the *mild, light-bringing, and life-giving* Gospel of the Son of God. And 5thly. That as the old Jewish covenant and Mediatorship had ended, Jesus was now to be considered as the sole *Teacher*, the only availing *offering* for *sin*, and the grand *Mediator* between God and man. There are many very useful remarks on this transaction, by the late venerable *Bp. Porteus*.

Verse 10. His disciples] instead of HIS disciples, some MSS., with the *Coptic, Armenian, Vulgate*, all the *Itala* except two, and *Origen*, read simply, *οι μαθηται*, THE *disciples*, i.e. those only who had been with him on the mount, *Peter, James, and John*.

Why then say the scribes that Elias must first come?] As the disciples saw that *Elijah* returned to heaven, knowing the tradition of the elders, and the prophecy on which the tradition was founded, ^{<3045>}**Malachi 4:5, 6**, *Behold I send you Elijah the prophet, before the great and terrible day of the Lord shall come; and he shall turn the hearts, &c.*, it was natural

enough for them to inquire what the meaning of the *tradition*, and the intention of the *prophecy*, were.

Verse 11. Elias-shall first come, and restore all things.] Or *will reform*, **αποκαταστησει**; this word our Lord quotes from the Septuagint; who render the Hebrew **מְנַבֵּל** [*twba bl bwnhw* *vehesheb leb aboth al banim*, *he will cause the heart of the fathers to turn to the children*, by, **ος αποκαταστησει καρδιαν πατρος προς υιον**, *who will convert, or restore, the heart of the father to the son*. We are not therefore to understand the version of the Septuagint quoted by our Lord in any other sense than the Hebrew will allow. No fanciful restoration of all men, devils and damned spirits, is spoken of as either being done, or begun, by the ministry of John; but merely that he should preach a doctrine tending to universal reformation of manners, and should be greatly successful: see **Matthew 3:1-7**, and especially **Luke 3:3-15**, where we find that a general *reformation* had taken place, 1. among the common people; 2. among the tax-gatherers; and 3. among the soldiers. And as John announced the coming Christ, who was to baptize with the Holy Ghost, i.e. to enlighten, change, and purify the heart, that the reform might be complete, both outward and inward, he may be said, in the strictest sense of the word, to have fulfilled the prophecy: and that he was the Elijah mentioned by Malachi, the words of Gabriel to the virgin Mary prove; **Luke 1:17**. *And he (John) shall go before him (Christ) in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, &c.*; and that his ministry was powerfully effectual for this purpose, we have already seen.

Verse 12. Knew him not] Or, **ουκ επιγνωσαν αυτον**, *They have not acknowledged him*. That is, the *Jewish rulers* have not acknowledged him, did not receive him as the forerunner of the Messiah. But it appears that all the rest acknowledged him as *such*; and some, from the power and demonstration of his preaching, were inclined to think he was *more*, even the *Messiah* himself: see **Luke 3:15**.

Verse 13. Then the disciples understood] When he spoke of the sufferings of this prophetic Elijah, and also of his *own*, which had been the subject of the conversation on the mount, during the transfiguration, they clearly apprehended that he spoke of John the Baptist.

Verse 14. When they were come to the multitude] It appears that a congregation had been collected during our Lord's stay on the mount: how great must have been the desire of these people to hear the words of Christ! The assembly is *self-collected*, and no delay on the preacher's side discourages them—they continue to wait for him. In the present day how rare is this zeal! How few by the most pathetic invitation can be brought together, even at the most convenient times, to hear the same doctrines, and to get their souls healed by the same wonder-working Christ!

Kneeling down to him] Or falling at his knees, *γονυπετων*. The ancients consecrated the EAR to *memory*; the FOREHEAD to *genius*; the RIGHT HAND to *faith*; and the KNEES to *mercy*: hence those who entreated favour *fell at* and *touched* the *knees* of the person whose kindness they supplicated. See Wakefield's Commentary; and see the note on ^{<0029>}**Exodus 9:29**; where the subject is largely explained.

Verse 15. My son-is lunatic] *σεληνιαζεται*. One who was most affected with this disorder at the *change* and *full* of the moon. See Clarke ^{<0024>}**Matthew 4:24**". But this lunacy was occasioned by a demon, see ^{<0178>}**Matthew 17:18**, and ^{<0177>}**Mark 9:17**; ^{<0138>}**Luke 9:38**. In this case, the devil intended to *hide* himself under the appearance of a natural disorder, that no supernatural means might be resorted to for his expulsion. See a remarkable account on ^{<0139>}**Luke 9:39**.

Falleth oftentimes into the fire, and oft into the water.] The paroxysms of his disorder frequently recurred; and among his numerous falls, some were into the fire and some into the water: so that, on this account, his life was in continual danger. Those who are under the influence of the devil are often driven to *extremes* in every thing. Such are often driven into the *fire* of *presumption*, or the *waters* of *despair*. Satan takes advantage of our natural temper, state of health, and outward circumstances, to plague and ruin our souls.

Verse 16. Thy disciples could not cure him.] No wonder, when the cure must be effected by supernatural agency, and they had not faith enough to interest the power of God in their behalf, ^{<0170>}**Matthew 17:20**. A spiritual disorder must have a spiritual remedy: natural means, in such cases, signify just-nothing.

Verse 17. O faithless and perverse generation!] These and the following words may be considered as spoken: 1. To the disciples, because of their

unbelief, ^{<0172>}**Matthew 17:20.** 2. To the father of the possessed, who should have brought his son to Christ. 3. To the whole multitude, who were slow of heart to believe in him as the Messiah, notwithstanding the miracles which he wrought. See KYPKE.

Perverse, **διστραμμενη**, signifies-1. Such as are influenced by perverse *opinions*, which hinder them from receiving the truth: and, 2. Such as are *profligate in their manners*. KYPKE. This last expression could not have been addressed to the *disciples*, who were certainly saved from the corruption of the world, and whose minds had been lately divinely *illuminated* by what passed at and after the transfiguration: but at all times the expression was applicable to the *Jewish* people.

Verse 18. Jesus rebuked the devil] Deprived him of all power to torment the child; and obliged him to abandon his present usurped habitation.

There are some souls whose cure God reserves to himself alone, and to whom all the applications of his ministers appear to be utterly ineffectual. He sometimes does all without *them*, that they may know they can never do any good without *him*. QUESNEL.

Verse 19. Why could not we cast him out?] They were confounded at their want of success-but not at their want of faith, which was the cause of their miscarriage! When the ministers of the Gospel find their endeavours, with respect to some places or persons, ineffectual, they should come, by *private* prayer, to Christ, humble themselves before him, and beg to be informed whether some evil in *themselves* have not been the cause of the unfruitfulness of their labours.

Verse 20. Because of your unbelief] Are we preachers of the Gospel? Do the things of God rest upon our minds with a deep and steady conviction? Can we expect that a doctrine which we do not, from conviction, credit ourselves, can be instrumental in our hands of begetting faith in others? *So we preached, and so ye believed.* The word *preached* generally begets in the people the *same* spirit which the preacher possesses. Instead of **απιστιαν**, *unbelief*, the famous Vatican MS. and Cod. Cyprius, six others, Coptic, Ethiopic, Armenian, and Arabic, Origen, and Chrysostom, read **ολιγοπιστιαν**, *littleness of faith*. The disciples had some faith, but not enough-they believed, but not fully.

As a grain of mustard seed] Some eminent critics think this a proverbial expression, intimating a GREAT DEGREE of faith, because *removing mountains*, which St. Paul, ^{<4613D>}**1 Corinthians 13:2**, attributes to ALL FAITH; i.e. the greatest possible degree of faith, is attributed here, by our Lord, to that faith which is as a *grain of mustard seed*. However this may be, there can be no doubt that our Lord means, as BISHOP PEARCE well remarks, a *thriving and increasing faith*; which like the grain of mustard seed, from being the *least* of seeds, becomes the greatest of all herbs; even a tree in whose branches the fowls of the air take shelter. See WAKEFIELD'S *Comment*, and see **Clarke's note on** "^{<4D132>}**Matthew 13:32**".

Verse 21. This kind goeth not out but by prayer, &c.] **ΤΟΥΤΟ ΤΟ ΓΕΝΟΣ**, *this kind*, some apply to the *faith* which should be exercised on the occasion, which goeth not out, *doth not exert itself*, but by prayer and fasting; but this interpretation is, in my opinion, far from *solid*. However, there is great difficulty in the text. The whole verse is wanting in the famous *Vatican MS.*, one of the most ancient and most authentic perhaps in the world; and in another one of *Colbert's*, written in the 11th or 12th century. It is wanting also in the *Coptic, Ethiopic, Syriac, Hieros.*, and in one copy of the *Itala*. But all the MSS. acknowledge it in the parallel place, ^{<41029>}**Mark 9:29**, only the *Vatican MS.* leaves out **νηστεία**, *fasting*. I strongly suspect it to be an interpolation; but, if it be, it is very *ancient*, as Origen, Chrysostom, and others of the primitive fathers, acknowledged it. But while candour obliges me to acknowledge that I cannot account for the fact here alleged, that a certain class or genus of demons cannot be expelled but by prayer and fasting, while others may be ejected without them, I can give a sense to the passage which all my readers will easily understand: viz. that there are certain evil *propensities*, in some persons, which *pampering the flesh* tends to nourish and strengthen; and that *self-denial* and *fasting*, accompanied by *prayer* to God, are the most likely means, not only to *mortify* such propensities, but also to *destroy* them. For other remarkable circumstances relative to this case, see **Clarke's notes on** "^{<41017>}**Mark 9:17**", &c.

Verse 22. They abode in Galilee] Lower *Galilee*, where the city of *Capernaum* was.

The Son of man shall be betrayed into the hands of men] **μελλει** "παραδιδοσθαι εις χειρας"-*The Son of man is about to be delivered into the hands*, &c. I am fully of the mind of two eminent critics,

Grotius and Wakefield, that **παραδιδοσθαι** should be here translated *delivered*, or *delivered up*, not *betrayed*; and that the agency, in this case, should be referred to *God*, not to *Judas*. Jesus was *delivered up*, by the counsel of God, to be an atonement for the sin of the world. See ^{<4027>}**Acts 4:27, 28**. *Against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed to do what thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done, Herod and Pontius Pilate-were gathered together.*

Verse 23. They were exceeding sorry] Since the conversation on the mount, with Moses and Elijah; Peter, James, and John could have no doubt that their Lord and Master must suffer, and that it was for this end he came into the world; but, while they submitted to the counsel of God, their affection for him caused them to feel exquisite distress.

Verse 24. They that received tribute] This was not a tax to be paid to the *Roman government*; but a tax for the support of the *temple*. The law, ^{<23013>}**Exodus 30:13**, obliged every male among the Jews to pay half a shekel yearly; for the support of the temple; and this was continued by them wherever dispersed, till after the time of Vespasian, see Josephus, WAR, book 7. c. 6, who ordered it afterwards to be paid into the Roman treasury. The word in the text, which is generally translated *tribute*-**τα διδραχμα**, signifies the *didrachma*, or *two drachms*. This piece of money was about the value of two *Attic* drachms, each equal to *fifteen pence* of our money. The didrachma of the Septuagint, mentioned ^{<23013>}**Exodus 30:13**, was twice as heavy as the *Attic*, for it was equal to a whole *shekel*, this being the value of that piece of money at *Alexandrina*, the place where the Septuagint translation was made; for the *half shekel* mentioned in the above passage, they render **ημισυ του διδαχμου**, *the half of a didrachma*.

Verse 25. He saith, Yes.] From this reply of Peter, it is evident that our Lord customarily paid all taxes, tributes, &c., which were common among the people wherever he came. The children of God are subject to all civil laws in the places where they live -and should pay the taxes levied on them by public authority; and though any of these should be found unjust, **THEY rebel** not, as their business is not to *reform* the *politics* of nations, but the *morals* of the *world*.

Verse 26. Then are the children free] As this money is levied for the support of that temple of which I am the Lord, then I am not obliged to

pay the tax; and my disciples, like the priests that minister, should be exempted from the necessity of paying.

Verse 27. Lest we-offend them] Be a stumbling-block to the priests, or rulers of the Jews, I will pay the tribute-go thou to the sea-cast a hook, and take the first fish-thou shalt find a piece of money, **στατηρα**, a stater. This piece of money was equal in value to four drachms, or two shekels, (five shillings of our money,) and consequently was sufficient to pay the tribute for our Lord and Peter, which amounted to about half-a-crown each. If the *stater* was in the mouth or belly of the fish *before*, who can help admiring the *wisdom* of Christ, that discovered it there? If it was not *before* in the mouth of the fish, who can help admiring the *power* of Christ, that impelled the fish to go where the stater had been lost in the bottom of the sea, take it up, come towards the shore where Peter was fishing, and, with the stater in its mouth or stomach, catch hold of the hook that was to draw it out of the water? But suppose there was no *stater* there, which is as likely as otherwise, then Jesus *created* it for the purpose, and here his omnipotence was shown; for to make a thing exist that did not exist before is an act of unlimited power, however small the thing itself may be. Some suppose that the *haddock* was the fish caught by Peter, because this fish has a blackish mark on each side of its neck or shoulders, as seems to exhibit the impression of a finger and thumb. The haddock is the *gadus eglesinus*. But this being a sea fish, could not be a native of the sea of Galilee or Tiberias, &c., for the river Jordan runs through the sea of Galilee, and falls into the Dead Sea, which has no outlet to the ocean: no sea fish of any kind can be found there; and we may add to this, that *Belzoni*, a learned traveller, who examined the produce of the lake of Tiberias, found only trouts, pikes, chevins, and tenches. That it may, besides these, have some fishes peculiar to itself, as most extensive fresh water lakes have, need not be denied; but it could have no sea fish.

THE account of the *transfiguration*, the peculiar case of the *lunatic*, with his cure, and the miracle wrought to pay the *tribute money*, render this one of the most interesting and instructive chapters in the New Testament.

1. To what has already been said on the subject of the *transfiguration*, nothing need be added: I have given that sense to it which the circumstances of the case, the construction of the words, and the analogy of faith warrant. That others have understood the whole transaction differently, is readily granted. Some of the foreign *critics*, who are also

called *divines*, have stripped it, by *their* mode of interpretation, of all its strength, use, and meaning. With them, it is thus to be understood:—"Jesus, with his disciples, Peter, James, and John, went by night into a mountain, for the purpose of prayer and meditation; while thus engaged, the animal spirits of the disciples were overcome by watching and fatigue, and they fell asleep: in this sleep they dreamed, or Peter only dreamed, that he saw his Master encompassed with a glorious light, and that Moses and Elijah were conversing with him. That early in the morning, just as the sun was rising, there happened some electric or thunder-like explosions (a thing not unfrequent near some mountains) by which the disciples were suddenly awoke; that Peter, whose mind was strongly impressed with his dream, seeing the rising sun shine gloriously upon his Master, and his strongly impressed senses calling to remembrance his late vision, he for a moment imagined he saw, not only the glory of which he had dreamed, but the persons also—Moses and Elijah, still standing on the mount with Christ; that not being as yet sufficiently awake, finding the images impressed on his imagination fleeting away with his returning exercise of reason, he cried out, before he was aware, *Lord! it is good for its to be here, let us make three tabernacles, &c.*; but in a short time, having recovered the regular use of his senses, he perceived that it was a *dream*; and, having told it to our Lord and his brother disciples, lest the Jews might take occasion of jealousy from it, he was desired to tell the vision to no man." This is the substance of that strange explanation given by those learned men to this extraordinary transaction; a mode of interpretation only calculated to support that system which makes it an important point to deny and decry all supernatural and miraculous influence, and to explain away all the spirituality of the New Testament. Whatever *ingenuity* may be in this pretended elucidation, every unprejudiced person must see that it can never be brought to accord with the *letter* and *concomitant circumstances* of this most remarkable case.

2. The cure of the deaf and dumb lunatic has been treated, by the same critics, in nearly the same way, and for the same obvious design, namely, to exclude from the world all supernatural agency; and could they succeed in this, of what *value*, or, indeed, *utility*, could the whole New Testament be to mankind? We might be well astonished to find such a history, with such a great variety of curious and apparently interesting circumstances:—a wondrous person, labouring, preaching, suffering, dying, &c., &c., without

having scarcely any thing in view, but a sort of merely moral reformation of the outward man! Truly, this:-

*“Is like an ocean into tempest toss’d,
To waft a feather, or to drown a fly.”*

But the truth of God’s miraculous interpositions, the miracles of the New Testament, demoniacal possessions and influence, the atonement, the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, the regeneration of the corrupted human heart, &c., &c., must not be given up to please a certain description of persons, who have no commerce with God themselves, and cannot bear that others should either have or pretend to it.

3. The miracle wrought for the paying of the *temple tribute* money, is exceedingly remarkable. See Clarke’s note on “⁴⁰¹⁷⁷Matthew 17:27”, which brings this particularly to view.

To what is there said, it may be added, that our Lord seems to have wrought this miracle for the following purposes:-

1. More forcibly to impress the minds of his disciples, and his followers in general, with the necessity and propriety of being subject to all the laws of the different states, kingdoms, &c., wheresoever the providence of God might cast their lot.
2. To show forth his own unlimited power and knowledge, that they might be fully convinced that he *knew* all things, even to the most minute; and *could do* whatsoever he pleased; and that both his wisdom and power were continually interested in behalf of his true disciples.
3. To teach all believers a firm trust and reliance on Divine Providence, the sources of which can never be exhausted; and which, directed by infinite wisdom and love, will make every provision essentially requisite for the comfort and support, of life. How many of the poor followers of Christ have been enabled to discern his kind hand, even in the means furnished them to discharge the *taxes* laid on them by the *state*! The profane and the unprincipled may deride, and mock on, but the people of God know it to be their duty, and their interest, to be subject to every ordinance of man for the Lord’s sake; and, while his *grace* and *providence* render this obedience, in things both spiritual and secular, *possible*, his love, which their hearts feel, renders their *duty* their *delight*. The accomplishment of such ends as these is worthy both of the wisdom and benevolence of Christ.

ST. MATTHEW

CHAPTER 18.

The disciples inquiring who should be greatest in Christ's kingdom, 1. He takes occasion to recommend humility, simplicity, and disinterestedness, 2-6. Warns them against offences, 7. Recommends mortification and self-denial. 8, 9. Charges them to avoid giving offence. 10, 11. Parable of him who had lost one sheep out of his flock consisting of one hundred, 12-14. How to deal with an offending brother, 15-18. A gracious promise to social prayer, 19, 20. How often an offending brother who expresses sorrow, and promises amendment, is to be forgiven, 21, 22. The parable of the king, who calls his servants to account, and finds one who owed him ten thousand talents, who, being unable to pay, and imploring mercy, is forgiven, 23-27. Of the same person, who treated his fellow-servant unmercifully, who owed him but a small sum, 28-30. Of the punishment inflicted on this unmerciful servant, 31-35.

NOTES ON CHAP. 18.

Verse 1. At the same time] Or *hour*; but $\omega\rho\alpha$ is frequently used to signify some particular time: however, instead of $\omega\rho\alpha$, three MSS., all the *Itala* but four, and *Origen*, read $\eta\mu\epsilon\rho\alpha$, *day*. *Origen* says both readings were extant in MSS. in his time.

Who is the greatest] Could these disciples have viewed the kingdom of Christ in any other light than that of a temporal one? Hence they wished to know whom he would make his prime minister-whom his general-whom his chief chancellor-whom supreme judge, &c., &c. Is it he who first became thy disciple, or he who is thy nearest relative, or he who has most frequently entertained thee, or he who is the oldest, merely as to years? Could this inquiry have proceeded from any but the nine disciples who had not witnessed our Lord's transfiguration? Peter, James, and John, were surely more spiritual in their views! And yet how soon did even these forget that his kingdom was not of this world! See ^{<41085>} **Mark 10:35**, &c.; ^{<61810>} **John 18:10**, &c. The disciples having lately seen the keys delivered to Peter, and found that he, with James and John, had been privileged with being present at the transfiguration, it is no wonder if a measure of jealousy and suspicion began to work in their minds. From this inquiry we may also learn, that the disciples had no notion of *Peter's supremacy*; nor did they understand, as the Roman Catholics will have it, that Christ had constituted

him their head, either by the conversation mentioned ^{<DIGIS>}**Matthew 16:18, 19**, or by the *act* mentioned in the conclusion of the preceding chapter. Had they thought that any such superiority had been designed, their present question must have been extremely impertinent. *Let this be observed.*

Verse 2. A little child] But this child could *walk*, for he called *him to him*. *Nicephorus* says, this was *Ignatius*, who was afterwards bishop of *Antioch*, and suffered martyrdom under, and by command of, the Roman Emperor *Trojan*, in the 107th year of our Lord. But this good father is not much to be depended on, being both weak and credulous.

Verse 3. Except ye be converted] Unless ye be saved from those prejudices which are at present so baneful to your nation, (seeking a temporal and not a spiritual kingdom,) unless ye be clothed with the spirit of humility, ye cannot enter into the spirit, design, and privileges of my spiritual and eternal kingdom. The name of this kingdom should put you in mind of its nature.-1. The KING is *heavenly*; 2. His SUBJECTS are *heavenly-minded*; 3. Their COUNTRY is *heavenly*, for they are strangers and pilgrims upon earth; 4. The GOVERNMENT of this kingdom is wholly *spiritual* and *divine*. See on ^{<ORD>}**Matthew 3:2**.

And become as little children] i.e. Be as truly without worldly ambition, and the lust of power, as little children are, who act among themselves as if all were *equal*. The following saying from the *Boostan* of the poet *Saady* is very appropriate. "The hearts of infants being free from *avarice*, what care they for a handful of *silver* more than for a handful of *dust*?"

Verse 4. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself] So great is the disparity between the kingdom of Christ and the kingdoms of this world, that there is no way of rising to honours in the former, but by humility of mind, and continual self-abasement.

The same is greatest] Thus our Lord shows them that they were all *equal*, and that there could be no superiority among them, but what must come from the deepest humility; he intimates also, that wherever this principle should be found, it would save its possessor from seeking worldly honours or earthly profits, and from seeking to be a *ruler* over his *brethren*, or a *lord* in God's *heritage*.

Verse 5. One such little child] As our Lord in the preceding verses considers a little child an emblem of a genuine disciple, so by the term in

this verse he means a disciple only. “Whosoever will receive, *i.e.* show unto such a child-like, unambitious disciple of mine, any act of kindness for my sake, I will consider it as done to myself.”

Verse 6. But whoso shall offend one of these little ones] But, on the contrary, whosoever shall cause one of the least of those who believe in me to be stumbled-to go into the spirit of the world, or give way to sin-such a one shall meet with the most exemplary punishment.

Let those who act the part of the devil, in tempting others to sin, hear this declaration of our Lord, and tremble.

A millstone] **μυλος ονικος**, *an ass's millstone*, because in ancient times, before the invention of *wind* and *water mills*, the stones were turned sometimes by *slaves*, but commonly by *asses* or *mules*. The most ancient kind of mills among the inhabitants of the northern nations, was the *quern*, or hand-mill. In some places in Ireland, Scotland, and the Zetland Isles, these still exist.

Drowned in the depth of the sea.] It is supposed that in Syria, as well as in Greece, this mode of punishing criminals was practised; especially in cases of parricide; and when a person was devoted to destruction for the public safety, as in cases of plague, famine, &c. That this was the custom in Greece, we learn from the Scholiast on the *Equites* of Aristophanes, **οταν γαρ κατεποντουν τινας βαρος απο των τραχηλων εκρεμων**. When a person was drowned, they hung a weight, (**υπερβολον λιθον**, Suidas,) a vast stone about his neck. See the ancient Scholia upon the *Equites*, lin. 1360, and Suidas, in **υπερβολον λιθον**. We find also that it was a positive institute of the ancient Hindoo law. “If a woman,” says the precept, “causes any person to take poison, sets fire to any person’s house, or murders a man, then the magistrate, having *bound a stone to her neck, shall drown her.*” Halhead’s Code of Gentoo Laws, 4to. edition, page 306.

Verse 7. Wo!] Or, *alas!* **ουαι**. It is the opinion of some eminent critics, that this word is ever used by our Lord to express *sympathy* and *concern*.

Because of offences] Scandals, stumbling-blocks, persecutions, &c.

For it must needs be that offences come] **αναγκε γαρ εστιν ελθειν τα σκανδαλα**, *for the coming of offences is unavoidable*. Such is the wickedness of men, such their obstinacy, that they will not come unto Christ that they may have life, but desperately continue *deceiving* and

being *deceived*. In such a state of things, offences, stumbling-blocks, persecutions, &c., are unavoidable.

Wo to that man] He who *gives* the offence, and he who *receives* it, are both exposed to ruin.

Verses 8. - 9. If thy hand, &c.] See the notes on ^{<4162>}Matthew 5:29, 30.

Verse 10. One of these little ones] One of my simple, loving, humble disciples.

Their angels-always behold] Our Lord here not only alludes to, but, in my opinion, establishes the notion received by almost all nations, viz. That every person has a *guardian angel*; and that these have always access to God, to receive orders relative to the management of their charge. See ^{<49348>}Psalm 34:8; ^{<8014>}Hebrews 1:14.

Always behold the face] Hence, among the Jews, the angels were styled μυνη γκλ m, *malakey panim*, angels of the face, and Michael is said to be μυνη ρε, *sar ha-panim* the prince of the face. This is an allusion to the privilege granted by eastern monarchs to their chief favourites; a privilege which others were never permitted to enjoy. The seven princes of Media and Persia, who were the *chief favourites* and *privy-counsellors* of *Ahasuerus*, are said to *see the king's face*. ^{<17014>}Esther 1:14; see also ^{<12519>}2 Kings 25:19, and ^{<25125>}Jeremiah 51:25. Our Lord's words give us to understand that humble-hearted, child-like disciples, are objects of his peculiar care, and constant attention. The clause, εν ουρανοις, *in the heavens*, is wanting in several MSS., versions, and fathers.

Verse 11. For the Son of man, &c.] This is added as a second reason, why no injury should be done to his followers. "The Son of man has so loved them as to come into the world to lay down his life for them."

That which was lost.] απολωλος. In ^{<6911>}Revelation 9:11, Satan is called απολλων, *Apolluon*, the destroyer, or *him who lays waste*. This name bears a near relation to that state in which our Lord tells us he finds all mankind-*lost, desolated, ruined*. So it appears that Satan and men have the nearest affinity to each other-as the *destroyer* and the *destroyed*-the *desolator* and the *desolated*- the *loser* and the *lost*. But the Son of man came to save the lost. Glorious news! May every lost soul feel it! This verse is omitted by five MSS., two versions, and three of the fathers; but of

its authenticity there can be no doubt, as it is found in the parallel place, ^{<21910>}**Luke 19:10**, on which verse there is not a single various reading found in any of the MSS. that have ever been discovered, nor in any of the ancient versions.

Verse 12. Doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains] So our common translation reads the verse; others, *Doth he not leave the ninety and nine UPON THE MOUNTAINS, and go, &c.* This latter reading appears to me to be the best; because, in ^{<21514>}**Luke 15:4**, it is said, *he leaveth the ninety and nine IN THE DESERT.* The allusion, therefore, is to a shepherd feeding his sheep on the mountains, in the desert; not seeking the lost one ON the mountains.

*Leaving the ninety and nine, and seeking the ONE strayed sheep:-*This was a very common form of speech among the Jews, and includes no mystery, though there are some who imagine that our Lord refers to the angels who kept not their first estate, and that they are in number, to men, as NINETY are to ONE. But it is likely that our Lord in this place only alludes to his constant solicitude to instruct, heal, and save those simple people of the sea coasts, country villages, &c., who were scattered abroad, as sheep without a shepherd, (^{<41026>}**Matthew 9:36**), the scribes and Pharisees paying no attention to their present or eternal well-being. This may be also considered as a lesson of instruction and comfort to backsliders. How hardly does Christ give them up!

Verse 13. He rejoiceth more] It is justly observed by one, on this verse, that it is natural for a person to express unusual joy at the *fortunate accomplishment* of an *unexpected event*.

Verse 14. It is not the will of your Father] If any soul be finally lost, it is not because God's *will* or *counsel* was against its salvation, or that a proper provision had not been made for it; but that, though light came into the world, it preferred darkness to light, because of its attachment to its evil deeds.

Verse 15. If thy brother] Any who is a member of the same religious society, *sin against thee*, 1. *Go and reprove him alone*, -it may be in person; if that cannot be so well done, by thy messenger, or in writing, (which in many cases is likely to be the most effectual.) Observe, our Lord gives no liberty to omit this, or to exchange it for either of the following steps. If this do not succeed,

Verse 16. 2. **Take with thee one or two more]** Men whom he esteems, who may then confirm and enforce what thou sayest; and afterwards, if need require, bear witness of what was spoken. If even this do not succeed, then, and not before,

Verse 17. 3. **Tell it unto the Church]** Lay the whole matter before the congregation of Christian believers, in that place of which he is a member, or before the *minister* and *elders*, as the *representatives* of the Church or assembly. If all this avail not, then,

Let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican.] To whom thou art, as a Christian, to owe earnest and persevering good will, and acts of kindness; but have no *religious* communion with him, till, if he have been convicted, he *acknowledge* his fault. Whosoever follows this threefold rule will seldom offend others, and never be offended himself.-Rev. J. WESLEY.

Reproving a brother who had sinned was a positive command under the law. See ^{<B1917>}**Leviticus 19:17**. And the Jews have a saying, that one of the causes of the ruin of their nation was, “*No man reproveth another.*” On the word *Church*, see **Clarke** at “^{<O1628>}**Matthew 16:28**”.

Verse 18. **Whatsoever ye shall bind, &c.]** Whatever determinations ye make, in conformity to these directions for your conduct to an offending brother, will be accounted just, and ratified by the Lord. See on ^{<O1619>}**Matthew 16:19**; and, to what is there said, the following observations may be profitably added. **οσα εαν δησητε” και οσα εαν λυσητε.**
Binding and *loosing*, in this place, and in ^{<O1619>}**Matthew 16:19**, is generally restrained, by Christian interpreters, to matters of discipline and authority. But it is as plain as the sun, by what occurs in numberless places dispersed throughout the *Mishna*, and from thence commonly used by the later *rabbins* when they treat of ritual subjects, that *binding* signified, and was commonly understood by the *Jews* at that time to be, a *declaration that any thing was unlawful to be done*; and *loosing* signified, on the contrary, a *declaration that any thing may be lawfully done*. Our Saviour spoke to his disciples in a language which they understood, so that they were not in the least at a loss to comprehend his meaning; and its being obsolete to us is no manner of reason why we should conclude that it was obscure to them. The words, *bind* and *loose*, are used in both places in a declaratory sense, of *things*, not of *persons*. It is **ο** and **οσα**, in the neuter gender, both in chap. 16, and here in this: i.e. *Whatsoever thing or things ye shall bind*

or loose. Consequently, the same commission which was given at first to St. Peter alone, (~~401619~~ **Matthew 16:19**), was afterwards enlarged to all the apostles. St. Peter had made a confession that *Jesus* was the *Christ*, the Son of God. His confession of the Divinity of our Lord was the first that ever was made by man; to him, therefore, were given the keys of the kingdom of heaven: i.e. God made choice of him among all the apostles, that the *Gentiles* should *first*, by his mouth, hear the word of the Gospel, and believe. He first *opened* the kingdom of heaven to the *Gentiles*, when he preached to *Cornelius*. It was *open* to the *Jews* all along before; but if we should suppose that it was not, yet to them also did St. Peter *open* the kingdom of heaven, in his sermon at the great *pentecost*. Thus, then, St. Peter exercised his two keys: that for the *Jews* at the great *pentecost*; and that for the *Gentiles*, when he admitted *Cornelius* into the Church. And this was the reward of his first confession, in which he owned *Jesus* to be the promised *Messiah*. And what St. Peter *loosed*, i.e. declared as *necessary* to be believed and practised by the disciples here, was ratified above. And what he declared *unlawful* to be believed and practised, (i.e. what he *bound*), was actually forbidden by God himself.

I own myself obliged to Dr. *Lightfoot* for this interpretation of the true notion of *binding* and *loosing*. It is a noble one, and perfectly agrees with the ways of speaking then in use among the *Jews*. It is observable that these *phrases*, of *binding* and *loosing*, occur no where in the New Testament but in St. *Matthew*, who is supposed to have written his Gospel first in *Hebrew*, from whence it was translated into *Greek*, and then the force and use of the expression will better appear. Dr. *Wotton's* Miscell. Discourses, vol. i. p. 309, &c., &c.

“The phrases to *bind* and to *loose* were *Jewish*, and most frequent in their writers. It belonged only to the teachers among the *Jews* to *bind* and to *loose*. When the *Jews* set any apart to be a preacher, they used these words, ‘Take thou liberty to teach what is BOUND and what is LOOSE.’“ *Strype's* preface to the Posthumous Remains of Dr. *Lightfoot*, p. 38.

Verse 19. Again I say unto you] The word *αμην*, *verily*, is *added* here, in ninety-eight MSS., (many of which are of the greatest antiquity and importance,) seven editions, all the Arabic, the Slavonic, and several of the *Itala*. The taking in or leaving out such a word may appear to some a matter of indifference; but, as I am fully convinced *Jesus Christ* never

spoke a useless or a needless word, my maxim is, to omit not one syllable that I am convinced (from such authority as the above) he has ever used, and to take in nothing that he did not speak. It makes the passage much more emphatic—*Again, VERILY I say unto you,*

If two of you shall agree] *συμφωνηστωσιν*, *sympthonize*, or *harmonize*. It is a metaphor taken from a number of musical instruments set to the same *key*, and playing the same *tune*: here, it means a perfect agreement of the hearts, desires, wishes, and voices, of *two* or more persons praying to God. It also intimates that as a number of musical instruments, skilfully played, in a good concert, are pleasing to the ears of men, so a number of persons united together in warm, earnest, cordial prayer, is highly pleasing in the sight and ears of the Lord. Now this conjoint prayer refers, in all probability, to the *binding* and *loosing* in the preceding verse; and thus we see what power faithful prayer has with God!

It shall be done for them] What an encouragement to pray! even to *two*, if there be no more disposed to join in this heavenly work.

Verse 20. For where two-are gathered together in thy name] There are many sayings among the Jews almost exactly similar to this, such as, *Wherever even two persons are sitting in discourse concerning the law, the Divine presence is among them.* See much more in *Schoettgen*. And the following, among the ancient Hindoos, is like unto it: “When *Brahma*, the Lord of creation, had formed mankind, and at the same time appointed his worship, he spoke and said, ‘With this worship pray for increase, and let it be that on which ye shall depend for the accomplishment of all your wishes. With this remember God, that God may remember you. Remember one another, and ye shall obtain supreme happiness. God, being remembered in worship, will grant you the enjoyment of your wishes: he who enjoyeth what hath been given unto him by God, and offereth not a portion unto him, is even as a thief. Know that good works come from *Brahma*, whose nature is incorruptible; wherefore, the omnipresent *Brahma* is PRESENT IN THE WORSHIP.’” See the *Bagvat Geeta*, p. 45, 46.

In my name] Seems to refer particularly to a *public* profession of Christ and his Gospel.

There am I in the midst] None but God could say these words, to say them with truth, because God alone is *every where present*, and these words refer to his *omnipresence*. *Wherever*-suppose millions of assemblies

were collected in the same moment, in different places of the creation, (which is a very possible case,) this promise states that Jesus is in each of them. Can any, therefore, say these words, except that God who fills both heaven and earth? But Jesus says these words: *ergo*-Jesus is God. Let it be observed, that Jesus is not among them to spy out their sins; or to mark down the imperfections of their worship; but to enlighten, strengthen, comfort, and save them.

Verse 21. Till seven times?] Though *seven* was a number of perfection among the Hebrews, and often meant much more than the units in it imply, yet it is evident that Peter uses it here in its plain literal sense, as our Lord's words sufficiently testify. It was a maxim among the Jews never to forgive more than thrice: Peter enlarges this charity more than *one half*; and our Lord makes even his enlargement *septuple*, see ^{<0182>}**Matthew 18:22**. *Revenge* is natural to man, i.e. man is naturally a *vindictive being*, and, in consequence, nothing is more difficult to him than *forgiveness* of injuries.

Verse 22. Seventy times seven.] There is something very remarkable in these words, especially if collated with ^{<0124>}**Genesis 4:24**, where the very same words are used—"If any man kill LAMECH, he shall be avenged *seventy times seven*." The just God punishes sin in an exemplary manner. *Sinful* man, who is exposed to the stroke of Divine justice, should be *abundant* in forgiveness, especially as the merciful only shall find mercy. See Clarke's note on ^{<0187>}**Matthew 5:7**", and on ^{<0164>}**Matthew 6:14, 15**. The sum *seventy times seven* makes four hundred and ninety. Now an *offence*, properly such, is that which is given *wantonly, maliciously*, and without ANY PROVOCATION. It is my opinion, that, let a man search ever so accurately, he will not find that he has received, during the whole course of his life, four hundred and ninety such offences. If the man who receives the offence has given any *cause* for it, in that case, the *half* of the offence, at least, towards his brother, ceases.

Verse 23. Therefore is the kingdom] In respect to *sin, cruelty*, and *oppression*, God will proceed in the kingdom of heaven (the dispensation of the Gospel) as he did in former times; and every person shall give an account of himself to God. Every sin is a *debt* contracted with the justice of God; men are all God's own servants; and the day is at hand in which their Master will *settle accounts* with them, inquire into their work, and pay them their wages. Great Judge! what an awful time must this be, when with multitudes nothing shall be found but *sin* and *insolvency*!

By *servant*, in the text, we are to understand, a petty king, or tributary prince; for no *hired* servant could possibly owe such a sum as is here mentioned.

Verse 24. Ten thousand talents] **μυριων ταλαντων**, a myriad of talents, the highest number known in Greek arithmetical notation. An immense sum, which, if the *silver* talent be designed, amounts to 4,500,000 sterling; but if the gold talent be meant which is by far the most likely, then the amount is 67,500,000 sterling, a sum equal to the annual revenue of the British empire! See the note on ^{<1253>}**Exodus 25:39**. The *margin* above is incorrect.

Verse 25. He had not to pay] That is *not being able to pay*. As there could not be the smallest probability that a servant, wholly *dependent* on his master, who was now absolutely insolvent, could ever pay a debt he had contracted of more than 67 millions! -so is it impossible for a sinner, infinitely indebted to Divine justice, ever to pay a mite out of the talent.

Commanded him to be sold-his wife-children, &c.] Our Lord here alludes to an ancient custom among the Hebrews, of selling a man and his family to make payment of contracted debts. See ^{<1271>}**Exodus 22:3**; ^{<1253>}**Leviticus 25:30, 47**; ^{<1341>}**2 Kings 4:1**. This custom passed from among the *Jews* to the *Greeks* and *Romans*. I have already remarked (see ^{<14719>}**Genesis 47:19**) that in the Burman empire the sale of whole families, to discharge debts, is very common.

Verse 26. Fell down and worshipped him] **προσεκυνει αυτω**, *crouched as a dog before him*, with the greatest deference, submission, and anxiety.

Have patience with me] **μακροθυμησον εἰς εμοι**, *be long-minded towards me-give me longer space*.

The means which a sinner should use to be saved, are, 1. Deep *humiliation* of heart-*he fell down*. 2. *Fervent prayer*. 3. *Confidence* in the *mercy of God-have patience*. 4. A *firm purpose* to devote his soul and body to his Maker-*I will pay thee all*. A sinner may be said, according to the economy of grace, to *pay all*, when he brings the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus to the throne of justice, by faith; thus offering an *equivalent* for the pardon he seeks, and *paying all* he owes to Divine justice, by presenting the blood of the Lamb.

Verse 27. Moved with compassion] Or with *tender pity*. This is the *source* of salvation to a lost world, the tender pity, the eternal mercy of God.

Verse 28. A hundred pence] Rather *denarii*. The *denarius* was a Roman coin, worth about *seven-pence halfpenny* English. The original word should be retained, as our word *penny* does not convey the *seventh part* of the meaning. A hundred denarii would amount to about *3l. 2s. 6d.* British, or, if reckoned as some do, at *seven-pence three farthings*, the sum would be *3l. 4s. 7d.*

Took him by the throat] κρατησας αυτον επνιγε. There is no word I am acquainted with, which so fully expresses the meaning of the original, επνιγε, as the *Anglo-saxon* term *throttle*: it signified (like the Greek) to *half choke* a person, by *seizing his throat*.

Verse 29. Fell down at his feet] This clause is wanting in several ancient MSS., versions, and fathers. Several printed editions also have omitted it; Griesbach has left it out of the text.

Pay thee all.] παντα, *all*, is omitted by a multitude of MSS., versions, and fathers.

Verse 30. And he would not, &c.] To the *unmerciful*, God will show *no mercy*; this is an eternal purpose of the Lord, which never can be changed. God teaches us what to do to a *fellow-sinner*, by what HE does to us. Our fellow-servant's debt to us, and ours to God, are as one hundred denarii to ten thousand talents! When we humble ourselves before him, God freely forgives us all this mighty sum! And shall we exact from our brother recompense for the most trifling faults? Reader, if thou art of this unmerciful, unforgiving cast, read out the chapter.

*“All the souls that are were forfeit once,
And he who might the ‘vantage best have took,
Found out the remedy. How would you be,
If HE, who is the top of judgment, should
But judge you as you are? O! think on that,
And mercy then will breathe within your lips*

*Like man new made.
Though justice be thy plea, consider this,
That, in the course of justice, none of us
Should see salvation: we do pray for mercy;
And that same prayer doth teach us all to render
The deeds of Mercy.-“*

Verse 31. His fellow-servants saw what was done] An act of this kind is so dishonourable to all the followers of Christ, and to the spirit of his Gospel, that through the respect they owe to their Lord and Master, and through the concern they feel for the prosperity of his cause, they are obliged to plead against it at the throne of God.

Verse 32. His lord, after that he had called him] Alas! how shall he appear! *Confounded*. What shall he answer? He is *speechless!*

Verse 33. Shouldest not thou also have had compassion] οὐκ εἶδε καὶ σέ, *Did it not become thee also?* What a cutting reproach! It became ME to show mercy, when thou didst earnestly entreat me, because *I am MERCIFUL*, It became thee also to have *shown mercy*, because thou wert so deep in debt thyself, and hadst obtained mercy.

Verse 34. Delivered him to the tormentors] Not only continued captivity is here intended, but the tortures to be endured in it. If a person was suspected of fraud, as there was reason for in such a case as that mentioned here, he was put to very cruel tortures among the Asiatics, to induce him to confess. In the punishments of China, a great variety of these appear; and probably there is an allusion to such torments in this place. Before, he and all that he had, were only to be *sold*. Now, as he has increased his debt, so he has increased his punishment; he is delivered to the tormentors, to the horrors of a guilty conscience, and to a fearful looking for of fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. But if this refers to the day of judgment, then the *worm that dieth not*, and the *fire that is not quenched*, are the *tormentors*.

Verse 35. So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you] The goodness and indulgence of God towards us is the pattern we should follow in our dealings with others. If we take man for our exemplar we shall err, because our copy is a bad one; and our lives are not likely to be better than the copy we imitate. Follow Christ; be merciful as your Father who is in heaven is merciful. You cannot complain of the *fairness* of your

copy. Reader, hast thou a *child*, or *servant* who has *offended* thee, and humbly asks forgiveness? Hast thou a *debtor*, or a *tenant*, who is *insolvent*, and asks for a little longer time? And hast thou not *forgiven* that child or servant? Hast thou not given *time* to that *debtor* or *tenant*? How, then, canst thou ever expect to see the face of the *just* and *merciful* God? Thy child is *banished*, or *kept at a distance*; thy *debtor* is thrown into *prison*, or thy *tenant sold up*: yet the child offered to *fall at thy feet*; and the *debtor* or *tenant*, utterly insolvent, prayed for a *little longer time*, hoping God would enable him *to pay thee all*; but to these things thy *stony* heart and *seared* conscience paid no regard! O monster of ingratitude! Scandal to human nature, and reproach to God! If thou canst, go hide thyself-even in *hell*, from the face of the Lord!

Their trespasses.] These words are properly left out by GREISBACH, and other eminent critics, because they are wanting in some of the *very best* MSS. most of the versions, and in some of the chief of the fathers. The words are evidently an interpolation; the construction of them is utterly improper, and the concord false.

In our common method of dealing with insolvent debtors, we in some sort imitate the Asiatic customs: we put them in prison, and all their circumstances there are so many *tormentors*; the *place*, the *air*, the *company*, the *provision*, the *accommodation*, all destructive to comfort, to peace, to health, and to every thing that *humanity* can devise. If the person be *poor*, or *comparatively poor*, is his imprisonment likely to lead him to discharge his *debt*? His *creditor* may rest assured that he is now farther from his object than ever: the man had no other way of discharging the debt but by his *labour*; that is now impossible, through his *confinement*, and the creditor is put to a *certain* expense towards his maintenance. How foolish is this policy! And how much do such laws stand in need of *revision* and *amendment*! Imprisonment for debt, in such a case as that supposed above, can answer no other end than the gratification of the malice, revenge, or inhumanity of the creditor. Better sell all that he has, and, with his hands and feet untied, let him begin the world afresh. Dr. *Dodd* very feelingly inquires here, "Whether rigour in exacting temporal debts, in treating without mercy such as are *unable* to satisfy them-whether this can be allowed to a *Christian*, who is bound to imitate his God and Father? To a *debtor*, who can expect forgiveness only on the condition of forgiving others? To a *servant*, who should obey his Master?-and to a *criminal*, who is in daily expectation of his *Judge* and final *sentence*?" Little did he think,

when he wrote this sentence, that himself should be a melancholy proof, not only of human weakness, but of the relentless nature of those laws by which *property*, or rather *money*, is guarded. The unfortunate Dr. Dodd was hanged for forgery, in 1777, and the above note was written only seven years before!

The unbridled and extravagant appetites of men sometimes require *a rigour even beyond the law* to suppress them. While, then, we learn lessons of *humanity* from what is before us, let us also learn lessons of *prudence*, *sobriety*, and *moderation*. The parable of the two debtors is blessedly calculated to give this information.

ST. MATTHEW

CHAPTER 19.

Jesus leaves Galilee, and comes into the coasts of Judea, and is followed by great multitudes, whom he heals, 1, 2. The question of the Pharisees concerning divorce answered, and the doctrine of marriage explained, 3-9. The inquiry of the disciples on this subject, 10. Our Lord's answer, explaining the case of eunuchs, 11, 12. Little children brought to Christ for his blessing, 13-15. The case of the young man who wished to obtain eternal life, 16-22. Our Lord's reflections on this case, in which he shows the difficulty of a rich man's salvation, 23-26. What they shall possess who have left all for Christ's sake and the Gospel. 27-29 How many of the first shall be last, and the last first, 30.

NOTES ON CHAP. 19.

Verse 1. Beyond Jordan] Or, *by the side of Jordan*. Matthew begins here to give an account of Christ's journey (the only one he mentions) to Jerusalem, a little before the passover, at which he was crucified. See ◀1100▶ **Mark 10:1**; ◀005▶ **Luke 9:51**.

Jesus came from Galilee (which lay to the north of Judea) into the coasts of Judea; and from thence, in his way to Jerusalem, he went through Jericho, (◀007▶ **Matthew 20:17, 29**,) which lay at the distance of sixty furlongs, or seven miles and a half from Jordan, to the western side of it. See Joseph. WAR, book iv. chap. 8. sect. 3. It seems, therefore, most probable, that the course of Christ's journey led him *by the side* of the river Jordan, not *beyond* it. That the Greek word **περὰν**, especially with a *genitive* case as here, has sometimes this signification, see on ◀0122▶ **John 6:22**; see also Bp. Pearce.

Verse 2. Great multitudes followed him] Some to be *instructed*-some to be *healed*-some through *curiosity*-and some to *ensnare* him.

Verse 3. Tempting him] Trying what answer he would give to a question, which, however decided by him, would expose him to censure.

Is it lawful-for every cause?] Instead of **αἰτίαν**, *fault, cause, reason*, three MSS. and the *Coptic* version read **ἁμαρτίαν**, *sin* or *transgression*: this was probably the original reading-the first syllable being lost, **αἰτίαν** alone would remain, which a subsequent transcriber would suppose to be a

mistake for **αἰτίαν**, and so wrote it; hence this various reading. What made our Lord's situation at present so critical in respect to this question was: At this time there were two famous divinity and philosophical *schools* among the Jews, that of SHAMMAI, and that of HILLEL. On the question of *divorce*, the school of *Shammai* maintained, that a man could not legally put away his wife, except for *whoredom*. The school of *Hillel* taught that a man might put away his wife for a multitude of other causes, and when she did not *find grace in his sight*; i.e. when he saw any other woman that pleased him better. See the case of *Josephus*, mentioned in **Clarke's note on** "~~4051~~ **Matthew 5:31**", and Calmet's Comment, vol. i. part ii. p. 379. By answering the question, not from *Shammai* or *Hillel*, but from *Moses*, our blessed Lord defeated their malice, and confounded their devices.

Verse 4. He which made them at the beginning] When Adam and Eve were the first of human kind.

Made them male and female] Merely through the design of matrimonial union, that the earth might be thus peopled. To answer a case of conscience, a man should act as Christ does here; pay no regard to that which the corruption of manners has introduced into Divine ordinances, but go back to the original *will, purpose, and institution* of God. Christ will never accommodate his morality to the *times*, nor to the inclinations of men. What was done at the *beginning* is what God judged most worthy of his *glory*, most profitable for *man*, and most suitable to *nature*.

Verse 5. For this cause] Being created for this very purpose; that they might glorify their Maker in a matrimonial connection. *A man shall leave* (**καταλειψαι**, *wholly give up*) both *father and mother*-the matrimonial union being more *intimate* and binding than even paternal or filial affection;-and shall be *closely united*, **προσκολληθησεται**, *shall be firmly cemented* to his wife. A beautiful metaphor, which most forcibly intimates that nothing but *death* can separate them: as a *well-glued board* will break sooner in the *whole* wood, than in the *glued* joint. So also the Hebrew word **qbd** *debak* implies.

And they twain shall be one flesh?] Not only meaning, that they should be considered as *one* body, but also as two souls in one body, with a complete union of interests, and an indissoluble partnership of life and fortune, comfort and support, desires and inclinations, joys and sorrows. Farther, it appears to me, that the words in ~~41024~~ **Genesis 2:24**, **dj a rcbl**

lebasar achad, for one flesh, which our Lord literally translates, mean also, that *children*, compounded as it were of both, should be the product of the matrimonial connection. Thus, *they two* (man and woman) *shall be* for the producing of *one flesh*, the very same kind of human creature with themselves. See the note on ^{<01023>}**Genesis 2:24**.

Verse 6. What therefore God hath joined together] *συνεζευξεν*, yoked together, as *oxen in the plough*, where each must pull *equally*, in order to bring it on. Among the ancients, when persons were newly married, they put a *yoke* upon their necks, or *chains* upon their arms, to show that they were to be *one*, closely united, and pulling equally together in all the concerns of life. See KYPKE in loco.

The finest allegorical representation of the marriage union I have met with, is that antique gem representing the marriage of *Cupid and Psyche*, in the collection of the duke of Marlborough: it may be seen also among Baron *Stoch's* gems, and casts or copies of it in various other collections. 1. *Both* are represented as *winged*, to show the *alacrity* with which the husband and wife should help, comfort and support each other; *preventing*, as much as possible, the *expressing* of a wish or want on either side, by fulfilling it *before* it can be expressed. 2. *Both* are *veiled*, to show that *modesty* is an inseparable attendant on *pure* matrimonial connections. 3. Hymen or Marriage goes before them with a lighted torch, leading them by a chain, of which each has a hold, to show that they are united together, and are *bound* to each other, and that they are led to this by the pure flame of love, which at the same instant both enlightens and warms them. 4. This *chain* is not *iron* nor *brass*, (to intimate that the marriage union is a state of *thralldom* or *slavery*;) but it is a chain of *pearls*, to show that the union is *precious*, *beautiful*, and *delightful*. 5. They hold a dove, the emblem of conjugal fidelity, which they appear to embrace affectionately, to show that they are faithful to each other, not merely through *duty*, but by affection, and that this fidelity contributes to the happiness of their lives. 6. A *winged Cupid*, or *Love*, is represented as having gone *before* them, preparing the *nuptial feast*; to intimate that *active affections*, *warm* and *cordial love*, are to be to them a continual source of *comfort* and *enjoyment*; and that this is the *entertainment* they are to meet with at every *step* of their affectionate lives. 7. *Another Cupid*, or genius of love comes *behind*, and places on their heads a *basket of ripe fruits*; to intimate that a matrimonial union of *this kind* will generally be blessed with *children*, who shall be as pleasing to all their *senses* as *ripe* and *delicious fruits* to the *smell* and *taste*. 8. The

genius of love that *follows them* has his *wings shrivelled up*, or the *feathers all curled*, so as to render them utterly *unfit for flight*; to intimate that *love* is to *abide* with them, that there is to be no separation in affection, but that they are to continue to love one another with pure hearts fervently. Thus *love begins* and *continues* this sacred union; as to *end*, there can be none, for God hath yoked them together.

A finer or more expressive set of emblems has never, I believe, been produced, even by *modern* refined taste and ingenuity. This group of emblematical figures is engraved upon an onyx by Tryphon, an ancient Grecian artist. A fine drawing was made of this by Cypriani, and was engraved both by *Bartolozzi* and *Sherwin*. See one of these plates in the second volume of Bryant's *Analysis of Ancient Mythology*, page 392.

Verse 7. Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement?] It is not an unusual case for the impure and unholy to seek for a justification of their conduct from the law of God itself, and to wrest Scripture to their own destruction. I knew a gentleman, so called, who professed deep reverence for the sacred writings, and, strange as it may appear, was outwardly irreproachable in every respect but *one*; that was, he kept more women than his wife. This man frequently read the Bible, and was particularly conversant with those places that spoke of or seemed to legalize the *polygamy of the patriarchs*!

A writing of divorcement] See the *form* of it in **Clarke's note on** “~~4031~~ **Matthew 5:31**”.

Verse 8. Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts] It is dangerous to tolerate the least evil, though prudence itself may require it: because toleration, in this case, raises itself insensibly into permission, and permission soon sets up for command. Moses perceived that if divorce were not permitted, in many cases, the women would be exposed to great hardships through the *cruelty* of their husbands: for so the word **σκληροκαρδια**, is understood in this place by some learned men.

From the beginning it was not so] The Jews named the books of the law from the *first* word in each. *Genesis* they always term *Bereshith*, **tyvarb**, which is the *first* word in it, and signifies, *In the beginning*. It is probable that our Lord speaks in this way here, *In Bereshith it was not so*, intimating that the account given in *Genesis* is widely different. There was no *divorce*

between Eve and Adam; nor did *he* or his family practise *polygamy*. But our Lord, by *the beginning*, may mean the original intention or design.

Verse 9. Except it be for fornication] See on ~~4052~~ **Matthew 5:32**. The decision of our Lord must be very unpleasant to these men: the reason why they wished to put away their wives was, that they might take others whom they liked better; but our Lord here declares that they could not be remarried while the divorced person was alive, and that those who did marry, during the life of the divorced, were *adulterers*; and heavy judgments were, denounced, in their law, against such: and as the question was not settled by the schools of *Shammai* and *Hillel*, so as to ground national practice on it therefore they were obliged to abide by the *positive declaration* of the law, as it was *popularly* understood, till these eminent schools had proved the word had another meaning. The grand subject of dispute between the two schools, mentioned above, was the word in ~~4530~~ **Deuteronomy 24:1**, *When a man hath taken a wife-and she find no grace in his sight, because of some UNCLEANNESS, twr [eruath:-this the school of Shammai held to mean whoredom or adultery; but the school of Hillel maintained that it signified any corporeal defect, which rendered the person deformed, or any bad temper which made the husband's life uncomfortable. Any of the latter a good man might bear with; but it appears that Moses permitted the offended husband to put away the wife on these accounts, merely to save her from cruel usage.*

In this discourse, our Lord shows that marriage, (except in one case,) is *indissoluble*, and should be so:-

1st, By Divine *institution*, ~~4094~~ **Matthew 19:4**.

2dly, By express *commandment*, ~~4095~~ **Matthew 19:5**.

3dly, Because the married couple become *one* and the *same person*, ~~4096~~ **Matthew 19:6**.

4thly, By the *example* of the *first pair*, ~~4098~~ **Matthew 19:8**; and

5thly, Because of the *evil* consequent on *separation*, ~~4099~~ **Matthew 19:9**. The *importance* of this subject will, I hope, *vindicate* or *excuse*, the *length* of these notes.

Verse 10. If the case of the man] *του ανθρωπου*, of a husband, so I think the word should be translated here. The *Codex Bezae*, *Armenian*, and most of the *Itala*, have *του ανδρος*, which, perhaps, more properly signifies a *husband*, though both words are used in this sense.

Our word *husband* comes from the Anglo-Saxon, *hus* and *band*: the *bond* of the *house*, anciently spelt *housebond*,—so in my old MS. Bible. It is a lamentable case when the husband, instead of being the *bond* and *union* of the family, *scatters* and *ruins* it by *dissipation*, *riot*, and *excess*.

It is not good to marry.] That is, if a man have not the liberty to put away his wife when she is displeasing to him. God had said, ^{<00218>}**Genesis 2:18**, It is not good for man to be alone, i.e. unmarried. The disciples seem to say, that if the husband have not the power to divorce his wife when she is displeasing to him, *it is not good for him to marry*. Here was a flat contradiction to the decision of the Creator. There are difficulties and trials in all states; but let marriage and celibacy be weighed fairly, and I am persuaded the former will be found to have fewer than the latter. However, before we enter into an engagement which nothing but *death* can *dissolve*, we had need to act cautiously, carefully consulting the *will* and *word* of God. Where an unbridled *passion*, or a *base love of money*, lead the way, marriage is sure to be miserable.

Verse 11. All-cannot receive this saying] A very wise answer, and well suited to the present circumstances of the disciples. *Neither* of the states is condemned. If thou marry, thou dost well—this is according to the order, will, and commandment of God. But if thou do not marry, (because of the present necessity, persecution, worldly embarrassments, or bodily infirmity,) thou dost better. See ^{<00725>}**1 Corinthians 7:25**.

Verse 12. Eunuchs] ευνουχος, from ευνην εχειν, *to have the care of the bed* or *bedchamber*; this being the principal employment of *eunuchs* in the eastern countries, particularly in the apartments of queens and princesses. These are they whom our Lord says are *made eunuchs by men*, merely for the above purpose.

So born from their mother's womb] Such as are naturally incapable of marriage, and consequently should not contract any.

For the kingdom of heaven's sake.] I believe our Lord here alludes to the case of the ESSENES, one of the most holy and pure sects among the Jews. These abstained from all commerce with women, hoping thereby to acquire a greater degree of purity, and be better fitted for the kingdom of God: *children* they had none of their own, but constantly *adopted* those of poor people, and brought them up in their own way. PHILO, JOSEPHUS, and PLINY have largely described this very singular sect; and *Dean PRIDEAUX*,

with his usual fidelity and perspicuity, has given the substance of what each has said. CONNEX. vol. iii. p. 483, &c.; edit. 1725. The account is very interesting, and well worthy the attention of every Christian. Among the rabbins we find these different kinds of eunuchs, not only mentioned, but circumstantially described, **hmj syrs saris chama**, *eunuchs of the sun*, i.e. *eunuchs by the hand of God*; men born impotent. **µda syrs saris Adam**, *eunuchs of men*, those who were castrated. And they add a *third* sort; *those who make themselves eunuchs*, abstain from marriage, &c., *that they may give themselves UP to the study of the Divine law*. See many examples in *Schoettgen*.

He that is able to receive] **χωρειν χωρειτω**. These words are variously translated: he who can *take*; *let him take it*; *comprehend*, let him *comprehend* it: *admit*, let him *admit* it. The meaning seems to be, Let the man who feels himself *capable* of embracing this way of life, embrace it; but none can do it but he to whom it is given, who has it as a gift from his mother's womb.

The great ORIGEN, understanding the latter clause of this verse (which I have applied to the *Essenes*) *literally*-O human weakness!-went, and *literally* fulfilled it on *himself*!

Verse 13. Then were there brought unto him little children] These are termed by Luke, ^{<DISIS>} **Luke 18:15, τα βρεφη**, *infants*, very young children; and it was on *this* account, probably, that the disciples rebuked the parents, thinking them *too young* to receive good. See on ^{<H1016>} **Mark 10:16**.

That he should put his hands] It was a common custom among the Jews to lay their hands on the heads of those whom they blessed, or for whom they prayed. This seems to have been done by way of dedication or consecration to God-the person being considered as the sacred property of God ever after. Often God added a testimony of his approbation, by communicating some extraordinary influence of the Holy Spirit. This rite has been long practised among Christians, when persons are appointed to any sacred office. But this consecration of children to God seems to have grown out of use. It is no wonder that the great mass of children are so wicked, when so few, are put under the care of Christ by humble, praying, believing parents. Let every parent that fears God bring up his children in that fear; and, by baptism, let each be dedicated to the holy trinity.

Whatever is solemnly consecrated to God abides under his protection and blessing.

Verse 14. Of such is the kingdom of heaven.] Or, *the kingdom of heaven is composed of such*. This appears to be the best sense of the passage, and utterly ruins the whole inhuman diabolic system of what is called non-elect infants' damnation; a doctrine which must have sprung from Moloch, and can only be defended by a heart in which he dwells. A great part of God's kingdom is composed of such *literally*; and those only who resemble little children shall be received into it: see on ^{<4018B>}**Matthew 18:3**. Christ loves little children because he loves simplicity and innocence; he has sanctified their very age by passing through it himself-the holy Jesus was once a *little child*.

Verse 15. He-departed thence.] That is, from that part of Judea which was beyond Jordan, ^{<4019B>}**Matthew 19:1**; and then went to Jericho. See ^{<4019B>}**Matthew 20:29**.

Verse 16. One came] Instead of εἰς one, several MSS., the Slavonic version, and Hilary, read νεανίσκος τις, *a certain young man*.

Good, &c.] Much instruction may be had from seriously attending to the *conduct, spirit, and question* of this person.

1. He came running, (^{<41017>}**Mark 10:17**,) for he was deeply convinced of the importance of his business, and seriously determined to *seek* so as to find.

2. *He kneeled*, or caught him by the knees, thus evidencing his *humility*, and addressing himself only to *mercy*. See ^{<40174>}**Matthew 17:14**.

3. He came in the spirit of a *disciple*, or *scholar*, desiring to be *taught* a matter of the utmost importance to him-*Good teacher*.

4. He came in the spirit of *obedience*; he had worked hard to no purpose, and he is still willing to work, provided he can have a prospect of succeeding-*What good thing shall I do?*

5. His question was the most interesting and important that any soul can ask of God-*How shall I be saved?*

Verse 17. Why callest thou me good?] Or, *Why dost thou question me concerning that good thing?* τι με ερωτας περι του αγαθου. This important reading is found in BDL, three others, *the Coptic, Sahidic,*

Armenian, Ethiopic, latter Syriac, Vulgate, Saxon, all the *Itala* but one, Origen, Eusebius, Cyril, Dionysius Areop., Antiochus, Novatian, Jerome, Augustin, and Juvencus. Erasmus, Grotius, Mill, and Bengel approve of this reading. This authority appears so decisive to Griesbach that he has received this reading into the text of his second edition, which in the *first* he had *interlined*. And instead of, *None is good but the one God*, he goes on to read, on nearly the same respectable authorities, **εις εστιν ο αγαθος**. *There is one who is good*. Let it be observed also that, in the 16th verse, instead of **διδασκαλε αγαθε**, *good teacher*, **διδασκαλε** only is read by BDL, one other, one Evangelistarium, the *Ethiopic*, three of the *Itala*, Origen, and Hilary. The whole passage therefore may be read thus: *O teacher! what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life? And he said unto him, Why dost thou question me concerning that good thing? There is one that is good. (Or he who is good is one.) But If thou art willing to enter into that life, keep the commandments*. This passage, as it stood in the common editions, has been considered by some writers as an incontrovertible proof against the Divinity or Godhead of Christ. A very learned person, in his note on this place, thus concludes concerning it: "Therefore our Saviour cannot be GOD: and the notion of, I know not what, a *trinity in unity*, THREE *Gods* in ONE, is here proved beyond all controversy, by the unequivocal declaration of JESUS CHRIST HIMSELF, to be ERRONEOUS and IMPOSSIBLE." Not so. One of the greatest critics in Europe, not at all *partial* to the *Godhead* of Christ, has admitted the above readings into his text, on evidence which he judged to be unexceptionable. If they be the true readings, they destroy the whole doctrine built on this text; and indeed the utmost that the enemies of the trinitarian doctrine can now expect from their formidable opponents, concerning this text, is to leave it *neuter*.

Keep the commandments.] From this we may learn that God's great design, in giving his law to the Jews, was to lead them to the expectation and enjoyment of eternal life. But as all the law referred to Christ, and he became the end of the law for righteousness (justification) to all that believe, so he is to be received, in order to have the *end* accomplished which the law proposed.

Verse 18. Thou shalt do no murder, &c.] But some say these commandments are not binding on *us*. Vain, deceived men! Can a murderer, an adulterer, a thief, and a liar enter into eternal life? No. The God of purity and justice has forbidden it. But we are not to keep these

commandments in order to *purchase* eternal life. Right. Neither Jesus Christ, nor his genuine messengers, say you are. To save your souls, Christ must save you *from* your sins, and enable you to walk before him in *newness of life*.

Verse 19. Honour thy father and thy mother] σου *thy*, is omitted by almost every MS. of respectability.

Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself] *Self-love*, as it is generally called, has been grievously declaimed against, even by religious people, as a most pernicious and dreadful evil. But they have not understood the subject on which they spoke. They have denominated that intense *propensity* which unregenerate men feel to gratify their carnal appetites and vicious passions, *self-love*; whereas it might be more properly termed *self-hatred* or *self-murder*. If I am to love my neighbour as *myself* and this “love worketh no ill to its neighbour,” then *self-love*, in the sense in which our Lord uses it, is something excellent. It is properly a disposition essential to our nature, and inseparable from our being, by which we *desire* to be happy, by which we *seek* the happiness we have not, and rejoice in it when we possess it. In a word, it is a uniform wish of the soul to avoid all evil, and to enjoy all good. Therefore, he who is wholly governed by *self-love*, properly and Scripturally speaking, will devote his whole soul to God, and earnestly and constantly seek all his peace, happiness, and salvation in the enjoyment of God. But *self-love* cannot make me happy. I am only the *subject* which receives the happiness, but am not the *object* that constitutes this happiness; for it is that *object*, properly speaking, that I love, and love not only for its own sake, but also for the sake of the happiness which I enjoy through it. “No man,” saith the apostle, “ever hated his own flesh.” But he that sinneth against God wrongeth his own soul, both of present and eternal salvation, and is so far from being governed by *self-love* that he is the implacable enemy of his best and dearest interests in both worlds.

Verse 20. All these have I kept] I have made these precepts the rule of my life. There is a difference worthy of notice between this and our Lord’s word. He says, ^{<401917>} **Matthew 19:17, τηρησον**, *keep*, earnestly, diligently, as with watch and ward; probably referring not only to the *letter* but to the *spirit*. The young man modestly says, all these (εφυλαξα) have I *observed*; I have paid attention to, and endeavoured to regulate my conduct by them. I have *kept* them in *custody*.

From my youth] Several MSS., versions, and fathers, leave out these words. *Grotius* and *Mill* approve of the omission, and *Griesbach* leaves them in the text with a note of suspicion. Perhaps the young man meant no more than that he had in general observed them, and considered them of continual obligation.

What lack I yet?] He felt a troubled conscience, and a mind unassured of the approbation of God; and he clearly perceived that something was wanting to make him truly happy.

Verse 21. If thou wilt be perfect] *τελειος ειναι*, To be *complete*, to have the business *finished*, and all *hinderances* to thy salvation removed, *go and sell that thou hast*-go and dispose of thy possessions, to which it is evident his heart was too much attached, *and give to the poor*-for thy goods will be a continual snare to thee if thou keep them; *and thou shalt have treasure in heaven*-the loss, if it can be called such, shall be made amply up to thee in that eternal life about which thou inquirest; *and come and follow me*-be my disciple, and I will appoint thee to preach the kingdom of God to others. This was the usual *call* which Christ gave to his disciples. See ^{<4049>}**Matthew 4:19; 8:22; 9:9;** ^{<41024>}**Mark 2:14;** and it is pretty evident, from this, that he intended to make him a preacher of his salvation. How many, by their attachment to filthy lucre, have lost the honour of *becoming* or *continuing* ambassadors for the *Most High*! See on ^{<41021>}**Mark 10:21.**

Verse 22. Went away sorrowful] Men undergo great agony of mind while they are in suspense between the love of the world and the love of their souls. When the first absolutely predominates, then they enjoy a factitious rest through a false peace: when the latter has the upper hand, then they possess true tranquillity of mind, through that peace of God that passeth knowledge.

He had great possessions.] And what were these in comparison of peace of conscience, and mental rest? Besides, he had unequivocal proof that these contributed nothing to his comfort, for he is now miserable even *while* he possesses them! And so will every soul be, who puts worldly goods in the place of the supreme God. See on ^{<41022>}**Mark 10:22.**

Verse 23. A rich man shall hardly enter] That is, into the *spirit* and *privileges* of the *Gospel* in *this world*, and through them into the *kingdom of glory*. Earthly riches are a great obstacle to salvation; because it is

almost impossible to possess them, and not to set the heart upon them; and they who love the world have not the love of the Father in them. ^{<αρις>} 1

John 2:15. To be rich, therefore, is in general a great misfortune: but what rich man can be convinced of this? It is only God himself who, by a miracle of mercy, can do this. Christ himself affirms the difficulty of the salvation of a rich man, with an oath, *verily*; but who of the rich either hears or believes him!

Verse 24. A camel] Instead of *καμηλον*, *camel*, six MSS. read *καμιλον*, *cable*, a mere gloss inserted by some who did not know that the other was a proverb common enough among the people of the east.

There is an expression similar to this in the *Koran*. “The impious, who in his arrogance shall accuse our doctrine of falsity, shall find the gates of heaven shut: nor shall he enter there *till a camel shall pass through the eye of a needle*. It is thus that we shall recompense the wicked.” *Al KORAN. Surat vii. ver. 37.*

It was also a mode of expression common among the Jews, and signified a thing impossible. Hence this proverb: *A camel in Media dances in a caba*; a measure which held about three pints. Again, *No man sees a palm tree of gold, nor an elephant passing through the eye of a needle*. Because these are impossible things. “Rabbi *Shesheth* answered Rabbi *Amram*, who had advanced an absurdity, *Perhaps thou art one of the Pembidithians who can make an elephant pass through the eye of a needle*; that is, says the *Aruch*, ‘who speak things *impossible*.’” See *Lightfoot* and *Schoettgen* on this place.

Go through] But instead of *διελθειν*, about eighty MSS. with several versions and fathers, have *εισελθειν*, *to enter in*; but the difference is of little importance in an English translation, though of some consequence to the elegance of the Greek text.

Verse 25. Who can be saved?] The question of the disciples seemed to intimate that most people were *rich*, and that therefore scarcely any could be saved. They certainly must have attached a different meaning to what constitutes a *rich man*, to what we in general do. Who is a *rich man* in our Lord’s sense of the word? This is a very important question, and has not, that I know of, been explicitly answered. A *rich man*, in my opinion, is not one who has so many *hundreds* or *thousands more* than some of his neighbours; but is one who *gets more* than is necessary to supply all his

own wants, and those of his household, and *keeps* the residue still to himself, though the poor are starving through lack of the necessaries of life. In a word, he is a man who *gets* all he can, *saves* all he can, and *keeps* all he has gotten. Speak, *reason!* Speak, *conscience!* (for *God* has already spoken) Can such a person enter into the kingdom of God? ALL, NO!!!

Verse 26. With men this is impossible] God *alone* can take the love of the world out of the human heart. Therefore the salvation of the rich is represented as *possible* only to him: and indeed the words seem to intimate, that it requires more than common exertions of Omnipotence to save a rich man.

Verse 27. We have forsaken all] “A poor *all*,” says one, “a parcel of rotten nets.” No matter—they were *their* ALL, whether *rotten* or *sound*; besides, they were the *all* they got their bread by; and such an *all* as was quite sufficient for that purpose: and let it be observed, that that man forsakes *much* who reserves *nothing* to himself, and renounces all expectations from this world, taking God alone for his *portion*. See ~~400~~ **Matthew 4:20.**

To *forsake all*, without *following Christ*, is the virtue of a *philosopher*. To *follow Christ* in profession, without *forsaking all*, is the *state* of the *generality* of *Christians*. But to *follow Christ* and *forsake all*, is the *perfection* of a *Christian*.

What shall we have therefore?] τι αρα εσται ημιν, *What REWARD shall we get?* This *Kypke* proves to be the meaning of the words from some of the best Greek writers.

Verse 28. Ye which have followed me, in the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, &c.] The punctuation which I have observed here, is that which is followed by the most eminent critics: the *regeneration* is thus referred to the *time* when Jesus *shall sit* on the *throne* of his *glory*, and not to the *time* of *following* him, which is utterly improper.

The *regeneration*, παλιγγενεσια. Some refer this to the time in which *the new heavens and the new earth* shall be created, and the *soul and body united*. The Pythagoreans termed that παλιγγενεσια, when, according to their doctrine of the transmigration or metempsychosis, the soul entered into a *new body*, and got into a *new state of being*. *Clement*, in his *Epistle*

to the Corinthians, calls the restoration of the world, after the deluge, by the same name.

Judging the twelve tribes] From the parallel place, ~~4228~~ **Luke 22:28-30**, it is evident that *sitting on thrones*, and *judging the twelve tribes*, means simply obtaining eternal salvation, and the *distinguishing* privileges of the kingdom of glory, by those who continued faithful to Christ in his sufferings and death.

Judging, κρινοντες. Kypke has shown that κρινεσθαι is to be understood in the sense of *governing, presiding, holding the first or most distinguished place*. Thus, ~~014916~~ **Genesis 49:16**, *Dan shall JUDGE his people*, i.e. shall *preside* in, or *rule* over them; shall occupy a *chief place* among the tribes. It is well known that the *Judges* among the Jews were *moderators, captains, chief, or head men*. The sense therefore of our Lord's words appears to be, that these disciples should have those *distinguished* seats in glory which seem to belong peculiarly to the first confessors and martyrs. See ~~5044~~ **1 Thessalonians 4:14, 16**, and particularly ~~6504~~ **Revelation 20:4-6**.

The last-quoted passage brings into view the doctrine of the *Millennium*, when Jesus, after having formed the new heavens and the new earth, shall reign here gloriously among his ancients 365,000 years; for the *thousand* years referred to above are certainly *prophetical* years, in which, it is well known, each *day* stands for a *year*.

Others, of no mean note, are of opinion that the *regeneration* means the *conversion of men* by the *preaching of the Gospel*-that *sitting on twelve thrones* signifies the *state of eminent dignity* to which the apostles should be raised-and that *judging the twelve tribes of Israel*, means no more than exercising *authority* in the Church, and dispensing *laws* to the people of God. But I confess I do not see the propriety of this application of the terms, as the following verse seems to fix the meaning mentioned above.

Verse 29. Shall receive a hundredfold] Viz. in this life, in *value*, though perhaps not in *kind*; and in the world to come everlasting life. A glorious portion for a persevering believer! The fulness of GRACE *here*, and the fulness of GLORY *hereafter*! See on ~~4100~~ **Mark 10:30**.

Verse 30. But many that are **first**, &c.] The *Jews*, who have been the *first* and most *distinguished* people of God, will in general reject the Gospel of

my grace, and be consequently rejected by me. The *Gentiles*, who have had no name among the living, shall be brought to the *knowledge* of the *truth*, and become the *first*, the *chief*, and most *exalted* people of God. That this prediction of our Lord has been *literally* fulfilled, the present state of the Christian and Jewish Churches sufficiently proves. To illustrate this fully, and to demonstrate that the Jews and Gentiles were now put on an *equal* footing by the Gospel, our Lord speaks the following parable, which has been unhappily divided from its *connection* by making it the beginning of a new chapter.

ST. MATTHEW

CHAPTER 20.

The similitude of the householder hiring labourers into his vineyard, to show that the Gentiles should be preferred to the Jews, according to what was hinted at the close of the last chapter, 1-16. On the way going up to Jerusalem he predicts his sufferings and death, 17-19. The mother of Zebedee's children requests dignities for her sons, 20, 21. Christ, by his answer, shows that sufferings, not worldly honours, are to be the lot of his most faithful followers, and that seats in glory can be given only to those who are prepared for them, 22, 23. From this our Lord takes occasion to teach the necessity of humility, and to show that those who wished to be chief must be servants of all, 24-28. On his coming to Jericho, he restores sight to two blind men, who, being restored, follow him, 29-34.

NOTES ON CHAP. 20.

Verse 1. For the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man-a householder]

The very commencement of this chapter shows it to be connected with the preceding. The manner of God's proceeding under the Gospel dispensation resembles a householder, who went out at *day break*, **αμα πρωι**, *together with the morning*; as the light began to go out of its chambers in the east, so he went out of his bed-room to employ labourers, that they might cultivate his vineyard. This was what was called, among the Jews and Romans, the *first hour*; answering to *six o'clock* in the morning.

To hire labourers] *Some workmen*, **των εργατων**-for he had not got all that was necessary, because we find him going out at other hours to hire more.

Verse 2. A penny] A Roman coin, as noted before, ^{<01828>} **Matthew 18:28**, worth about *seven-pence halfpenny* or *seven-pence three farthings* of our money, and equal to the Greek *drachma*. This appears to have been the ordinary price of a day's labour at that time. See Tobit 5:14. In 1351 the price of labour was regulated in this country by parliament; and it is remarkable that "corn-weeders and hay-makers, without meat, drink, or other courtesy demanded," were to have *one penny* per day! In 1314 the pay of a *chaplain* to the Scotch bishops, who were then prisoners in England, was *three halfpence* per day. See *Fleetwood's Chronicon Precios*, p. 123, 129. This was miserable wages, though things at that time

were so cheap that twenty-four eggs were sold for a penny, p. 72; a pair of shoes for *four-pence*, p. 71; a *fat goose* for *two-pence halfpenny*, p. 72; a *hen* for a *penny*, p. 72; *eight bushels* of wheat for *two shillings*, and a *fat ox* for *six shillings* and *eight-pence*! Ibid. In 1336, wheat per quarter, 2s.; a fat sheep 6d.; fat goose, 2d. and a pig, 1d., p. 75.

Verse 3. The third hour] *Nine o'clock* in the morning.

Market-place] Where labourers usually stood till they were hired. I have often seen labourers standing in the market places of large towns in these countries, waiting to be employed.

Verse 5. The sixth hour] *Twelve o'clock. Ninth hour-three o'clock* in the afternoon.

Verse 6. Eleventh] *Five o'clock* in the evening, when there was only *one hour* before the end of the Jewish day, which, in matters of labour, closed at *six*.

Verse 7. No man hath hired us.] This was the reason why they were all the day *idle*.

And whatsoever is right, that shall ye receive.] Ye may expect payment in proportion to your *labour*, and the *time* ye spend in it; but this clause is wanting in some of the best MSS., versions, and fathers.

Verse 8. When the even was come] *Six o'clock*, the time they ceased from labour, and the workmen came to receive their wages.

Steward] *ἐπιτροπος*. A *manager of the household concerns* under the master. The rabbinical writers use the very same word, in Hebrew letters, for the same office, *שׁוּפְרָן עֵרֶב* *epitropos*. See *Kypke*.

Verse 11. They murmured] The Jews made the preaching of the Gospel to the Gentiles, a pretence why they should reject that Gospel; as they fondly imagined they were, and should be, the sole objects of the Divine approbation. How they murmured because the Gentiles were made partakers of the kingdom of God; see ^{<4110>}**Acts 11:1**, &c., and ^{<4150>}**Acts 15:1**, &c.

There are many similitudes of this kind among the Jews, where the principal part even of the phraseology of our Lord's parable may be found. Several of them may be seen in *Schoettgen*. Our Lord, however, as in all

other cases, has greatly improved the language, scope, design, and point of the similitude. He was, in all cases, an eminent *master of the sentences*.

Verse 13. Friend, I do thee no wrong] The salvation of the Gentiles can in itself become no impediment to the Jews; there is the same Jesus both for the Jew and for the Greek. Eternal life is offered to *both* through the blood of the cross; and there is room enough in heaven for *all*.

Verse 15. Is it not lawful for me] As eternal life is the free gift of God, he has a right to give it in whatever *proportions*, at whatever *times*, and on whatever *conditions* he pleases.

Is thine eye evil] An evil eye among the Jews meant a *malicious*, *covetous*, or *envious* person.

Most commentators have different methods of interpreting this parable. Something was undoubtedly designed by its principal parts, besides the scope and design mentioned at the conclusion of the last chapter. The following, which is taken principally from the very pious *Quesnel*, may render it as useful to the reader as any thing else that has been written on it.

The *Church* is a *vineyard*, because it is a place of *labour*, where no man should be *idle*. Each of us is engaged to *labour* in this vineyard—to work out our salvation through him who worketh in us to will and to perform. *Life* is but a *day*, whereof *childhood*, or the first use of reason, is the day-break or *first hour*, ◀**Matthew 20:1**, in which we receive the *first CALL*.

The promise of the kingdom of glory is given to all those who are workers together with him, ◀**Matthew 20:2**.

The *second call* is in the time of *youth*, which is most commonly *idle*, or only employed in *dissipation* and *worldly cares*, ◀**Matthew 20:3**.

The *third call* is at the age of *manhood*.

The *fourth*, in the *decline of life*, ◀**Matthew 20:5**.

The *fifth*, when *sickness* and the *infirmities* of life press upon us. How many are there in the world who are just ready to leave it, before they properly consider for what end they were brought into it! Still *idle*, still unemployed in the things which concern their souls; though eternal life is

offered to them, and hell moving from beneath to meet them! ^{<4106>}**Matthew 20:6.**

Others consider the *morning* the first dawn of the *Gospel*; and the *first call* to be the preaching of *John Baptist*.

The *second call*, the public preaching of our LORD; and that of the *apostles* when they got an especial commission to the Jews, ^{<4105>}**Matthew 10:5, 6**, together with that of the *seventy disciples* mentioned ^{<2101>}**Luke 10:1.**

The *third call*, which was at *mid-day*, represents the preaching of the *fulness* of the Gospel after the *ascension* of Christ, which was the *meridian* of evangelic glory and excellence.

The *fourth call* represents the mission of the apostles to the various *synagogues* of the *Jews*, in every part of the world where they were scattered; the history of which is particularly given in the Acts of the Apostles.

The *fifth call*, or *eleventh hour*, represents the general call of the *Gentiles* into the Church of Christ, when the unbelieving Jews were finally rejected. What makes this interpretation the more likely is, that the persons who are addressed at ^{<4107>}**Matthew 20:7**, say, *No man hath hired us*, i.e. We never heard the voice of a prophet announcing the true God, nor of an apostle preaching the Lord Jesus, until now. The Jews could not use this as an argument for their carelessness about their eternal interests.

Verse 16. So the last shall be first, and the first last] The GENTILES, who have been long without the true God, shall now enjoy all the privileges of the new covenant; and the Jews, who have enjoyed these from the beginning, shall now be dispossessed of them; for, because they here rejected the Lord, he also hath rejected them.

Many are called, &c.] This clause is wanting in BL, one other, and in the *Coptic* and *Sahidic* versions. Bishop PEARCE thinks it is an *interpolation* from ^{<41214>}**Matthew 22:14**. The simple meaning seems to be: As those who did not come at the invitation of the householder to work in the vineyard did not receive the *denarius*, or wages, so those who do not obey the call of the Gospel, and believe in Christ Jesus, shall not inherit eternal life.

This place seems to refer to the ancient Roman custom of recruiting their armies. Among this celebrated people, no one was *forced* to serve his

country in a military capacity; and it was the highest honour to be deemed worthy of thus serving it. The youth were instructed, almost from their cradle, in military exercises. The *Campus Martius* was the grand field in which they were disciplined: there, they accustomed themselves to *leaping, running, wrestling, bearing burdens, fencing, throwing the javelin, &c.*, and when, through these violent exercises, they were all besmeared with dust and sweat, in order to refresh themselves, they *swam twice or thrice across the Tyber!* Rome might at any time have recruited her armies by *volunteers* from such a mass of well-educated, hardy soldiers; but she thought proper, to use the words of the *Abbe Mably*, that the honour of being *chosen* to serve in the wars should be the *reward* of the accomplishments shown by the citizens in the *Campus Martius*, that the soldier should have a reputation to save; and that the regard paid him, in *choosing* him to serve, should be the pledge of his fidelity and zeal to discharge his duty. The age of serving in the army was from seventeen to forty-five, and the manner in which they were *chosen* was the following:-

After the creation of consuls, they every year named twenty-four military tribunes, part of whom must have served five years at least, and the rest *eleven*. When they had divided among them the command of the four legions to be formed, the consuls *summoned* to the capitol, or Campus Martius, *all the citizens* who, by their age, were obliged to bear arms. They drew up by tribes, and lots were drawn to determine in what *order* every tribe should present its soldiers. That which was the first in order *chose* the four citizens who were judged the most proper to serve in the war; and the six tribunes who commanded the first legion *chose* one of these *four*, whom they liked best. The tribunes of the second and third likewise made their *choice* one after another; and he that remained entered into the fourth legion. A new tribe presented other four soldiers, and the second legion *chose* first. The third and fourth legions had the same advantage in their turns. In this manner, each tribe successively *chose* four soldiers, till the legions were complete. They next proceeded to the creation of subaltern officers, whom the tribunes *chose* from among the soldiers of the greatest reputation. When the legions were thus completed, the citizens who had been *called*, but *not chosen*, returned to their respective employments, and served their country in other capacities. None can suppose that these were deemed *useless*, or that, because not now *chosen* to serve their country in the field, they were proscribed from the rights and privileges of citizens, much less *destroyed*, because others were found better qualified to serve

their country at the post of honour and danger. Thus many are called by the preaching of the Gospel, but few are found who use their advantages in such a way as to become extensively useful in the Church-and many in the Church *militant* behave so ill as never to be admitted into the Church *triumphant*. But what a mercy that those who appear now to be rejected may be called in another muster, enrolled, serve in the field, or work in the vineyard? How many millions does the *long-suffering* of God lead to repentance!

Verse 17. And Jesus going up] From Jericho to Jerusalem, See Clarke “^{<40915>}**Matthew 19:15**”.

Verse 18. The Son of man shall be betrayed] Or, *will be delivered up*. This is the third time that our Lord informed his disciples of his approaching sufferings and death. This was a subject of the utmost importance, and it was necessary they should be well prepared for such an awful event.

Verse 19. Deliver him to the Gentiles to mock] This was done by *Herod* and his *Roman* soldiers. See ^{<42311>}**Luke 23:11**.

To scourge, and to crucify] This was done by *Pilate*, the Roman governor. The punishment of the *cross* was *Roman* not *Jewish*; but the *chief priests* condemned him to it, and the *Romans* executed the sentence. How little did they know that they were, by this process, jointly offering up that sacrifice which was to make an atonement for the Gentiles and for the Jews; an atonement for the sin of the whole world? How often may it be literally said, *The wrath of man shall praise thee!*

Verse 20. The mother of Zebedee’s children] This was *Salome*.

Verse 21. Grant that these my two sons] James and John. See ^{<41540>}**Mark 15:40**. In the preceding chapter, ^{<40928>}**Matthew 19:28**, our Lord had promised his disciples, that they should sit on *twelve thrones*, judging the twelve tribes. *Salome*, probably hearing of this, and understanding it literally, came to request the *chief dignities* in this new government for her sons; and it appears it was at their instigation that she made this request, for Mark, ^{<41035>}**Mark 10:35**, informs us that these brethren *themselves* made the request, i.e. they made it through the *medium* of their mother.

One on thy right hand, and the other on (THY) left] I have added the pronoun in the latter clause on the authority of almost every MS. and version of repute.

That the sons of Zebedee wished for ecclesiastical, rather than secular honours, may be thought probable, from the allusion that is made here to the supreme dignities in the great Sanhedrin. The *prince* of the Sanhedrin (HA-NASI) sat in the midst of two rows of senators or elders; on his right hand sat the person termed AB (*the father* of the Sanhedrin;) and on his left hand the CHACHAM, or *sage*. These persons transacted all business in the absence of the *president*. The authority of this council was at some periods very great, and extended to a multitude of matters both *ecclesiastical* and *civil*. These appear to have been the honours which James and John sought. They seem to have strangely forgot the lesson they had learned from the transfiguration.

Verse 22. Ye know not what ye ask.] How strange is the infatuation, in some *parents*, which leads them to desire *worldly* or *ecclesiastical* honours for their children! He must be much in love with the *cross* who wishes to have his child a minister of the Gospel; for, if he be such as God approves of in the work, his life will be a life of toil and suffering; he will be obliged to *sip*, at least, if not to drink largely, of the cup of Christ. *We know not what we ask*, when, in getting our children into the CHURCH, we take upon ourselves to *answer for their CALL* to the sacred *office*, and for the *salvation* of the *souls* that are put under their care. Blind parents! rather let your children beg their bread than thrust them into an office to which God has not called them; and in which they will not only ruin their souls, but be the means of damnation to hundreds; for if *God has not sent them*, they shall not profit the people at all.

And to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized, &c.] This clause in *this*, and the *next verse*, is wanting in BDL, two others, (7 more in ~~MS~~ **Matthew 20:23**.) *Coptic, Sahidic, Ethiopic*, Mr. WHEELOCK'S *Persic, Vulgate, Saxon*, and all the *Itala*, except two. Grotius, Mill, and Bengel, think it should be omitted, and Griesbach has left it out of the text in both his editions. It is omitted also by *Origen, Epiphanius, Hilary, Jerome, Ambrose, and Juvenus*. According to the rules laid down by critics to appreciate a false or true reading, this clause cannot be considered as forming a part of the sacred text. It may be asked, Does not *drink of my cup*, convey the same idea? Does the clause add any thing to

the perspicuity of the passage? And, though found in many good MSS., is not the balance of evidence in point of antiquity against it? Baptism among the Jews, as it was performed in the coldest weather, and the persons were kept under water for some time, was used not only to express *death*, but the most cruel kind of death. See *Lightfoot*. As to the term *cup*, it was a common figure, by which they expressed calamities, judgments, desolation, &c.

They say unto him, We are able.] Strange blindness! You *can*? No: one drop of this cup would sink you into utter ruin, unless upheld by the power of God. However, the man whom God has appointed to the work he will preserve in it.

Verse 23. Is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father.] The common translation, in which the words, *it shall be given to them*; are interpolated by our translators, utterly changes and destroys the meaning of the passage. It represents Christ (in opposition to the whole Scriptures) as having nothing to do in the dispensing of rewards and punishments; whereas, our Lord only intimates that, however partial he may be to these two brethren, yet seats in glory can only be given to those who are *fitted* for them. No *favour* can prevail here; the elevated seat is for him who is filled with the fulness of God. The true construction of the words is this:—**οὐκ ἐστὶν ἐμὸν δούναι, ἀλλ' οἷς ἡτοιμύσται ὑπο τοῦ αὐτοῦ μου,** *To sit on my right hand and on my left, is not mine to give, except to them for whom it is prepared of my Father.* According to the prediction of Christ, these brethren did partake of his afflictions: *James* was martyred by *Herod*, ^{<412D>}**Acts 12:2**; and *John* was banished to *Patmos*, for the testimony of Christ, ^{<600D>}**Revelation 1:9**.

Verse 24. When the ten heard it, they were moved] The *ambition* which leads to *spiritual lordship* is one great cause of murmurings and animosities in religious societies, and has proved the ruin of the most flourishing Churches in the universe.

Verse 25. Exercise dominion-and-exercise authority upon them.] They *tyrannized* and *exercised arbitrary power* over the people. This was certainly true of the governments in our Lord's time, both in the *east* and in the *west*. I have endeavoured to express, as nearly as possible, the meaning of the two Greek verbs, **κατακυριεύουσιν**, and **κατεξουσιάζουσιν**; and those who understand the genius of the language will perceive that I

have not *exhausted* their sense, however some may think that no emphasis was intended, and that these compound verbs are used for the simple **κυριευειν**, and **εξουσιαζειν**. See *Wakefield and Rosenmuller*.

The *government* of the *Church* of Christ is widely different from secular governments. It is founded in humility and brotherly love: it is derived from Christ, the great Head of the Church, and is ever conducted by his maxims and spirit. When *political* matters are brought into the Church of Christ, both are ruined. The *Church* has more than once ruined the *State*; the *State* has often *corrupted* the *Church*: it is certainly for the interests of both to be kept *separate*. This has already been abundantly exemplified in both cases, and will continue so to be, over the whole world, wherever the Church and State are *united* in secular matters.

Verse 26. It shall not be so among you] Every kind of lordship and spiritual domination over the Church of Christ, like that exercised by the Church of Rome, is destructive and anti-christian.

Your minister] Or, *deacon*, **διακονος**. I know no other word which could at once convey the meaning of the original, and make a proper distinction between it and **δουλος**, or *servant*, in ^{<4017>}**Matthew 20:27**. The office of a deacon, in the primitive Church, was to *serve* in the *agapæ*, or love feasts, to *distribute the bread and wine* to the communicants; to *proclaim different parts and times of worship* in the churches; and to *take care* of the *widows, orphans, prisoners, and sick*, who were provided for out of the revenues of the Church. Thus we find it was the very *lowest* ecclesiastical office. *Deacons* were first appointed by the apostles, ^{<4061>}**Acts 6:1-6**; they had the care of the poor, and preached occasionally.

Verse 27. Your servant] **δουλος** the *lowest secular* office, as *deacon* was the *lowest ecclesiastical* office: **δουλος** is often put for *slave*.

From these directions of our Lord, we may easily discern what sort of a spirit his ministers should be of. 1. A minister of Christ is not to consider himself a *lord* over Christ's flock. 2. He is not to conduct the concerns of the Church with an *imperious* spirit. 3. He is to reform the weak, after Christ's example, more by *loving instruction* than by *reproof* or *censure*. 4. He should consider that true apostolic greatness consists in *serving* the followers of Christ with all the powers and talents he possesses. 5. That he should be ready, if required, to *give up his life unto death*, to promote the salvation of men.

Verse 28. A ransom for many.] **λυτρον αντι πολλων**, or a *ransom instead of many*, -one ransom, or atonement, *instead of the many* prescribed in the Jewish law. Mr. *Wakefield* contends for the above translation, and with considerable show of reason and probability.

The word **λυτρον** is used by the *Septuagint* for the Hebrew **לַפְדִּיּוֹן**, *pidion*, the ransom paid for a man's life: see ^{<0213>}**Exodus 21:30**; ^{<0439>}**Numbers 3:49-51**; and **λυτρα** is used ^{<0831>}**Numbers 35:31**, where a *satisfaction* (Hebrew **כֹּפֶר** *copher*, an *atonement*) for the life of a murderer is refused. The original word is used by *Lucian* in exactly the same sense, who represents *Ganymede* promising to sacrifice a ram to *Jupiter*, **λυτρον υπερ εμου**, as a *ransom for himself*, provided he would dismiss him.

The whole Gentile world, as well as the Jews, believed in vicarious sacrifices. *Virgil*, *Æn.* v. 85, has nearly the same words as those in the text. "UNUM PRO MULTIS dabitur CAPUT," -*One man must be given for many*. *Jesus Christ* laid down his life as a ransom for the lives and souls of the children of men. In the *Codex Bezae*, and in most of the *Itala*, the *Saxon*, and one of the *Syriac*, *Hilary*, *Leo Magnus*, and *Juvenus*, the following remarkable addition is found; "But seek ye to increase from a little, and to be lessened from that which is great. Moreover, when ye enter into a house, and are invited to sup, do not recline in the most eminent places, lest a more honourable than thou come after, and he who invited thee to supper come up to thee and say, Get down yet lower; and thou be put to confusion. But if thou sit down in the lowest place, and one inferior to thee come after, he who invited thee to supper will say unto thee, Go and sit higher: now this will be advantageous to thee." This is the largest addition found in any of the MSS., and contains not less than *sixty* words in the original, and eighty-three in the Anglo-Saxon. It may be necessary to remark, that Mr. *Marshall*, in his edition of the Gothic and Saxon Gospels, does not insert these words in the text, but gives them, p. 496 of his observations. This addition is at least as ancient as the fourth century, for it is quoted by *Hilary*, who did not die till about A. D. 367.

Verse 30. Two blind men] ^{<4104>}**Mark 10:46**, and ^{<0185>}**Luke 18:35**, mention only one blind man, *Bartimeus*. Probably *he* was mentioned by the other evangelists, as being a person well known before and after his cure. *Blindness of heart* is a disorder of which, men seldom complain, or from which they desire to be delivered; and it is one property of this blindness,

to keep the person from *perceiving* it, and to persuade him that his sight is *good*.

Sitting by the way side] In the likeliest place to receive alms, because of the multitudes going and coming between Jerusalem and Jericho.

Cried out] In the midst of judgments God remembers mercy. Though God had deprived them, for wise reasons, of their *eyes*, he left them the use of their *speech*. It is never so *ill* with us, but it might be *much worse*: let us, therefore, be submissive and thankful.

Have mercy on us] Hearing that Jesus passed by, and not knowing whether they should ever again have so good an opportunity of addressing him, they are determined to call, and call earnestly. They ask for *mercy*, conscious that they *deserve* nothing, and they ask with *faith-Son of David*, acknowledging him as the promised *Messiah*.

Verse 31. The multitude rebuked them] Whenever a soul begins to cry after Jesus for *light* and *salvation*, the world and the devil join together to drown its cries, or force it to be silent. But let all such remember, Jesus is now passing by; that their souls must perish everlastingly, if not saved by him, and they may never have so good an opportunity again. While there is a broken and a contrite heart, let it sigh its complaints to God, till he hear and answer.

They cried the more] When the world and the devil begin to rebuke, in this case, it is a proof that the salvation of God is *nigh*; therefore, let such *cry out a great deal the more*.

Verse 32. Jesus stood] “The cry of a believing penitent,” says one, “is sufficient to stop the most merciful Jesus, were he going to make a new heaven and a new earth; for what is all the *irrational* part of God’s creation in worth, when compared with the value of one immortal soul!” See Clarke on “~~41160~~Mark 10:50”.

What will ye that I shall do] Christ is at all times infinitely willing to save sinners: when the desire of the heart is turned towards him, there can be little delay in the salvation. *What is thy wish?* If it be a good one, God will surely fulfil it.

Verse 33. That our eyes may be opened.] He who feels his own sore, and the plague of his heart, has no great need of a *prompter* in prayer. A

hungry man can easily ask bread; he has no need to go to a book to get expressions to state his wants in; his hunger tells him he wants food, and he tells *this* to the person from whom he expects relief. Helps to devotion, in all ordinary cases, may be of great use; in extraordinary cases they can be of little importance; the afflicted heart alone can tell its own sorrows, with appropriate pleadings.

Verse 34. So Jesus had compassion on them] *επλαγγνισθης*, *He was moved with tender pity*. The tender pity of Christ met the earnest cry of the blind men, and their immediate cure was the result.

They followed him.] As a proof of the *miracle* that was wrought, and of the *gratitude* which they felt to their benefactor. For other particulars of this miraculous cure, see **Clarke's notes on** "^{<41104>}**Mark 10:46**", &c.

Reader, whosoever thou art, act in behalf of thy soul as these blind men did in behalf of their sight, and thy salvation is sure. Apply to the Son of David; lose not a moment; he is *passing by*, and thou art *passing* into *eternity*, and probably wilt never have a more favourable opportunity than the present. The Lord increase thy earnestness and faith!

ST. MATTHEW

CHAPTER 21.

Christ rides into Jerusalem upon an ass, and the multitude receive him joyfully, 1-11. He enters the temple, and expels the money-changers, &c. 12, 13. The blind and the lame come to him and are healed, 14. The chief priests and scribes are offended, 15. Our Lord confounds them, and goes to Bethany, 16, 17. The barren fig-tree blasted, 18-22. While teaching in the temple, the chief priests and elders question his authority; he answers and confutes them, 23-27. The parable of the man and his two sons, 28-32. The parable of a vineyard let out to husbandmen, 33-42; applied to the priests and Pharisees, 43-45; who wish to kill him, but are restrained by the fear of the people, who acknowledge Christ for a prophet, 46.

NOTES ON CHAP. 21.

Verse 1. Bethphage] A place on the west declivity of Mount *Olivet*, from which it is thought the whole declivity and part of the valley took their name. It is supposed to have derived its name from the *fig-trees* which grew there; **tyb** beeth, signifying a *region* as well as a *house*, and **gp phag**, a *green fig*.

Verse 2. Ye shall find an ass tied, and a colt] *Asses* and *mules* were in common use in Palestine: *horses* were seldom to be met with. Our blessed Lord takes every opportunity to convince his disciples that nothing was *hidden* from him: he informs them of the most minute occurrence; and manifested his power over the heart in disposing the owner to permit the ass to be taken away.

Verse 3. The Lord (the proprietor of all things) **hath need of them]** Jesus is continually humbling himself, to show us how odious *pride* is in the sight of God: but in his humility he is ever giving proofs of his almighty power, that the belief of his *divinity* may be established.

Verse 4. All this was done] The word *all*, in this clause, is omitted by some MSS., versions, and fathers.

Which was spoken] The Spirit of God, which predicted those things that concerned the Messiah, took care to have them literally fulfilled: 1. To

show the truth of prophecy in general; and, 2. To designate Christ as the person intended by that prophecy. See the note on ^{<4023>}**Matthew 2:23**.

Verse 5. Tell ye the daughter of Sion] The quotation is taken from ^{<3809>}**Zechariah 9:9**, but not in the precise words of the prophet.

This entry into Jerusalem has been termed the *triumph* of Christ. It was indeed the triumph of *humility* over *pride* and worldly grandeur; of *poverty* over *affluence*; and of *meekness* and *gentleness* over *rage* and *malice*.

He is coming now *meek*, full of kindness and compassion to those who were plotting his destruction! He comes to deliver up himself into their hands; their king comes to be murdered by his subjects, and to make his death a ransom price for their souls!

Verse 7. And put on them their clothes] Thus acknowledging him to be their *king*, for this was a *custom* observed by the people when they found that God had appointed a man to the kingdom. When Jehu sat with the captains of the army, and Elisha the prophet came, by the order of God, to anoint him king over Israel, as soon as he came out of the inner chamber into which the prophet had taken him to anoint him, and they knew what was done, *every man took his garment, and spread it under him on the top of the steps, and blew the trumpets*, saying, "Jehu is king." ^{<42913>}**2 Kings 9:13**.

And they set him thereon.] και επεκαθισεν επανω αυτων, *and he sat upon them*; but instead of επανω αυτων, *upon THEM*, the Codex Bezae, seven copies of the *Itala*, some copies of the *Vulgate*, and some others, read εν αυτον, *upon him*, i.e. the colt. This is most likely to be the true reading; for we can scarcely suppose that he rode upon both by *turns*,—this would appear *childish*; or that he rode upon both at *once*, for this would be *absurd*. Some say he sat on *both*; for "the ass that was *tied up* was an emblem of the Jews *bound under the yoke of the law*; and the *colt* that had *not been tied* represented the *Gentiles* who were *not under the law*; and that Jesus Christ's sitting on both represented his *subjecting* the Jews and the Gentiles to the *sway* of his evangelical *sceptre*." He who *can* receive this saying, let him receive it.

Verse 8. Cut down branches from the trees] Carrying palm and other branches was emblematical of victory and success. See 1 Mac. xiii. 51; 2 Mac. x. 7; and ^{<6179>}**Revelation 7:9**.

The rabbins acknowledge that the prophecy in Zechariah refers to the Messiah; so Rab. *Tancum*, and Yalcut Rubeni has a strange story about the ass. "This ass is the colt of that ass which was created in the twilight of the sixth day. This is the ass which Abraham found when he went to sacrifice his son. This is the ass on which Moses rode when he went to Egypt; and this is the ass on which the Messiah shall ride." Some of the Jews seem to think that the *zebra* is intended; for according to *Bab. Sanhedr.* fol. 98, when Shapoor, king of Persia, said to Rabbi Samuel: "You say your Messiah will come upon an ass; I will send him a noble horse." To which the rabbi replied, "You have not a horse with a hundred spots (query, streaks) like his ass." See *Lightfoot* and *Schoettgen*.

Verse 9. Hosanna to the son of David] When persons applied to the king for help, or for a redress of grievances, they used the word *hosanna*, or rather from the Hebrew **an h[yvwh]** HOSHIAH NA! *Save now!* or, *Save, we beseech thee!*-redress our grievances, and give us help from oppression! Thus both the *words* and *actions* of the people prove that they acknowledged Christ as their *king*, and looked to him for *deliverance*. How easily might he have assumed the sovereignty at this time, had he been so disposed! For instances of the use of this *form* of speech, see ~~<1014>~~ **2 Samuel 14:4;** ~~<1206>~~ **2 Kings 6:26;** ~~<1982>~~ **Psalm 118:25.**

Son of David] A well-known epithet of the Messiah. *He who cometh in the name*, &c. He who comes in the *name* and *authority* of the Most High.

Hosanna in the highest] Either meaning, Let the *heavenly hosts* join with us in magnifying this august Being!-or, Let the *utmost degrees* of hosanna, of *salvation*, and *deliverance*, be communicated to thy people! Probably there is an allusion here to the custom of the Jews in the feast of tabernacles. During the first seven days of that feast, they went *once* round the altar, each day, with *palm* and *other branches* in their hands, singing HOSANNA: but on the *eighth* day of that feast they walked *seven* times round the altar, singing the *hosanna*; and this was termed the *hosanna rabba*, the GREAT *hosanna*: i.e. *Assist with the greatest succour*. Probably answering to the **τοῖς ὑψίστοις** of the evangelist, for on this day they beg the most *speedy* and *powerful help* against their *enemies*, and likewise pray for a *prosperous* and *fruitful* year. See STEHLIN'S *Jewish Traditions*, vol. ii. p. 322.

Verse 10. All the city was moved] Or, *the whole city was in motion.*

εσεισθη, was in a tumult-they saw and heard plainly that the multitude had proclaimed Christ *king*, and *Messiah*. *Who is this?* Who is accounted worthy of this honour?

Verse 11. This is Jesus THE PROPHET] ο προφητης THAT *prophet* whom Moses spoke of, <61818>**Deuteronomy 18:18.** *I will raise them up a prophet-like unto thee, &c.* Every expression of the multitude plainly intimated that they fully received our blessed Lord as the promised Messiah.-How strange is it that these same people (if the creatures of the high priest be not only intended) should, about five days after, change their hosannas for, *Away with him! crucify him! crucify him!* How fickle is the multitude! Even when they get *right*, there is but little hope that they will continue so long.

Verse 12. Jesus went into the temple of God, &c.] “*Avarice,*” says one, “covered with the veil of religion, is one of those things on which Christ looks with the greatest indignation in his Church. Merchandize of holy things, simoniacal presentations, fraudulent exchanges, a mercenary spirit in sacred functions; ecclesiastical employments obtained by flattery, service, or attendance, or by any thing which is instead of money; collations, nominations, and elections made through any other motive than the glory of God; these are all fatal and damnable profanations, of which those in the temple were only a shadow.” QUESNEL.

Money-changers] Persons who furnished the Jews and proselytes who came from other countries, with the *current* coin of Judea, in exchange for their own.

Verse 13. My house shall be called the house of prayer] This is taken from <2367>**Isaiah 56:7.**

But ye have made it a den of thieves.] This is taken from <3071>**Jeremiah 7:11.**

Our Lord alludes here to those *dens* and *caves* in Judea, in which the public robbers either hid or kept themselves fortified.

They who are placed in the Church of Christ to *serve* souls, and do it not, and they who enjoy the revenues of the Church, and neglect the *service* of it, are *thieves* and *robbers* in more senses than one.

Our Lord is represented here as purifying his temple; and this we may judge he did in reference to his true temple, the Church, to show that nothing that was *worldly* or *unholy* should have any place among his followers, or in that heart in which he should condescend to dwell. It is marvellous that these interested, vile men did not raise a mob against him: but it is probable they were overawed by the Divine power, or, seeing the multitudes on the side of Christ, they were afraid to molest him. I knew a case something similar to this, which did not succeed so well. A very pious clergyman of my acquaintance, observing a woman keeping a public standing to sell nuts, gingerbread, &c., at the very *porch* of his *Church*, on the *Lord's day*, "desired her to remove thence, and not defile the house of God, while she profaned the Sabbath of the Lord." She paid no attention to him. He warned her the next Sabbath, but still to no purpose. Going in one Lord's day to preach, and finding her still in the very entrance, with her stall, he *overthrew* the stall, and scattered the stuff into the street. He was shortly after summoned to appear before the royal court, which, to its eternal reproach, condemned the action, and fined the man of God in a considerable sum of money!

Verse 14. The blind and the lame came] Having condemned the *profane* use of the temple, he now shows the proper use of it. It is a *house of prayer*, where God is to manifest his goodness and power in giving *sight* to the spiritually *blind*, and *feet* to the *lame*. The *Church* or *chapel* in which the *blind* and the *lame* are not healed has *no* Christ in it, and is not worthy of attendance.

Verse 15. The chief priests-were sore displeased] Or, *were incensed*. Incensed at what! At the purification of the profaned temple! This was a work *they* should have done themselves, but for which they had neither *grace* nor *influence*; and their pride and jealousy will not suffer them to permit others to do it. Strange as it may appear, the *priesthood* itself, in all corrupt times, has been ever the most forward to *prevent* a reform in the Church. Was it because they were conscious that a reformer would find them no better than *money-changers* in, and *profaners* of, the house of God, and that they and their system must be *overturned*, if the true worship of God were restored! Let him who is concerned answer this to his conscience.

Verse 16. Out of the mouth of babes] The eighth Psalm, out of which these words are quoted, is applied to Jesus Christ in *three* other places in

the new covenant, ^{<6157>}**1 Corinthians 15:27**; ^{<6012>}**Ephesians 1:22**; ^{<8016>}**Hebrews 2:6**. Which proves it to be merely a prophetic psalm, relating to the Messiah.

It was a common thing among the Jews for the children to be employed in public acclamations; and thus they were accustomed to hail their celebrated rabbins. This shouting of the children was therefore no strange thing in the land: only they were exasperated, because a person was celebrated against whom they had a rooted hatred. As to the prophecy that foretold this, they regarded it not. Some imagine that babes and sucklings in the prophecy have a much more extensive meaning, and refer also to the first preachers of the Gospel of Christ.

Verse 17. And he left them (*καταλιπων*, *finally leaving them*) **and went-into Bethany; and he lodged there.**] Bethany was a village about *two* miles distant from Jerusalem, by Mount Olivet, ^{<6118>}**John 11:18**; and it is remarkable that from this day till his death, which happened about six days after, he spent not one night in Jerusalem, but went every evening to Bethany, and returned to the city each morning. See ^{<4217>}**Luke 21:37; 22:39**; ^{<6101>}**John 8:1, 2**. They were about to murder the Lord of glory; and the true *light*, which they had *rejected*, is now *departing* from them.

Lodged there.] Not merely to avoid the snares laid for him by those bad men, but to take away all suspicion of his affecting the regal power. To the end of this verse is added by the Saxon, [Anglo-Saxon]. *And taught them of the kingdom of God*. This same reading is found in some MSS., *Missals*, and one copy of the *Itala*. It appears also in *Wickliff*, and my old folio English MS. Bible, and *taugt hem of the kyngdom of God*; and in two MS. copies of the *Vulgate*, in my possession: one, duodecimo, very fairly written, in 1300; the other a large folio, probably written in the 11th or 12th century, in which the words are, *IBIQUE docebat eos de regno Dei*. *AND THERE he taught them concerning the kingdom of God*.

Verse 18. Now in the morning, as he returned into the city] Which was his custom from the time he wholly left Jerusalem, spending only the day time teaching in the temple; see ^{<4017>}**Matthew 21:17**. This was probably on Thursday, the 12th day of the month *Nisan*.

He hungered-Probably neither he, nor his disciples, had any thing but what they got from *public charity*; and the hand of that seems to have been *cold* at this time.

Verse 19. He saw a fig tree in the way] *επι της οδου*, *By the road side*. As this fig tree was by the *way side*, it was no *private* property; and on this account our Lord, or any other traveller, had a right to take of its fruit. For a full explanation of this difficult passage, relative to this emblematic fig tree, see on ^{<41113>}**Mark 11:13**, &c.

Let no fruit grow on thee] Can a professor, who affords Christ nothing but *barren words* and *wishes*, expect any thing but his malediction? When the soul continues in *unfruitfulness*, the influences of grace are removed, and then the tree speedily withers from the very root.

Verse 20. How soon is the fig tree withered away!] We often say to our neighbours, “How suddenly this man died! Who could have expected it so soon?” But who takes warning by these examples? What we say *to-day* of OTHERS, may be said *to-morrow* of OURSELVES. Be ye also ready! Lord, increase our faith!

Verse 21. If ye have faith, and doubt not] See on ^{<40720>}**Matthew 17:20**. *Removing mountains*, and *rooting up of mountains*, are phrases very generally used to signify the *removing* or *conquering* great *difficulties*-getting through *perplexities*. So, many of the rabbins are termed *rooters up of mountains*, because they were dexterous in removing difficulties, solving cases of conscience, &c. In this sense our Lord’s words are to be understood. He that has faith will get through every difficulty and perplexity; mountains shall become molehills or plains before him. The saying is neither to be taken in its literal sense, nor is it *hyperbolical*: it is a proverbial form of speech, which no Jew could misunderstand, and with which no Christian ought to be puzzled.

Verse 22. All things-ye shall ask in prayer, believing] In order to get salvation, there must be, 1. a *conviction* of the want of it: this begets, 2. *prayer*, or *warm desires*, in the heart: then 3. the person *asks*, i.e. makes use of *words* expressive of his wants and wishes: 4. *believes* the word of promise, relative to the fulfilment of his wants: and 5. *receives*, according to the merciful promise of God, the salvation which his soul requires.

Verse 23. By what authority doest thou these things?] The things which the chief priests allude to, were his *receiving* the *acclamations* of the people as the *promised Messiah*, his *casting* the *traders* out of the *temple*, and his *teaching* the *people* publicly in it.

Who gave thee this authority?] Not *them*: for, like many of their successors, they were neither *teachers* nor *cleansers*; though they had the name and the profits of the place.

Verse 24. I also will ask you one thing] Our Lord was certainly under no obligation to answer their question: he had already given them such proofs of his Divine mission as could not possibly be exceeded, in the miracles which he wrought before their eyes, and before all Judea; and, as they would not credit him on this evidence, it would have been in vain to have expected their acknowledgment of him on any profession he would make.

Verse 25. The baptism of John] Had John a *Divine commission* or not, for his baptism and preaching? Our Lord here takes the wise in their own cunning. He knew the estimation John was in among the people; and he plainly saw that, if they gave any answer at all, they must convict themselves: and so they saw, when they came to examine the question. See <125> **Matthew 21:25, 26.**

Verse 27. We cannot tell.] Simplicity gives a wonderful confidence and peace of mind; but double dealing causes a thousand inquietudes and troubles. Let a man do his utmost to conceal in his own heart the evidence he has of truth and innocence, to countenance his not yielding to it; God, who sees the heart, will, in the light of the last day, produce it as a witness against him, and make it his judge.

We cannot tell, said they; which, in the words of truth, should have been, *We will not tell*, for we will not have this man for the Messiah: because, if we acknowledge John as his *forerunner*, we must, of necessity, receive Jesus as *the Christ*.

They who are engaged against the truth are abandoned to the spirit of falsity, and scruple not at a lie. Pharisaical pride, according to its different interests, either pretends to *know* every thing, or affects to *know nothing*. Among such, we may meet with numerous instances of arrogance and affected humility. God often hides from the wise and prudent what he reveals unto babes; for, when they use their wisdom only to invent the most plausible excuses for rejecting the truth when it comes to them, it is but just that they should be punished with that ignorance to which, in their own defence, they are obliged to have recourse.

Verse 28. A certain man had two sons] Under the emblem of these two sons, one of whom was a *libertine, disobedient, and insolent*, but who afterwards thought on his ways, and returned to his duty; and the second, a *hypocrite*, who promised all, and did nothing; our Lord points out, on the one hand, the *tax-gatherers* and *sinner*s of all descriptions, who, convicted by the preaching of John and that of Christ, turned away from their iniquities and embraced the Gospel; and, on the other hand, the *scribes, Pharisees, and self-righteous people*, who, pretending a zeal for the *law*, would not receive the salvation of the *Gospel*.

Verse 29. I will not] This is the general reply of every sinner to the invitations of God; and, in it, the Most High is treated without ceremony or respect. They only are safe who *persist not* in the denial.

Verse 30. I go, sir] This is all respect, complaisance, and professed, obedience; but *he went not*: he promised *well*, but did not perform. What a multitude of such are in the world, professing to know God, but denying him in their works! Alas! what will such professions avail, when God comes to take away the soul?

Verse 31. The publicans and the harlots] In all their former conduct they had said NO. Now they yield to the voice of truth when they hear it, and enter into the kingdom, embracing the salvation brought to them in the Gospel. The *others*, who had been always professing the most ready and willing obedience, and who pretended to be waiting for the kingdom of God, did not receive it when it came, but rather chose, while making the best professions, to continue members of the synagogue of Satan.

Verse 32. John came unto you in the way of righteousness] Proclaiming the truth, and living agreeably to it. Or, *John came unto you*, who are *in the way of righteousness*. This seems rather to be the true meaning and construction of this passage. The Jews are here distinguished from the Gentiles. The former were in the *way of righteousness*, had the revelation of God, and the ordinances of justice *established* among them; the latter were in the *way of unrighteousness*, without the Divine revelation, and iniquitous in all their conduct: John came to both, preaching the doctrine of repentance, and proclaiming Jesus the Christ. To say that it was John who came in the way of righteousness, and that to him the words refer, is, in my opinion, saying nothing; for this was necessarily implied: as he professed to come from God, he must not only *preach* righteousness, but *walk* in it.

It is very difficult to get a worldly minded and self-righteous man brought to Christ. *Examples* signify little to him. Urge the example of an eminent *saint*, he is discouraged at it. Show him a *profligate sinner* converted to God, him he is ashamed to own and follow; and, as to the conduct of the generality of the followers of Christ, it is not striking enough to impress him. John, and Christ, and the apostles preach; but, to multitudes, all is in vain.

Verse 33. There was a certain householder] Let us endeavour to find out a general and practical meaning for this parable. A *householder*-the *Supreme Being*. The *family*-the *Jewish nation*. The *vineyard*-the *city of Jerusalem*. The *fence*-the *Divine protection*. The *wine-press*-the *law and sacrificial rites*. The *tower*-the *temple*, in which the Divine presence was manifested. The *husbandmen*-the *priests and doctors of the law*. Went *from home*-entrusted the cultivation of the vineyard to the priests, &c., with the utmost confidence; as a man would do who had the most trusty servants, and was obliged to absent himself from home for a certain time. Our Lord takes this parable from ²³⁸¹ **Isaiah 5:1**, &c.; but whether our blessed Redeemer quote from the *law*, the *prophets*, or the *rabbins*, he reserves the liberty to himself to beautify the whole, and render it more pertinent.

Some apply this parable also to Christianity, thus:-The *master* or *father*-our *blessed Lord*. The *family*-*professing Christians in general*. The *vineyard*-the *true Church*, or *assembly of the faithful*. The *hedge*-the *true faith*, which keeps the sacred assembly *enclosed and defended* from the errors of *heathenism* and *false Christianity*. The *wine-press*-the *atonement* made by the sacrifice of Christ, typified by the *sacrifices* under the law. The *tower*-the *promises* of the *Divine presence* and *protection*. The *husbandmen*-the *apostles* and all their *successors* in the *ministry*. The *going from home*-the *ascension* to heaven. But this parable cannot go on all fours in the *Christian* cause, as any one may see. In the case of the *husbandmen*, especially it is applicable; unless we suppose our Lord intended such as those inquisitorial *Bonnors*, who always persecuted the true ministers of Christ, and consequently Christ himself in his members; and to these may be added the whole train of *St. Bartholomew EJECTORS*, and all the fire and faggot men of a certain Church, who think they do God service by murdering his saints. But let the persecuted take courage: Jesus Christ will *come back* shortly; and then *he will miserably destroy those*

wicked men: indeed, he has done so already to several, and let out his vineyard to more faithful husbandmen.

Dugged a wine-press] *ωρυξε ληνον*. St. Mark has *υποληνιον*, the pit under the press, into which the liquor ran, when squeezed out of the fruit by the press.

Verse 34. He sent his servants] *Prophets*, which, from *time to time*, he sent to the Jewish nation to call both priests and people back to the purity of his holy religion.

Receive the fruits of it.] Alluding to the ancient custom of paying the rent of a farm in *kind*; that is, by a part of the *produce* of the *farm*. This custom anciently prevailed in most nations; and still prevails in the highlands of Scotland, and in some other places. The *Boldon book*, a survey made of the state of the bishopric of Durham in 1183, shows how much of the rents was paid in cows, sheep, pigs, fowls, eggs, &c., the remaining part being made up chiefly by manual labour.

Verse 35. Beat one] *εδειραν*, *took his skin off, flayed him*: probably alluding to some who had been *excessively scourged*.

Killed another, &c.] Rid themselves of the true witnesses of God by a *variety* of persecutions.

Verse 36. Other servants] There is not a moment in which God does not shower down his gifts upon men, and require the fruit of them. *Various instruments* are used to bring sinners to God. There are *prophets, apostles, pastors, teachers*: some with his gift after this manner, and some after that. The true disciples of Christ have been persecuted in all ages, and the greatest share of the persecution has fallen upon the *ministers* of his religion; for there have always been *good* and *bad* husbandmen, and the *latter* have persecuted the *former*.

More than the first] Or, *more honourable*, so I think *πλειονας* should be translated; for, as the *fulness* of the time approached, each prophet more *clearly* and *fully* pointed out the coming of Christ.

Our translation, which says, *more than the first*, conveys no meaning at all.

πλειος is the meaning I have given it above, in ^{<1065>} **Matthew 6:25**.

πλειον της τροφης, of MORE VALUE than food; and in ^{<10215>} **Numbers 22:15** *πλειους και εντιμοτερους*, persons higher in dignity and office.

Verse 37. Last of all he sent-his son] This requires no comment. Our Lord plainly means *himself*.

They will reverence] *εντραπησονται*, they will *reflect* upon their *conduct* and *blush for shame* because of it, when they see my son. So the *Syric* and *Persic*.

Verse 38. Said among themselves] Alluding to the *conspiracies* which were then forming against the life of our blessed Lord, in the *councils* of the Jewish elders and chief priests. See ^{<4270>}**Matthew 27:1**.

Verse 39. Cast him out of the vineyard] Utterly rejected the counsel of God against themselves; and would neither acknowledge the *authority* of Christ, nor submit to his *teaching*. What a strange and unaccountable case is this!-a sinner, to enjoy a little longer his *false peace*, and the gratification of his sinful appetites, rejects Jesus, and persecutes that Gospel which troubles his sinful repose.

Verse 41. He will miserably destroy those wicked men] So, according to this evangelist, our Lord caused them to pass that sentence of destruction upon themselves which was literally executed about *forty years* after. But Luke relates it differently: according to him, they said μη *γενοιτο*, *God forbid!* The Codex Leicestrensis omits *οι λεγουσιν*, *they say*; so that the following words appear to be spoken by our Lord. Michaelis supposes that in the Hebrew original the word was *rmayw waiomer*, *he said*; for which the Greek translator might have read *wrmayw waiomeru*, *they said*.

Verse 42. The stone] R. Solom. Jarchi, on Micah 5., says, this *stone* means the *Messiah*, *j yvm ^ka*: *Abarbanel* is of the same opinion. This seems to have been originally spoken of *David* who was at first rejected by the Jewish rulers, but was afterwards chosen by the Lord to be the great ruler of his people Israel. The quotation is taken from ^{<1982>}**Psalms 118:22**.

As the *Church* is represented in Scripture under the name of the *temple* and *house* of God, in allusion to the *temple* of Jerusalem, which was a type of it, ^{<4316>}**1 Corinthians 3:16**; ^{<3816>}**Hebrews 3:6**; ^{<1016>}**1 Peter 2:5**; so Jesus Christ is represented as the *foundation* on which this edifice is laid, ^{<4311>}**1 Corinthians 3:11**; ^{<4121>}**Ephesians 2:20, 21**.

The builders] The *chief priests* and *elders* of the people, with the *doctors* of the *law*.

Rejected] An expression borrowed from masons, who, finding a stone, which being tried in a particular place, and appearing improper for it, is thrown aside, and another taken; however, at last, it may happen that the *very stone* which had been before *rejected*, may be found the most suitable as the *head stone of the corner*.

This passage, as applied by our Lord to himself, contains an abridgment of the whole doctrine of the Gospel.

1. The *Lord's* peculiar *work* is astonishingly manifested in the mission of Jesus Christ.
2. He, being *rejected* and *crucified* by the Jews, became an *atonement* for the sin of the world.
3. He was *raised* again from the dead, a proof of his *conquest* over *death* and *sin*, and a *pledge* of *immortality* to his followers.
4. He was constituted the *foundation* on which the salvation of mankind rests, and the *corner stone* which unites *Jews* and *Gentiles*, *beautifies*, *strengthens*, and *completes* the whole building, as the *head stone*, or *uppermost* stone in the corner does the whole edifice.
5. He is hereby rendered the *object* of the *joy* and *admiration* of all his followers and the *glory* of man. *This was done by the Lord, and is marvellous in our eyes.*

Verse 43. Therefore say I] Thus showing them, that to them alone the parable belonged. *The kingdom of God shall be taken from you*-the Gospel shall be taken from you, and given to the Gentiles, who will receive it, and bring forth fruit to the glory of God.

Bringing forth the fruits] As in ^{<42134>}Matthew 21:34 an allusion is made to paying the landlord in *kind*, so here the Gentiles are represented as paying God thus. The *returns* which He expects for his grace are *the fruits of grace*; nothing can ever be acceptable in the sight of God that does not spring from *himself*.

Verse 44. The 44th verse should certainly come before ver. 43, otherwise the narration is not consecutive.

-Verse 42. *The stone which the builders rejected, is become the head of the corner, &c.*

-Verse 44. *Whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken, &c.* This is an allusion to the punishment of stoning among the Jews. The place of stoning was twice as high as a man; while standing on this, one of the witnesses struck the culprit on the loins, so that he fell over this scaffold; if he died by the stroke and fall, well; if not, the other witness threw a *stone upon his heart*, and despatched him. That stone thrown on the culprit was, in some cases, as much as two men could lift up. Tract *Sanhed.* and *Bab. Gemara*, and *Lightfoot*. See also the note on ~~4087~~ **John 8:7**.

He, whether Jew or Gentile, who shall *not believe* in the Son of God, shall suffer grievously in consequence; but on whomsoever the *stone* (Jesus Christ) *falls in the way of judgment*, he shall *be ground to powder*, **λικμησει αυτον**-it shall make him so *small* as to render him capable of being *dispersed as chaff* by the *wind*. This seems to allude, not only to the dreadful *crushing* of the Jewish state by the Romans, but also to that general *dispersion* of the Jews through all the nations of the world, which continues to the present day. This whole verse is wanting in the Codex Bezae, one other, five copies of the Itala, and Origen; but it is found in the parallel place, ~~42018~~ **Luke 20:18**, and seems to have been quoted from ~~20814~~ **Isaiah 8:14, 15**. *He shall be for a STONE of STUMBLING, and for a ROCK OF OFFENCE to both the houses of Israel-and many among them shall STUMBLE and FALL, and be BROKEN.*

Verse 45. The chief priests-perceived that he spoke of them.] The most wholesome advice passes for an affront with those who have shut their hearts against the truth. When that which should lead to repentance only kindles the flame of malice and revenge, there is but little hope of the salvation of such persons.

Verse 46. They sought to lay hands on him, they feared the multitude] Restraining and preventing grace is an excellent blessing, particularly where it leads to repentance and salvation; but he who abstains from certain evils, only through fear of scandal or punishment, has already committed them in his heart, and is *guilty* before God. The intrepidity of our Lord is worthy of admiration and imitation; in the very face of his most inveterate enemies, he bears a noble testimony to the truth, reproves their iniquities, denounces the Divine judgments, and, in the very teeth of

destruction, braves danger and death! A true *minister* of Christ fears nothing but God, when *his* glory is concerned: a *hireling* fears every thing, except Him whom he ought to fear.

This last journey of our Lord to Jerusalem is a subject of great importance; it is mentioned by all the four evangelists, and has been a subject of *criticism* and *cavil* to some unsanctified minds. He has been accused of “attempting, by this method, to *feel* how far the *populace* were disposed to favour his pretensions in establishing himself as a *king* in the land; or, at least, by his conduct in this business, he gave much cause for popular seditions.” Every circumstance in the case refutes this calumny.

1. His whole conduct had proved that his kingdom was not of this world, and that he sought not the honour that cometh from man.
2. He had in a very explicit manner foretold his own premature death, and particularly at *this time*.
3. It is evident, from what he had said to his disciples, that he went up to Jerusalem at this time for the *express purpose* of *being sacrificed*, and not of erecting a *secular* kingdom.
4. What he did at this time was to fulfil a declaration of God delivered by two prophets, upwards of 700 years before, relative to his lowliness, poverty, and total deadness to all secular rule and pomp. See ~~2321~~ **Isaiah 62:11**; ~~3009~~ **Zechariah 9:9**.
5. All the time he spent now in Jerusalem, which was about five days, he spent in teaching, precisely in the same way he had done for three years past; nor do we find that he uttered one maxim dissimilar to what he formerly taught, or said a word calculated to produce any sensation on the hearts of the populace, but that of piety towards God; and in the parable of the *man and his two sons*, the *husbandmen and the vineyard*, he spoke in such a way to the rulers of the people as to show that he knew they were plotting his destruction; and that, far from fleeing from the face of danger, or strengthening his party against his enemies, he was come to wait at the foot of the altar till his blood should be poured out for the sin of the world!
6. Had he affected any thing of a *secular* kind, he had now the *fairest opportunity* to accomplish his designs. The people had already received him as *Jesus the prophet*; now they acknowledge him as the *Christ* or

MESSIAH, and sing the *hosannah* to him, as immediately appointed by Heaven to be their *deliverer*.

7. Though, with the character of the Messiah, the Jews had connected that of *secular royalty*, and they now, by spreading their clothes in the way, strewing branches, &c., treat him as a royal person, and one appointed to govern the kingdom; yet of this he appears to take no notice, farther than to show that an important prophecy was thus fulfilled: he went as usual into the temple, taught the people pure and spiritual truths, withdrew at night from the city, lodged in private at Mount Olivet; and thus most studiously and unequivocally showed that his sole aim was to call the people back to purity and holiness, and prepare them for that kingdom of righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, which he was about, by his passion, death, resurrection, ascension, and the mission of the Holy Spirit, to set up in the earth.

8. Could a person who worked such miracles as he was in the daily habit of working-miracles which proved he possessed *unlimited power* and *unerring wisdom*, need *subterfuges*, or a *colouring* for any design he wished to accomplish? He had only to put forth that power essentially resident in himself, and all resistance to his will must be *annihilated*. In short, every circumstance of the case shows at once the calumny and absurdity of the charge. But, instead of lessening, or tendering suspicious this or any other part of our Lord's conduct, it shows the whole in a more luminous and glorious point of view; and thus the *wrath of man* praises him.

9. That he was a *king*, that he was born of a woman and came into the world for this very purpose, he took every occasion to declare; but all these declarations showed that his kingdom was *spiritual*: he would not even interfere with the duty of the civil magistrate to induce an avaricious brother to do *justice to the rest of the family*, ^{ⲘⲓⲚⲓⲤ} **Luke 12:13**, when probably a few words from such an authority would have been sufficient to have settled the business; yet to prevent all suspicion, and to remove every cause for offence, he absolutely refused to interfere, and took occasion from the very circumstance to declaim against *secular views*, *covetousness*, and *worldly ambition*! O how groundless does every part of his conduct prove this charge of *secular ambition* to be!

Such was the spirit of the *Master*: such must be the spirit of the *disciple*. He that will reign with Christ, must be humbled and suffer with him. This is

the *royal road*. The *love of the world*, in its *power* and *honours*, is as inconsistent with the spirit of the Gospel as the love of the grossest vice. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. Reader, take occasion from this refuted calumny, to imitate thy Lord in the spirituality of his life, to pass through things temporal so as not to lose those that are eternal, that thou mayest reign with him in the glory of his kingdom. Amen.

ST. MATTHEW

CHAPTER 22.

The parable of the marriage of a king's son, 1-14. The Pharisees and Herodians question him concerning the lawfulness of paying tribute to Cæsar, 15-22. The Sadducees question him concerning the resurrection, 23-33. A lawyer questions him concerning the greatest commandment in the law, 34-40. He asks them their opinion of the Christ, and confounds them, 41-46.

NOTES ON CHAP. 22.

Verse 2. The kingdom of heaven] In *Bereshith Rabba*, sect. 62. fol. 60, there is a parable very similar to this, and another still more so in *Sohar. Levit.* fol. 40. But these rabbinical parables are vastly ennobled by passing through the hands of our Lord. It appears from Luke, ^{<21415>}**Luke 14:15;** &c., that it was at an *entertainment* that this parable was originally spoken. It was a constant practice of our Lord to take the *subjects* of his discourses from the persons present, or from the *circumstances of times, persons, and places*. See ^{<01615>}**Matthew 16:6;** ^{<03047>}**John 4:7-10;** ^{<03635>}**John 6:26, 27; 7:37.** A preacher that can do so can never be at a loss for text or sermon.

A marriage for his son] A *marriage feast*, so the word **γαμους** properly means. Or a feast of inauguration, when his son was put in possession of the government, and thus he and his new subjects became married together. See ^{<11005>}**1 Kings 1:5-9, 19, 25,** &c., where such a feast is mentioned.

From this parable it appears plain, 1. That the KING means the *great God*. 2. His SON, the *Lord Jesus*. 3. The MARRIAGE, his *incarnation*, or *espousing human nature*, by taking it into *union* with himself. 4. The MARRIAGE FEAST, the *economy of the Gospel*, during which men are *invited* to partake of the *blessings* purchased by, and consequent on, the *incarnation* and death of our blessed Lord. 5. By *those who HAD BEEN bidden, or invited*, ^{<02215>}**Matthew 22:3,** are meant the *Jews* in general, who had this *union* of Christ with human nature, and his *sacrifice* for sin, pointed out by various *rites, ceremonies, and sacrifices* under the law; and who, by all the prophets, *had been* constantly invited to believe in and receive the promised Messiah. 6. By the SERVANTS, we are to understand the *first preachers* of the Gospel, proclaiming salvation to the Jews. JOHN

the *Baptist* and the seventy disciples (^{<100>}**Luke 10:1**;) may be here particularly intended. 7. By the OTHER SERVANTS, ^{<124>}**Matthew 22:4**, the *apostles* seem to be meant, who, though they were to preach the Gospel to the whole world, yet were to begin at JERUSALEM (^{<247>}**Luke 24:47**) with the first offers of mercy. 8. By their *making light of it*, &c., ^{<1216>}**Matthew 22:5**, is pointed out their *neglect* of this salvation, and their preferring *secular enjoyments*, &c., to the kingdom of Christ. 9. By *injuriously using* some, and *slaying* others, of his servants, ^{<1216>}**Matthew 22:6**, is pointed out the persecution raised against the *apostles* by the *Jews*, in which some of them were martyred. 10. By *sending forth his troops*, ^{<1217>}**Matthew 22:7**, is meant the *commission* given to the *Romans* against *Judea*; and, *burning up their city*, the total destruction of Jerusalem by *Titus*, the son of *Vespasian*, which happened about *forty-one* years after.

On this parable it is necessary to remark, 1. That man was made at first in *union* with God. 2. That *sin* entered in, and *separated* between God and man. 3. That as there can be no *holiness* but in *union* with God, and no *heaven* without *holiness*, therefore he provided a way to *reconcile* and *reunite* man to himself. 4. This was effected by Christ's *uniting* himself to *human nature*, and giving his *Spirit* to those who *believe*. 5. That as the *marriage union* is the *closest*, the most *intimate*, *solemn*, and *excellent*, of all the connections formed among mortals, and that they who are thus united in the Lord are *one flesh*; so that mystical *union* which is formed between God and the soul through Jesus Christ, by the Eternal Spirit, is the *closest*, most *intimate*, *solemn*, and *excellent*, that can be conceived; for he who is thus joined unto the Lord is *one spirit*. 6. This *contract* is made *freely*: no man can be *forced* to it, for it is a union of *will to will*, *heart to heart*; and it is by *willing* and *consenting* that we *come* unto God through his Son. 7. That if this *marriage* do not take place *here*, an eternal *separation* from God, and from the glory of his power, shall be the fearful consequence. 8. That there are *three* states in which men run the risk of living without God and losing their souls. 1st. That of a *soft, idle, voluptuous life*, wherein a man thinks of nothing but quietly to enjoy life, conveniences, riches, private pleasures, and public diversions. *They made light of it*. 2dly. That of a *man wholly taken up with agricultural or commercial employments*, in which the love of riches, and application to the *means* of acquiring them, generally stifle all thoughts of salvation. *One went to his own field, and another to his traffic*. 3dly. That of a man who is *openly unjust, violent, and outrageously wicked*, who is a *sinner by*

profession, and not only *neglects* his salvation, but *injuriously* treats all those who bring him the Gospel of reconciliation. *Seizing his servants, they treated them injuriously, &c.*

Verse 4. Fatlings] **τα σιτιστα** Properly, *fatted rams*, or *wethers*. ^{<10613>}**2 Samuel 6:13;** ^{<13155>}**1 Chronicles 15:26.**

Verse 7. But when the king] HIMSELF: or, *this very king*. I have added **εκεινος** on the authority of *nine* of the most ancient MSS. and nearly one hundred others; the later *Syriac*, *six* copies of the *Itala*, and some of the *fathers*. Several printed editions have it, and *Griesbach* has received it into the text.

Verse 8. Were not worthy.] Because they *made light* of it, and *would not come*; preferring earthly things to heavenly blessings. Among the *Mohammedans*, refusal to come to a marriage feast, when invited, is considered a breach of the law of God. HEDAYAH, vol. iv. p. 91. Any one that shall be invited to a dinner, and does not accept the invitation, disobeys God, and his messenger: and any one who comes uninvited, you may say is a thief, and returns a plunderer.-*Mischat ul Mesabih*. It was probably considered in this light among all the oriental nations. This observation is necessary, in order to point out more forcibly the *iniquity* of the refusal mentioned in the text. A man may be said to be *worthy* of, or *fit* for, this marriage feast, when, *feeling* his *wretchedness* and *misery*, he comes to God in the way *appointed*, to get an entrance into the holiest, by the blood of Jesus.

Verse 9. Go ye therefore into the highways] **διεξοδους των αδων**, *cross* or *by-paths*; the places where *two* or *more* roads met in *one*, leading into the city, where people were coming together from various quarters of the country. St. Luke adds *hedges*, to point out the people to whom the apostles were sent, as either *miserable vagabonds*, or the most indigent poor, who were wandering about the country, or sitting by the sides of the ways and hedges, imploring relief. This verse points out the final *rejection* of the *Jews*, and the *calling* of the *Gentiles*. It was a custom among the Jews, when a rich man made a feast, to go out and invite in all destitute travellers. See in *Rab. Beracoth*, fol. 43.

As many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage] God sends his salvation to every soul, that all may believe and be saved.

Verse 10. Gathered together all-both bad and good] By the preaching of the Gospel, multitudes of souls are gathered into what is generally termed the *visible Church* of Christ. This *Church* is the FLOOR, where the *wheat* and the *chaff* are often mingled, ^{<01812>}**Matthew 3:12**. The FIELD, where the *bastard wheat* and the *true grain* grow together, ^{<01336>}**Matthew 13:26, 27**. The NET, which collects of all kinds, both *good* and *bad*, ^{<01348>}**Matthew 13:48**. The HOUSE in which the *wise* and *foolish* are found, ^{<02501>}**Matthew 25:1**, &c. And the FOLD, in which there are both *sheep* and *goats*, ^{<02533>}**Matthew 25:33**; &c.

Verse 11. When the king came] When God shall come to judge the world.

Wedding garment] Among the orientals, long white robes were worn at public festivals; and those who appeared on such occasions with any other garments were esteemed, not only highly culpable, but worthy of punishment. Our Lord seems here to allude to **#Zep 1:7, 8**, *The Lord hath prepared a SACRIFICE, he hath BIDDEN his guests. And it shall come to pass, in the day of the Lord's sacrifice, that I will PUNISH the princes, and the KING'S CHILDREN, and ALL SUCH as are clothed with STRANGE APPAREL*. The person who invited the guests prepared such a garment for each, for the time being; and with which he was furnished on *his application to the ruler* of the feast. It was this which made the conduct of the person mentioned in the text inexcusable; he might have had a proper marriage garment, if he had *applied* for it.

To afford accidental guests clothing suitable to a marriage feast, was a custom among the ancient Greeks. Homer relates that Telemachus, and the son of Nestor, arriving at Lacedæmon when Menelaus was making a marriage feast for his son and daughter, were accommodated with garments suited to the occasion, after having been bathed and anointed.

τους δ επει ουν δρωμαι λουσαν και χρισαν ελαιω,
 αμοι δ αρα χλαινας ουλας βαλον ηδε χιτωνας,
 ες ρα θρονους εζοντο παρ ατρειδην μενελαον
 Odys. i. iv. ver. 49-51.

*They entered each a bath, and by the hands
 Of maidens laved, and oiled, and clothed again
 With shaggy mantles and resplendent vests,
 Sat both enthroned at Menelaus' side. — Cowper.*

Among the Asiatics, garments called *caftans*, great numbers of which each *nobleman* has ordinarily ready in his wardrobe, are given to persons whom he wishes to honour: to refuse to accept or wear such a dress would be deemed the highest insult.

This *marriage feast* or *dinner* (the communication of the graces of the Gospel in this life) prepares for the *marriage supper* of the Lamb, ^{<61907>}**Revelation 19:7-9**, the enjoyment of eternal blessedness in the kingdom of glory. Now, as without *holiness* no man can see the Lord, we may at once perceive what our Lord means by the *marriage garment*-it is *HOLINESS* of *heart* and *life*: the text last quoted asserts that the *fine, white, and clean linen* (alluding to the marriage garment above mentioned) was an emblem of the *RIGHTEOUSNESS* of the *SAINTS*. Mark this expression: the *righteousness*, the whole *external* conduct; regulated according to the *will* and *word* of God. Of the *SAINTS*, the *holy persons*, whose souls were purified by the blood of the Lamb.

Verse 12. He saith unto him, Friend] Rather, *companion*: so εταίρε should be translated. As this man represents the state of a person in the visible Church, who neglects to come unto the master of the feast for a marriage garment, for the salvation which Christ has procured, he cannot be with any propriety called a *friend*, but may well be termed a *companion*, as being a *member* of the visible Church, and *present* at all those ordinances where Christ's *presence* and blessing are found, by all those who sincerely wait upon him for salvation.

How camest thou in hither] Why profess to be called by my name while living without a preparation for my kingdom?

He was speechless.] εφ' ἡμῶθη, he was *muzzled*, or *gagged*. He had nothing to say in vindication of his neglect. There was a garment provided, but he neither put it on, nor applied for it. His conduct, therefore, was in the highest degree insulting and indecorous. As this man is the emblem, by general consent, of those who shall perish in the last day, may we not ask, without offence, Where does the doctrine of absolute *reprobation* or *preterition* appear in his case? If Christ had *never died for him*, or if he had *applied* for the *garment*, and was *refused*, might he not well have alleged this in behalf of his soul?-and would not the *just* God have listened to it? But there is not the smallest excuse for him: Christ died, the sacrifice was offered, for *him*; the ministers of the Gospel invited him; the Holy Spirit strove with *him*; he *might* have been *saved*, but he *was not*: and the *fault*

lies so absolutely at his *own door* that the just God is vindicated in his conduct, while he sends him to hell, not for the lack of what he *could not get*, but for the lack of what he *might have had*, but either neglected or refused it.

Then said the king to the servants] To the ministering angels, executors of the Divine will.

Cast him into outer darkness] The Jewish marriages were performed in the night season, and the hall where the feast was made was superbly illuminated; the *outer darkness* means, therefore, the darkness on the *outside* of this festal hall; rendered still more gloomy to the person who was suddenly thrust out into it from such a profusion of light. See all this largely treated of on ^{<4082>}**Matthew 8:12**.

Verse 14. Many are called, &c.] This verse is wanting in one of Colbert's MSS., marked 33 in *Griesbach*. See the note on ^{<4016>}**Matthew 20:16**.

Many are called by the preaching of the Gospel into the outward communion of the Church of Christ; but few, comparatively, are chosen to dwell with God In glory, because they do not come to the master of the feast for a marriage garment—for that holiness without which none can see the Lord. This is an allusion to the Roman custom of raising their militia; all were mustered, but only those were chosen to serve, who were found proper. See the note on ^{<4016>}**Matthew 20:16**. Reader! examine thy soul, and make sure work for eternity!

Verse 15. In his talk.] *εν λογω*, by *discourse*: intending to ask him *subtle* and *ensnaring* questions; his answers to which might involve him either with the Roman government, or with the great Sanhedrin.

Verse 16. The Herodians] For an account of this sect, see the note on ^{<4010>}**Matthew 16:1**. The preceding parable had covered the Pharisees with confusion: when it was ended they *went out*, not to *humble* themselves before God, and deprecate the judgments with which they were threatened; but to *plot afresh* the destruction of their teacher. The depth of their malice appears, 1. In their *mode of attack*. They had often questioned our Lord on matters concerning *religion*; and his answers only served to increase *his* reputation, and *their* confusion. They now shift their ground, and question him concerning *state affairs*, and the question is such as *must* be answered; and yet the answer, to all human appearance, can be none other than what may be construed into a crime against the *people*, or against the *Roman*

government. 2. Their profound *malice* appears farther in the *choice* of their *companions* in this business, viz. the *Herodians*. Herod was at this very time at Jerusalem, whither he had come to hold the passover. Jesus, being of Nazareth, which was in Herod's jurisdiction, was considered as his subject. Herod himself was extremely attached to the Roman emperor, and made a public profession of it: all these considerations engaged the Pharisees to unite the Herodians, who, as the Syriac intimates, were the *domestics of Herod*, in this infernal plot. 3. Their profound *malice* appears, farther, in the *praises* they gave our Lord. *Teacher, we know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God*. This was indeed the real character of our blessed Lord; and now they bear testimony to the *truth*, merely with the design to make it subserve their bloody purposes. Those whose hearts are influenced by the spirit of the wicked one never do *good*, but when they hope to accomplish *evil* by it. Men who praise you to your face are ever to be suspected. The *Italians* have a very expressive proverb on this subject:-

*Che ti fa carezze piu che non suole,
O t' ha ingannato, o ingannar ti vuole.*

*He who caresses thee more than he was wont to do,
has either DECEIVED thee, or is ABOUT TO DO IT.*

I have never known the sentiment in this proverb to fail; and it was notoriously exemplified in the present instance. *Flatterers*, though they speak the truth, ever carry about with them a *base* or *malicious* soul. 4. Their *malice* appears still farther in the *question* they propose. *Is it lawful to give tribute to Cæsar, or not?*-^{<40217>} **Matthew 22:17**. The *constitution* of the Jewish republic, the *expectations* which they had of future glory and excellence, and the *diversity* of *opinions* which divided the Jews on this subject, rendered an answer to this question extremely difficult:-

1. In the presence of the *people*, who professed to have no other king but God, and looked on their *independence* as an essential point of their religion.
2. In the presence of the *Pharisees*, who were ready to stir up the people against him, if his decision could be at all construed to be contrary to their prejudices, or to their religious rights.
3. In the presence of the *Herodians*, who, if the answer should appear to be against Cæsar's rights, were ready to inflame their master to avenge, by the death of our Lord, the affront offered to his master the emperor.

4. The answer was *difficult*, because of the *different sentiments* of the Jews on this subject; some maintaining that they *could not lawfully* pay tribute to a *heathen* governor: while others held that as they were now under this strange government, and had no power to free themselves from it, it was *lawful* for them to pay what they had not power to refuse.

5. The answer was *difficult*, when it is considered that multitudes of the people had begun *now* to receive Jesus as the promised Messiah, who was to be the *deliverer* of their nation from spiritual and temporal *oppression*, and therefore had lately sung to him the *Hosanna Rabba*: see ~~4210~~ **Matthew 21:9**. If then he should decide the question in *Cæsar's favour*, what idea must the people have of him, either as *zealous* for the *law*, or as the *expected Messiah*? If *against* Cæsar, he is ruined. Who that loved Jesus, and was not convinced of his sovereign wisdom, could help trembling for him in these circumstances?

Jesus opposes the depth of his *wisdom* to the depth of their *malice*, and manifests it:- 1. By *unmasking* them, and showing that he knew the very secrets of their hearts. *Ye HYPOCRITES! why tempt ye me?* i.e. *why do ye try me thus?* This must cover them with *confusion*, when they saw their motives thus discovered; and tend much to lessen their influence in the sight of the people, when it was manifest that they acted not through a desire to receive *information*, by which to regulate their conduct, but merely to ensnare and ruin him.

2. Christ shows his profound *wisdom* in not attempting to discuss the question at large; but settled the business by seizing a maxim that was common among all people, and acknowledged among the Jews, *That the prince who causes his image and titles to be stamped on the current coin of a country, is virtually acknowledged thereby as the governor*. See Maimon. Gezel. c. v. in Wetstein. When Sultan MAHMOUD, king of *Maveralnahar, Turquestan, and the Indies*, wished to seize on the dominions of SEIDEH, queen of Persia, who governed in the place of her young son *Megededde-vlet*, about A. D. 909, he sent an ambassador to her with the following order: *You must acknowledge me for your KING, cause the kootbah to be read, i.e. pray for me in all the mosques of the kingdom, and GET YOUR MONEY recoined, with the IMPRESSION THAT IS ON MINE*: thus denoting that she must become absolutely subject to him. See Bibliot. Orient. de Galand. p. 453. Esau Afghan carried his conquest into Bhatti, into the viceroyalty of Bengal, and caused the kootbah to be read, and coin

to be struck in the name of the Emperor Akbar. Ayeen Akbery, vol. ii p. 5. See also p. 38,92,94,130,139,187.

Verse 19. They brought unto him a penny.] A *denarius*: probably the ordinary *capitation* tax, though the poll tax in the law, ^{<023013>}Exodus 30:13, 14, was *half a shekel*, about *twice* as much as the *denarius*. The Roman *denarius* had the emperor's image with a proper legend stamped on one side of it. It was not therefore the sacred shekel which was to be paid for the repairs of the temple which was now demanded, but the regular tribute required by the Roman government.

Verse 20. Whose is this image and superscription?] He knew well enough *whose* they were; but he showed the excellency of his *wisdom*, 3dly, in making them answer to their *own confusion*. They came to *ensnare* our Lord in his discourse, and now they are *ensnared* in their own. He who digs a pit for his neighbour ordinarily falls into it himself.

Verse 21. They say unto him, Cæsars.] The image was the *head of the emperor*; the *superscription*, his *titles*. JULIUS CÆSAR was the *first* who caused his image to be struck on the Roman coin. *Tiberius* was emperor at this time.

Render therefore unto Cæsar] The conclusion is drawn from their own premises. You acknowledge this to be *Cæsar's* coin; this coin is *current*, in your land; the currency of this coin shows the country to be *under* the Roman government; and your acknowledgment that it is Cæsar's proves you have *submitted*. Don't therefore be *unjust*; but render to Cæsar the things which you acknowledge to be his; at the same time, be not *impious*, but render unto God the things which belong to God.

This answer is full of consummate wisdom. It establishes the *limits*, regulates the *rights*, and distinguishes the *jurisdiction* of the two *empires* of *heaven* and *earth*. The *image* of *princes* stamped on their *coin* denotes that temporal things belong all to their government. The *image* of God stamped on the *soul* denotes that all its faculties and powers belong to the Most High, and should be employed in his service.

But while the earth is agitated and distracted with the question of political rights and wrongs, the reader will naturally ask, What does a man owe to *Cæsar*?-to the *civil government* under which he lives? Our Lord has answered the question-*That which IS Cæsar's*. But what is it that is

Cæsar's? 1. *Honour*. 2. *Obedience*. And 3. *Tribute*. 1. The civil government under which a man *lives*, and by which he is *protected*, demands his *honour* and *reverence*. 2. The *laws* which are made for the *suppression* of *evil doers*, and the maintenance of *good order*, which are calculated to promote the benefit of the *whole*, and the comfort of the *individual* should be religiously obeyed. 3. The government that charges itself with the *support* and *defence* of the *whole*, should have its *unavoidable* expenses, however great, repaid by the *people*, in whose behalf they are incurred; therefore we should pay *tribute*. But remember, if *Cæsar* should intrude into the *things of God*, coin a *new creed*, or broach a *new Gospel*, and affect to *rule* the *conscience*, while he rules the state, in these things Cæsar is *not* to be obeyed; he is taking the *things of God*, and he must not get them. Give not therefore *God's things* to Cæsar, and give not *Cæsar's things* to God. That which belongs to the commonwealth should, on no account whatever, be devoted to religious uses; and let no man think he has pleased God, by giving that to charitable or sacred uses which he has purloined from the *state*. The tribute of half a shekel, which the law, (^{<123013>}Exodus 30:13,14,) required every person above twenty years of age to pay to the temple, was, after the destruction of the temple, in the time of Vespasian, paid into the emperor's exchequer. This sum, *Melanethon* supposes, amounted annually to THREE TONS OF GOLD.

Verse 22. When they had heard these words, they marvelled] And well they might-never man spake like this man. By this decision, CÆSAR is *satisfied*-he gets *his own* to the uttermost farthing. GOD is *glorified*-his *honour* is in *every* respect secured. And the PEOPLE are *edified*-one of the most difficult questions that could possibly come before them is answered in such a way as to *relieve* their *consciences*, and *direct* their *conduct*. See *L'Evangile Medite*, and see my discourse entitled, *The Rights of God and Cæsar*.

Verse 23. The same day] Malice is ever *active*; let it be defeated ever so often, it returns to the charge. Jesus and his Gospel give no quarter to vice; the vicious will give no quarter to him or it.

The Sadducees] For an account of these see on ^{<40161>}Matthew 16:1.

Verse 24. Raise up seed unto his brother.] This law is mentioned ^{<15216>}Deuteronomy 25:5. The meaning of the expression is, that the children produced by this marriage should be reckoned in the *genealogy* of the *deceased* brother, and enjoy his estates. The word *seed* should be always

translated *children* or *posterity*. There is a law precisely similar to this among the *Hindoos*.

Verse 25. Seven brethren] It is very likely that the Sadducees *increased* the number, merely to make the question the more difficult.

Verse 28. Whose wife shall she be of the seven?] The rabbins have said, That if a woman have two husbands in this world, she shall have the *first* only restored to her in the world to come. *Sohar. Genes.* fol. 24. The question put by these bad men is well suited to the mouth of a *libertine*. Those who live *without* God in the *world* have no *other god* than the *world*; and those who have not that happiness which comes from the enjoyment of God have no other pleasure than that which comes from the gratification of *sensual* appetites. The stream cannot rise higher than the spring: these men, and their *younger* brethren, *atheists*, *deists*, and *libertines* of all sorts, can form no idea of *heaven* as a place of *blessedness*, unless they can hope to find in it the *gratification* of their *sensual* desires. On this very ground Mohammed built his paradise.

Verse 29. Ye do err] Or, *Ye are deceived*-by your impure passions: *not knowing the scriptures*, which assert the resurrection:-*nor the miraculous power of God* (την δυναμιν του θεου) by which it is to be effected. In *Avoda Sara*, fol. 18, *Sanhedrin*, fol. 90, it is said: "These are they which shall have no part in the world to come: Those who say, the Lord did not come from heaven; and those who say, the resurrection cannot be proved out of the law."

Their *deception* appeared in their supposing, that if there were a resurrection, men and women were to marry and be given in marriage as in this life; which our Lord shows is not the case: for men and women there shall be like the angels of God, immortal, and free from all human passions, and from those propensities which were to continue with them only during this *present state* of existence. There shall be no *death*; and consequently no need of marriage to maintain the population of the spiritual world.

Verse 31. Have ye not read] This quotation is taken from ^{
}**Exodus 3:6, 16**; and as the *five books of Moses* were the only part of Scripture which the *Sadducees* acknowledged as Divine, our Lord, by confuting them from those books, proved the second part of his assertion, "Ye are ignorant of those very scriptures which ye profess to hold sacred."

Verse 32. I am the God of Abraham] Let it be observed, that Abraham was dead upwards of 300 years before these words were spoken to Moses: yet *still* God calls himself the *God of Abraham*, &c. Now Christ properly observes that God is not the God of *the dead*, (that word being equal, in the sense of the Sadducees, to an *eternal annihilation*,) but of the *living*; it therefore follows that, if he be the *God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*, these are not *dead*, but *alive*; alive *with God*, though they had ceased, for some hundreds of years, to *exist among mortals*. We may see, from this, that our Lord combats and confutes *another* opinion of the Sadducees, viz. *that there is neither angel nor spirit*; by showing that the *soul* is not only immortal, but lives *with God*, even *while* the *body* is detained in the *dust* of the *earth*, which body is afterwards to be raised to life, and united with its soul by the *miraculous power of God*, of which *power* they showed themselves to be ignorant when they denied the *possibility* of a *resurrection*.

Verse 33. The multitude were astonished at his doctrine.] God uses the infidelity of some for the edification of others. Had no false doctrine been broached in the world, we had not seen the full evidence of the true teaching. The opposition of deists and infidels has only served to raise up men in behalf of the truth of God, who not only have refuted *them*, but shown, at the same time, that the sacred testimonies are infinitely amiable in themselves, and worthy of all acceptation. Truth always gains by being opposed.

Verse 34. They were gathered together.] *ἐπι το αὐτο*-*they came together with one accord*, or, *for the same purpose*; i.e. of *ensnaring* him in his *discourse*, as the Sadducees had done, ^{<41223>}**Matthew 22:23**.

The Codex Bezaë and several of the *Itala* have *ἐπὶ αὐτον*, *against him*. *Camēn togidre into oon*.-Old MS. Eng. Bib.

Verse 35. A lawyer] *νομικος*, *a teacher of the law*. What is called *lawyer*, in the common translation, conveys a wrong idea to most readers: my old MS. renders the word in the same way I have done. These teachers of the law were the same as the *scribes*, or what Dr. Wotton calls *letter-men*, whom he supposes to be the same as the *Karaites*, a sect of the Jews who rejected all the *traditions of the elders*, and admitted nothing but the written word. See Wotton's *Mishna*, vol. i. p. 78. These are allowed to have kept more closely to the spiritual meaning of the law and prophets than the Pharisees did; and hence the question proposed by the lawyer,

(Mark, ^{<4128>}Mark 12:28, calls him *one of the scribes*,) or Karaite, was of a more spiritual or refined nature than any of the preceding.

Verse 36. Which is the great commandment] We see here *three* kinds of *enemies* and false accusers of Christ and his disciples; and *three* sorts of *accusations* brought against them.

1. The *Herodians*, or politicians and courtiers, who form their questions and accusations on the *rights* of the *prince*, and matters of *state*,

^{<41216>}Matthew 22:16.

2. The *Sadducees*, or *libertines*, who found theirs upon matters of *religion*, and *articles of faith*, which they did not credit, ^{<41223>}Matthew 22:23.

3. The *Pharisees*, *lawyers*, *scribes*, or *Karaites*, hypocritical pretenders to devotion, who found theirs on that *vital* and *practical godliness* (the love of God and man) of which they wished themselves to be thought the sole proprietors, ^{<41236>}Matthew 22:36.

Verse 37. Thou shalt love the Lord] This is a subject of the greatest importance, and should be well understood, as our Lord shows that the whole of *true religion* is comprised in thus loving God and our neighbour.

It may not be unnecessary to inquire into the literal meaning of the word *love*. $\alpha\gamma\alpha\pi\eta$, from $\alpha\gamma\alpha\pi\alpha\omega$, *I love*, is supposed to be compounded either of $\alpha\gamma\alpha\nu$ and $\pi\omicron\iota\epsilon\iota\nu$, *to act vehemently or intensely*; or, from $\alpha\gamma\epsilon\iota\nu$ $\kappa\alpha\tau\alpha$ $\pi\alpha\nu$, because *love is always active*, and will *act in every possible way*; for he who loves is, with all his affection and desire, carried forward to the beloved object, in order to possess and enjoy it. Some derive it from $\alpha\gamma\alpha\nu$ and $\pi\alpha\nu\epsilon\sigma\theta\alpha\iota$, *to be completely at rest*, or, *to be intensely satisfied*; because he who loves is *supremely contented* with, and *rests completely satisfied* in, that which he loves. Others, from $\alpha\gamma\alpha\nu$ and $\pi\alpha\omega$, because a person *eagerly embraces*, and *vigorously holds fast*, that which is the object of his love. Lastly, others suppose it to be compounded of $\alpha\gamma\alpha\omega$, *I admire*, and $\pi\alpha\nu\omicron\mu\omicron\iota$, *I rest*, because that which a man loves intensely he *rests in*, with *fixed admiration* and *contemplation*. So that genuine love *changes not*, but always *abides* steadily attached to that which is loved.

Whatever may be thought of these *etymologies*, as being either *just* or *probable*, one thing will be evident to all those who know what *love* means, that they throw much light upon the subject, and manifest it in a variety of striking points of view. The ancient author of a MS. Lexicon in

the late French king's library, under the word *αγαπη*, has the following definition: *ασπαστος προθεσις επι τη φιλια του φιλουμενου - σωμαψυχια*. "A pleasing surrender of friendship to a friend:-an identity or sameness of soul." A sovereign preference given to *one* above all others, present or absent: a *concentration* of all the thoughts and desires in a single object, which a man prefers to all others. Apply this definition to the love which God requires of his creatures, and you will have the most correct view of the subject. Hence it appears that, by *this love*, the soul *eagerly cleaves to, affectionately admires, and constantly rests* in God, supremely *pleased and satisfied* with him as its *portion*: that it acts *from* him, as its *author*; *for* him, as its *master*; and *to* him, as its *end*. That, *by* it, all the powers and faculties of the mind are *concentrated* in the Lord of the universe. That, *by* it, the whole man is willingly surrendered to the Most High: and that, *through* it, an *identity, or sameness* of spirit with the Lord is acquired-the man being made a partaker of the Divine nature, having the mind in him which was in Christ, and thus dwelling in God, and God in him.

But what is implied in loving God *with all the heart, soul, mind, strength, &c.*, and when may a man be said to do this? 1. He loves God *with all his heart*, who loves nothing in *comparison* of him, and nothing but in *reference* to him:-who is ready to give up, do, or suffer any thing in order to please and glorify him:-who has in his heart neither *love* nor *hatred, hope* nor *fear, inclination, nor aversion, desire, nor delight*, but as they relate to God, and are regulated by him.

2. He loves God with *all his soul*, or rather, *εν ολη τη ψυχη*, *with all his life*, who is ready to give up *life* for his sake-to endure all sorts of torments, and to be deprived of all kinds of comforts, rather than dishonour God:-who employs *life* with all its comforts, and conveniences, to glorify God in, by, and through all:-to whom *life* and *death* are nothing, but as they come from and lead to God, From this Divine principle sprang the *blood of the martyrs*, which became the seed of the Church. *They overcame through the blood of the Lamb, and loved not their lives unto the death*. See ^{<6121>}**Revelation 12:11**.

3. He loves God with *all his strength* (^{<4120>}**Mark 12:30**; ^{<4107>}**Luke 10:27**) who *exerts* all the *powers* of his body and soul in the service of God:-who, for the glory of his Maker, spares neither *labour* nor *cost*-who sacrifices his time, body, health, ease, for the honour of God his Divine Master:-who

employs in his service all his goods, his talents, his power, credit, authority, and influence.

4. He loves God with *all his mind* (*intellect-διανοία*) who applies himself only to *know* God, and his holy will:-who receives with submission, gratitude, and pleasure, the sacred truths which God has revealed to man:-who studies no *art* nor *science* but as far as it is necessary for the service of God, and uses it at all times to promote his glory-who forms no projects nor designs but in reference to God and the interests of mankind:-who banishes from his *understanding* and *memory* every useless, foolish, and dangerous thought, together with every *idea* which has any tendency to defile his soul, or turn it for a moment from the *centre* of eternal repose. In a word, he who sees God in all things-thinks of him at all times-having his mind continually fixed upon God, acknowledging him in all his ways-who begins, continues, and ends all his thoughts, words, and works, to the glory of his name:-this is the person who loves God with all his *heart, life, strength, and intellect*. He is crucified to the world, and the world to him: he lives, yet not he, but Christ lives in him. He beholds as in a glass the glory of the Lord, and is changed into the same image from glory to glory. Simply and constantly looking unto Jesus, the author and perfecter of his faith, he receives continual supplies of enlightening and sanctifying grace, and is thus fitted for every good word and work. O glorious state! far, far, beyond this description! which comprises an ineffable communion between the ever-blessed Trinity and the soul of man!

Verse 38. This is the first and great commandment.] It is so,

1. In its *antiquity*, being as old as the world, and engraven originally on our very nature.
2. In *dignity*; as directly and immediately proceeding front and referring to God.
3. In *excellence*; being the commandment of the new covenant, and the very spirit of the Divine adoption.
4. In *justice*; because it alone renders to God his due, prefers him before all things, and secures to him his proper rank in relation to them.
5. In *sufficiency*; being in itself capable of making men holy in this life, and happy in the other.

6. In *fruitfulness*; because it is the *root* of all commandments, and the fulfilling of the law.

7. In *virtue* and *efficacy*; because by this alone God reigns in the heart of man, and man is united to God.

8. In *extent*; leaving nothing to the creature, which it does not refer to the Creator.

9. In *necessity*; being absolutely *indispensable*.

10. In *duration*; being ever to be *continued* on earth, and never to be *discontinued* in heaven.

Verse 39. Thou shalt love thy neighbour] The love of our neighbour springs from the love of God as its *source*; is found in the love of God as its *principle, pattern, and end*; and the love of God is found in the love of our neighbour, as its effect, representation, and infallible *mark*. This love of our neighbour is a love of *equity, charity, succour, and benevolence*. We owe to our neighbour what we have a right to expect from *him*-“Do unto all men as ye would they should do unto you,” is a positive command of our blessed Saviour. By this rule, therefore, we should *speak, think, and write*, concerning every soul of man:-put the best construction upon all the words and actions of our neighbour that they can possibly bear. By this rule we are taught to bear with, love, and forgive him; to rejoice in his felicity, mourn in his adversity, desire and delight in his prosperity, and promote it to the utmost of our power: instruct his ignorance, help him in his weakness, and risk even our life for his sake, and for the public good. In a word, we must do every thing in our power, through all the possible varieties of circumstances, for our neighbours, which we would wish them to do for us, were our situations *reversed*.

This is the religion of Jesus! How happy would Society be, were these two plain, rational precepts properly observed! *Love ME, and love thy FELLOWS!* Be unutterably happy in me, and be in perfect peace, unanimity, and love, among yourselves. Great fountain and dispenser of love! fill thy creation with this sacred principle, for his sake who died for the salvation of mankind!

On the nature of *self-love*, see ^{<01919>}**Matthew 19:19**.

Verse 40. On these two-hang all the law and the prophets.] They are like the first and last links of a chain, all the intermediate ones depend on them. True religion begins and ends in love to God and man. These are the two grand links that unite God to man, man to his fellows, and men again to God.

Love is the fulfilling of the law, says St. Paul, ^{<451310>}**Romans 13:10**; for he who has the love of God in him delights to *obey* the Divine precepts, and to do all manner of kindness to men for God's sake.

Verse 41. While the Pharisees were gathered together] Jesus asks a question in his turn, utterly to confound them, and to show the *people* that the source of all the captious questions of his opponents was their ignorance of the prophecies relative to the Messiah.

Verse 42. What think ye of Christ?] Or, What are your thoughts concerning THE CHRIST-the Messiah; for to this title the emphatic *article* should always be added.

Whose son is he?] From what *family* is he to spring?

They say unto him, The son of David.] This was a thing well known among the Jews, and universally acknowledged, see ^{<430742>}**John 7:42**; and is a most powerful proof against them that the Messiah is come. Their families are now so perfectly *confounded* that they cannot trace back any of their genealogies with any degree of certainty: nor have they been capable of ascertaining the different families of their tribes for more than sixteen hundred years. Why, then, should the spirit of prophecy assert so often, and in such express terms, that Jesus was to come from the family of David; if he should only make his appearance *when* the public registers were all demolished, and it would be impossible to ascertain the family? Is it not evident that God designed that the Messiah should come at a time when the public genealogies might be inspected, to prove that it was he who was prophesied of, and that no other was to be expected? The evangelists, Matthew and Luke, were so fully convinced of the conclusiveness of this proof that they had recourse to the public registers; and thus proved to the Jews, from their own records, that Jesus was born of the family mentioned by the prophets. Nor do we find that a scribe, Pharisee, or any other, ever attempted to invalidate this proof, though it would have essentially subserved their cause, could they have done it. But

as this has *not* been *done*, we may fairly conclude it was *impossible* to do it.

Verse 43. How then doth David in spirit (or by *the Spirit*-by the inspiration of the Spirit of God) **call him Lord? saying,**

Verse 44. The Lord (*hwly* *Yeve* or *Jehovah*) **said unto my Lord,** (*ynda Adni* or *Adonai*, my *prop*, *stay*, *master*, *support*.) **Sit thou on my right hand]** Take the place of the greatest eminence and authority. *Till I make thine enemies thy footstool*-till I subdue both Jews and Gentiles under thee, and cause them to acknowledge thee as their *sovereign* and *Lord*. This quotation is taken from ^{<1900>}**Psalm 110:1**; and, from it, these two points are clear: 1. That David wrote it by the inspiration of God; and 2. That it is a prophetic declaration of the *Messiah*.

Verse 45. How is he his son?] As the Jews did not attempt to deny the conclusion of our Lord's question, which was, the Messiah is not only the son of David according to the flesh, but he is the *Lord* of David according to his Divine nature, then it is evident they could not. Indeed, there was no other way of invalidating the argument, but by denying that the prophecy in question related to Christ: but it seems the prophecy was so fully and so generally understood to belong to the Messiah that they did not attempt to do this; for it is immediately added, *No man was able to answer him a word*-they were completely nonplussed and confounded.

Verse 46. Neither durst any-ask him any more questions.] "Thus," says Dr. Wotton, "our Lord put the four great sects of the Jews to silence, in one day, successively. The Herodians and Pharisees wanted to know whether they might lawfully pay tribute to Cæsar or not. The Sadducees were inquisitive to know whose wife the woman should be of the seven brethren, in the resurrection, who had her to wife. Then comes the *scribe*, (or *karaites*,) who owned no authority beyond or besides the written law, and asked which was the great commandment in the law. This lawyer deserves to be mentioned here, because he not only acquiesced in, but commended, what our Lord had said in answer to his question." Wotton's *Miscellaneous Discourses*, vol. i. p. 78.

The Pharisees and Herodians were defeated, ^{<1215>}**Matthew 22:15-22**. The Sadducees were confounded, ^{<1229>}**Matthew 22:29-33**. The lawyers or karaites nonplussed, ^{<1237>}**Matthew 22:37-40**. And the Pharisees, &c.,

finally routed, ^{<41241>}**Matthew 22:41-46**. Thus did the *wisdom* of God triumph over the *cunning* of men.

From this time, we do not find that our Lord was any more troubled with their captious questions: their whole stock, it appears, was expended, and now they coolly deliberate on the most effectual way to get him murdered. He that resists the *truth* of God is capable of effecting the worst purpose of Satan.

The very important subjects of this chapter have been so amply discussed in the notes, and applied so particularly to their spiritual uses, that it does not appear necessary to add any thing by way of practical improvement. The explanation of the great command of the law is particularly recommended to the reader's notice. See on ^{<41236>}**Matthew 22:36-40**.

ST. MATTHEW

CHAPTER 23.

The character of the scribes and Pharisees, and directions to the people and the disciples to receive the law from them, but not to follow their bad example, 1-7. The disciples exhorted to humility, 8-12. Different woes pronounced against the scribes and Pharisees for their intolerance, 13; rapacity, 14; false zeal, 15; superstition in oaths and tithes, 16-23; hypocrisy, 24-28. Their cruelty, 29-32. Their persecution of the apostles, &c. Their destruction foretold, 33-36. Christ's lamentation over Jerusalem, 37-39.

NOTES ON CHAP. 23.

Verse 2. The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat]

ἐκαθίσαν.-They *sat* there *formerly* by Divine *appointment*: they *sit* there *now* by Divine *permission*. What our Lord says here refers to their expounding the Scriptures, for it was the custom of the Jewish doctors to *sit* while they *expounded* the law and *prophets*, (^{<4105>}Matthew 5:1; ^{<4020>}Luke 4:20-22,) and to *stand up* when they *read* them.

By the *seat of Moses*, we are to understand authority to teach the law. Moses was the great teacher of the Jewish people; and the scribes, &c., are here represented as his successors.

Verse 3. All therefore whatsoever] That is, all those things which they read out of the law and prophets, and all things which they teach consistently with them. This must be our Lord's meaning: he could not have desired them to do every thing, without restriction, which the Jewish doctors taught; because himself warns his disciples against their false teaching, and testifies that they had made the word of God of none effect by their traditions. See ^{<4015>}Matthew 15:6, &c. Besides, as our Lord speaks here in the past tense-*whatsoever they HAVE commanded*, οσα εἰπῶσιν, he may refer to the teaching of a former period, when they taught the way of God in truth, or were much less corrupted than they were now.

Verse 4. They bind heavy burdens] They are *now* so corrupt that they have added to the ceremonies of the law others of their own invention, which are not only burdensome and oppressive, but have neither *reason*, *expediency*, nor *revelation*, to countenance them. In a word, like all their

successors in *spirit* to the present day, they were *severe to others*, but very *indulgent to themselves*.

Verse 5. All their works they do for to be seen of men] In pointing out the corruptions of these men, our Lord gives us the distinguishing characteristics of all false teachers, whether Jewish or Christian.

1. They live not according to the truths they preach. *They say, and do not,*
 <1238> **Matthew 23:3.**

2. They are severe to others, point out the narrowest road to heaven, and walk in the broad road themselves. *They bind on burdens, &c.,*
 <1234> **Matthew 23:4.**

3. They affect to appear righteous, and are strict observers of certain rites, &c., while destitute of the power of godliness. *They make broad their phylacteries, &c.,* <1235> **Matthew 23:5.**

4. They love worldly entertainments, go to feast wherever they are asked, and seek Church preferments. *They love the chief places at feasts, and chief seats in the synagogues,* <1236> **Matthew 23:6.**

5. They love and seek public respect and high titles, salutations in the *market-place*, (for they are seldom in their *studies*.) and to be called of men *rabbi- eminent teacher*, though they have no title to it, either from the *excellence* or *fruit* of their teaching. When these marks are found in a man who professes to be a minister of Christ, charity itself will assert *he is a thief and a robber-he has climbed over the wall of the sheepfold, or broken it down* in order to get in.

Phylacteries] *φυλακτηρια*, from *φυλασσω*, to *keep* or *preserve*. These were small slips of parchment or vellum, on which certain portions of the law were written. The Jews tied these about their foreheads and arms, for three different purposes.

1. To put them in *mind* of those precepts which they should constantly observe.

2. To procure them *reverence* and *respect* in the sight of the *heathen*. And

3. To act as *amulets* or *charms* to drive away evil spirits.

The *first* use of these phylacteries is evident from their *name*.

The *second* use appears from what is said on the subject from the Gemara, *Beracoth*, chap. 1., quoted by Kypke. “Whence is it proved that phylacteries, (^{<01520>}yl ypt, *tephilin*.) are the strength of Israel?-Ans. From what is written, ^{<05210>}**Deuteronomy 28:10**. *All the, people of the earth shall see that thou art called by the name [of hwhy Jehovah]-and they shall be afraid of thee.*

The *third* use of them appears from the Targum, on Cant. ^{<02188>}**Song of Solomon 8:3**. *His left hand is under my head, &c.* “The congregation of Israel hath said, I am elect above all people, because I bind my phylacteries on my left hand, and on my head, and the scroll is fixed to the right side of my gate, the third part of which looks to my bed-chamber, that **DÆMONS** *may not be permitted to INJURE me.*”

An original phylactery lies now before me. It is a piece of fine vellum, about eighteen inches long, and an inch and quarter broad. It is divided into four unequal compartments: in the first is written, in a very fair character, with many *apices*, after the mode of the German Jews, the first ten verses of Exod. 13, (^{<02130>}**Exodus 13:1-10**); in the second compartment is written, from the eleventh to the sixteenth verse of the same chapter (^{<02311>}**Exodus 13:11-16**), inclusive in the third, from the fourth to the ninth verse (^{<01604>}**Deuteronomy 6:4-9**), inclusive, of Deut. 6., beginning with, *Hear, O Israel, &c.*; in the fourth, from the thirteenth to the twenty-first verse, inclusive, of Deut. 11 (^{<05113>}**Deuteronomy 11:13-21**).

These passages seem to be chosen in vindication of the *use* of the phylactery itself, as the reader will see on consulting them: Bind them for a SIGN upon thy HAND-and for FRONTLETS between thy EYES-write them upon the POSTS of thy HOUSE, and upon thy GATES; all which commands the Jews took in the most literal sense.

Even the *phylactery* became an important appendage to a Pharisee’s character, insomuch that some of them wore them very broad, either that they might have the more written on them, or that, the characters being *larger*, they might be the more *visible*, and that they might hereby acquire greater esteem among the common people, as being more than ordinarily religious. For the same reason, they wore the *fringes* of their garments of an unusual length. Moses had commanded (^{<04158>}**Numbers 15:38, 39**) the children of Israel to put *fringes* to the borders of their garments, that, when they *looked* upon even these *distinct threads*, they might remember, not

only the *law* in *general*, but also the very *minutiae*, or smaller parts of all the *precepts, rites, and ceremonies*, belonging to it. As these hypocrites were destitute of all the life and power of religion *within*, they endeavoured to supply its place by *phylacteries* and *fringes without*. See **Clark's note on ⁴²¹³⁹Exodus 13:9**".

Verse 7. To be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi.] *ybr ybr*, i.e. *My teacher! my teacher!* The second *rabbi* is omitted by several excellent MSS., by most of the ancient versions, and by some of the fathers. *Griesbach* has left it in the text, with the note of doubtfulness.

There are three words used among the Jews as titles of dignity, which they apply to their doctors—*Rabh*, *Rabbi*, and *Rabban*; each of these terms has its particular meaning: *rabban* implies much more than *rabbi*, and *rabbi* much more than *rabh*.

They may be considered as three degrees of comparison: *rabh* great, *rabbi* greater, and *rabban* greatest. These rabbins were looked up to as infallible oracles in religious matters, and usurped not only the place of the law, but of God himself.

Verse 8. But be not ye called Rabbi] As our Lord probably spoke in Hebrew, the latter word *rabbi*, in this verse, must have been in the plural; but as the contracted form of the plural sounds almost exactly like the singular, the Greek writer would naturally express them both in the same letters.

None of the prophets had ever received this title, nor any of the Jewish doctors before the time of *Hillel* and *Shammai*, which was about the time of our Lord; and, as disputes on several subjects had run high between these two schools, the people were of course divided; some acknowledging *Hillel* as *rabbi*,—infallible teacher, and others giving this title to *Shammai*. The Pharisees, who always sought the honour that comes from men, assumed the title, and got their followers to address them by it. See on ^{4019B}**Matthew 19:3**.

One is your Master] Instead of *καθηγητης*, *guide* or *leader*, (the common reading here, and which occurs in ⁴²³¹⁰**Matthew 23:10**,) the famous Vatican MS., upwards of fifty others, and most of the ancient versions, read *διδασκαλος*, *master*. The most eminent critics approve of this reading and, independently of the very respectable authority by which

it is supported, it is evident that this reading is more consistent with the context than the other,- *Be not ye called MASTERS, for one is your MASTER.*

Even Christ] *Griesbach* has left this out of the text, because it is wanting in many of the most excellent MSS., versions, and fathers. *Mill* and *Bengel* approve of the omission. It might have been brought into this verse from ^{<12310>}**Matthew 23:10**. Our Lord probably alludes to ^{<25413>}**Isaiah 54:13**, *All thy children shall be taught of the Lord.*

Ye are brethren.] No one among you is *higher* than another, or can possibly have from me any *jurisdiction* over the rest. Ye are, in this respect, perfectly *equal*.

Verse 9. Call no man your FATHER] Our Lord probably alludes to the AB, or father of the Sanhedrin, who was the *next* after the *nasi*, or president. See on ^{<1121>}**Matthew 20:21**. By which he gives his disciples to understand that he would have no SECOND, after himself, established in his Church, of which he alone was the *head*; and that perfect equality must subsist among them.

Verse 10. Neither be ye called masters] καθηγηται, *leaders*. God is in all these respects jealous of his honour. To him alone it belongs to guide and *lead* his Church, as well as to govern and defend it. Jesus is the sole teacher of righteousness. It is he alone, (who is the word, light, and eternal truth,) that can illuminate every created mind; and who, as Saviour and Redeemer, speaks to every heart by his Spirit.

Though the title of Rabbi, mentioned above, was comparatively recent in the time of our Lord, yet it was in great vogue, as were the others-*father* and *master*, mentioned in this and the following verse: some had all *three* titles, for thus in *Bab. Maccoth*, fol. 24. It is feigned," says Dr. *Lightfoot*, "that when King Jehosaphat saw a disciple of the wise men, he rose up out of his throne, and embraced him, and said, *yrm yrm ybr ybr yba yba, Abbi, Abbi! Rabbi, Rabbi! Mori, Mori!-Father, Father! Rabbi, Rabbi! Master, Master!*" Here then are the three titles which, in ^{<1237>}**Matthew 23:7, 8, 10**, our blessed Lord condemns; and these were titles that the Jewish doctors greatly affected.

Verse 11. Your servant.] δακονος, *deacon*. See on ^{<1116>}**Matthew 20:26**.

Verse 12. Whosoever shall exalt himself, &c.] The way to arrive at the highest degree of dignity, in the sight of God, is by being willing to become the servant of all. Nothing is more hateful in his sight than *pride*; to bring it into everlasting contempt, God was manifest in the flesh. He who was in the likeness of God took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of man, and humbled himself unto death. After this, can God look upon any *proud* man without *abasing* him? Spiritual *lordship* and *domination*, ecclesiastical *luxury*, *pomp*, and *pride*, must be an abhorrence in the sight of that God who gave the above advices to his followers.

Another lesson, which our blessed Lord teaches here, is, that no man is *implicitly* to receive the *sayings*, *doctrines*, and *decisions* of any man, or number of men, in the things which concern the interests of his immortal soul. Christ, his Spirit, and his word, are the only infallible teachers. Every man who wishes to save his soul must search the Scriptures, by prayer and faith. Reader, take counsel with the pious; hear the discourses of the wise and holy: but let the book of God ultimately fix thy creed.

Verse 13. - 14. Wo unto you, scribes] I think the *fourteenth* and *thirteenth* verses should be *transposed*. This transposition is authorized by some of the best MSS., versions, and fathers. The *fourteenth* is wanting in the BDL., and in many others of inferior note, as well as in several of the *versions*. *Griesbach* has left it out of the text, in his first edition; I hesitated, and left it in, thus transposed. I am happy to find that a more extensive collation of MSS., &c., afforded proof to that eminent critic that it should be restored to its place. In the *second* edition, he has transposed the two, just as I had done. The *fifteenth* reads best after the *thirteenth*.

-Verse 13. **Ye shut up the kingdom]** As a *key* by opening a *lock* gives *entrance* into a house, &c., so *knowledge* of the sacred testimonies, manifested in *expounding* them to the people, may be said to *open* the way into the kingdom of heaven. But where men who are termed *teachers* are destitute of this *knowledge* themselves, they may be said to *shut* this kingdom; because they occupy the place of those who *should teach*, and thus *prevent* the people from acquiring heavenly knowledge.

In ancient times the rabbins carried a *key*, which was the symbol or emblem of knowledge. Hence it is written in *Semachoth*, chap. 8., "When Rab. Samuel the little died, his key and his tablets were hung on his tomb, because he died childless." See *Schoettgen*.

The *kingdom of heaven* here means the Gospel of Christ; the Pharisees would not receive it themselves, and hindered the common people as far as they could.

Verse 14. See Clarke at “^{<42313>}Matthew 23:13”.

-Verse 14. **Ye devour widows’ houses**] On this subject I am in possession of nothing better than the following note of Dr. *Whitby*.

“This sect,” says Josephus, (*Ant.* l. xvii. chap. 3.) “pretended to a more exact knowledge of the law, on which account the women were subject to them, as pretending to be dear to God. And when *Alexandra* obtained the government, (*Jewish War*, b. I. ch. 4,) they insinuated themselves into her favour, as being the exactest sect of the Jews, and the most exact interpreters of the law, and, abusing her simplicity, did as they listed, *remove* and *dispose*, *bind* and *loose*, and *even cut off men*. They were in vogue for their long prayers, which they continued sometimes *three hours*; that perhaps they sold them, as do the Roman priests their masses, or pretended others should be more acceptable to God for them; and so might spoil devout widows by the gifts or salaries they expected from them. Now this being only a hypocritical pretence of piety, must be hateful to God, and so deserve a greater condemnation.”

Long prayer] For proofs of *long prayers* and *vain repetitions* among *Jews*, *Mohammedans*, and *heathens*, see Clarke’s notes on “^{<4087>}Matthew 6:7”.

Verse 15. Compass sea and land] A proverbial expression, similar to ours, *You leave no stone unturned*; intimating that they did all in their power to gain converts, not to God, but to their sect. These we may suppose were principally sought for among the *Gentiles*, for the bulk of the Jewish nation was already on the side of the Pharisees.

Proselyte] *προσηλυτος*, a *stranger*, or *foreigner*; one who *is come from his own people* and country, to sojourn *with another*. See the different kinds of proselytes explained in Clarke’s note on “^{<2128>}Exodus 12:43”.

The child of hell] A Hebraism for an excessively wicked person, such as might claim *hell* for his *mother*, and the *devil* for his *father*.

Twofold-the child of] The Greek word **διπλοτερον**, which has generally been translated *twofold*, KYPKE has demonstrated to mean *more deceitful*. **απλους** is used by the best Greek writers for *simple, sincere*, **απλοτης** for *simplicity, sincerity*; so **διπλους**, *deceitful, dissembling*, and **διπλονη**, *hypocrisy, fraudulence*, and **διπλοτερον**, *more fraudulent, more deceitful, more hypocritical*. See also *Suidas* in **διπλονη**.

Dr. *Lightfoot*, and others, observe, that the proselytes were considered by the Jewish nation as the *scabs of the Church*, and hindered the coming of the Messiah; and *Justin Martyr* observes, that “the proselytes did not only disbelieve Christ’s doctrine, but were *abundantly more blasphemous* against him than the Jews themselves, endeavouring to torment and cut off the Christians wherever they could; they being in this the *instruments* of the scribes and Pharisees.”

Verse 16. Whosoever shall swear by the gold] The covetous man, says one, still gives preference to the object of his lust; *gold* has still the first place in his heart. A man is to be suspected when he recommends those good works most from which he receives most advantage.

Is bound thereby, i.e. to fulfil his *oath*.

Verse 20. Whoso shall swear by the altar] As an oath always supposes a person who witnesses it, and will punish perjury; therefore, whether they swore by the *temple* or the *gold*, (^{<42316>}**Matthew 23:16**), or by the *altar* or the *gift* laid on it, (^{<42318>}**Matthew 23:18**), the oath necessarily supposes the God of the temple, of the altar, and of the gifts, who witnessed the whole, and would, even in *their exempt* cases, punish the perjury.

Verse 21. Whoso shall swear by the temple] Perhaps it is to this custom of swearing by the temple, that *Martial* alludes, lib. xi. epist. 95.

*Ecce negas, jurasque mihi per templa Tonantis;
Non credo; jura, Verpe, per Anchialum.*

“Behold, thou deniest, and swearest to me by the temples of Jupiter; I will not credit thee: swear, O Jew, by the temple of Jehovah.” This word probably comes from **hy I kyh** *heical Yah, the temple of Jehovah*. This seems a better derivation than **yj μα μυηι a im chai Elohim, as God liveth**, though the sound of the latter is nearer to the Latin.

By him that dwelleth therein.] The common reading is **κατοικουντι**, *dwelleth* or INHABITETH, but **κατοικησαντι**, *dwelt* or DID *inhabit*, is the reading of CDEFGHKLM, *eighty-six* others; this reading has been adopted in the editions of *Complutum*, *Colineus*, *Bengel*, and *Griesbach*. The importance of this reading may be perceived by the following considerations. In the *first* Jewish temple, God had graciously condescended to manifest himself—he is constantly represented as dwelling between the cherubim, the two figures that stood at each end of the ark of the covenant; between whom, on the mercy seat, the lid of the ark, a splendour of glory was exhibited, which was the symbol and proof of the Divine *presence*. This the Jews called **השכינה** *Shekinah*, *the habitation of Jehovah*. Now the Jews unanimously acknowledge that *five* things were wanting in the second temple, which were found in the first, viz., 1. The ark; 2. The holy spirit of prophecy; 3. The Urim and Thummim; 4. The sacred fire; and 5. The **השכינה** *Shekinah*. As the Lord had long before this time abandoned the Jewish temple, and had now made the human nature of Jesus the *Shekinah*, (see ^{<4014>}**John 1:14**, the Logos was made flesh, **εσκηνοσεν**, and made his tabernacle—made the *Shekinah*,—among us,) our Lord could not, with any propriety, say that the supreme Being did *now inhabit* the temple; and therefore used a word that hinted to them that God *had forsaken* their temple, and consequently the whole of that service which was performed in it, and had now opened the new and living way to the holiest by the Messiah. But all this was common swearing; and, whether the subject was *true* or *false*, the oath was unlawful. A common swearer is worthy of no credit, when, even in the most solemn manner he takes an oath before a magistrate; he is so accustomed to stake his *truth*, perhaps even his *soul*, to things whether true or false, that an oath cannot bind him, and indeed is as little respected by himself as it is by his neighbour. Common swearing, and the shocking *frequency* and *multiplication* of oaths in *civil* cases, have destroyed all respect for an oath; so that men seldom feel themselves bound by it; and thus it is useless in many cases to require it as a confirmation, in order to end strife or ascertain truth. See Clarke's note on ^{<4057>}**Matthew 5:37**".

Verse 23.. Ye pay tithes of mint, &c.] They were remarkably scrupulous in the performance of all the rites and ceremonies of religion, but totally neglected the soul, spirit, and practice of godliness.

Judgment] Acting according to justice and equity towards all mankind. *Mercy*-to the distressed and miserable. And *faith* in God as the fountain of all righteousness, mercy, and truth. The scribes and Pharisees neither began nor ended their works in God, nor had they any respect unto his name in doing them. They did them to be seen of men, and they had their reward-*human applause*.

These ought ye to have done, &c.] Our Lord did not object to their paying tithe even of common pot-herbs-this did not affect the spirit of religion; but while they did this and such like, to the utter neglect of justice, mercy, and faith, they showed that they had no religion, and knew nothing of its nature.

Verse 24. Blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel.]

This clause should be thus translated: Ye strain out the gnat, but ye swallow down the camel. In the common translation, *Ye strain AT a gnat*, conveys no sense. Indeed, it is likely to have been at first an error of the press, AT for OUT, which, on examination, I find escaped in the edition of 1611, and has been regularly continued since. There is now before me, “*The Newe Testament, (both in Englyshe and in Laten,) of Mayster Erasmus translacion, imprinted by Wyllyam Powell, dwellynge in Flete strete: the yere of our Lorde M.CCC.CC.XLVII. the fyrste yere of the kynges (Edwd. VI.) moste gracious reygne.*” in which the verse stands thus: “*Ye blinde gides, which strayne out a gnat, and swalowe a cammel.*” It is the same also in Edmund Becke’s Bible, printed in London 1549, and in several others.-**ϸlensynge a gnatte.** -MS. Eng. Bib. So *Wickliff*. Similar to this is the following Arabic proverb [Arabic]. *He eats an elephant and is choked by a gnat.*

Verse 25. Ye make clean the outside] The Pharisees were exceedingly exact in observing all the washings and purifications prescribed by the law; but paid no attention to that inward purity which was typified by them. A man may appear clean without, who is unclean within; but *outward purity* will not avail in the sight of God, where *inward holiness* is wanting.

Extortion and excess.] ἄρπαγῆς καὶ ἀκρασίας, *rapine and intemperance*; but instead of ἀκρασίας, *intemperance*, many of the very best MSS., CEFHGKS, and more than a hundred others, the Syriac, Arabic, Ethiopic, Slavonic, with Chrysostom, Euthym., and Theophylact, have ἀδικίας *injustice*, which Griesbach has admitted into the text instead of ἀκρασίας. The latter Syriac has both. Several MSS. and versions have

ακαθαρσιας, *uncleanness*; others have πλεονεξιας, *covetousness*; some have πονηριας, *wickedness*; and two of the ancients have *iniquitate, iniquity*. Suppose we put them all together, the character of the Pharisee will not be overcharged. They were full of *rapine and intemperance, injustice and uncleanness, covetousness, wickedness, and iniquity*.

Verse 27. For ye are like] παρομοιαζετε, *ye exactly resemble-the parallel is complete.*

Whited sepulchres] *White-washed tombs.* As the law considered those unclean who had touched any thing belonging to the dead, the Jews took care to have their tombs white-washed each year, that, being easily *discovered*, they might be consequently *avoided*.

Verse 28. Even so ye also-appear righteous unto men] But what will this appearance avail a man, when God sits in judgment upon his soul? Will the fair reputation which he had acquired among men, while his heart was the seat of unrighteousness, screen him from the stroke of that justice which *impartially* sends all impurity and unholiness into the pit of destruction? No. *In* the sin that he hath sinned, and in which he hath died, and *according to that*, shall he be judged and punished; and his profession of holiness only tends to sink him deeper into the lake which burns with unquenchable fire. Reader! see that thy *heart* be right with God.

Verse 29. Ye build the tombs of the prophets] It appears that, through respect to their memory, they often repaired, and sometimes beautified, the tombs of the prophets. M. Deuteronomy la Valle, in his Journey to the Holy Land, says, that when he visited the cave of *Machpelah*, he saw some Jews honouring a sepulchre, for which they have a great veneration, with lighting at it wax candles and burning perfumes. See Harmer, vol. iii. p. 416. And in ditto, p. 424, we are informed that *building tombs* over those reputed *saints*, or *beautifying* those already built, is a frequent custom among the Mohammedans.

Verse 30. We would not have been partakers] They imagined themselves much better than their ancestors; but our Lord, who knew what they would do, uncovers their hearts, and shows them that they are about to be more abundantly vile than all who had ever preceded them.

Verse 31. Ye be witnesses] Ye acknowledge that ye are the children of those murderers, and ye are about to give full proof that ye are not *degenerated*.

There are many who think that, had they lived in the time of our Lord, they would not have acted towards him as the Jews did. But we can scarcely believe that they who reject his Gospel, trample under foot his precepts, do despite to the Spirit of his grace, love sin, and hate his followers, would have acted otherwise to him than the murdering Jews, had they lived in the same times.

Verse 32. Fill ye up then] Notwithstanding the profession you make, ye will fill up the measure of your fathers-will continue to walk in their way, accomplish the fulness of every evil purpose by murdering me; and then, when the measure of your iniquity is full, vengeance shall come upon you to the uttermost, as it did on your rebellious ancestors. The 31st verse should be read in a parenthesis, and then the 32d will appear to be, what it is, an Inference from the 30th.

Ye will fill up, or *fill ye up*-**πληρωσατε** but it is manifest that the *imperative* is put here for the *future*, a thing quite consistent with the *Hebrew idiom*, and frequent in the Scriptures. So ^{<4219>}**John 2:19**, *Destroy this temple, &c.*, i.e. *Ye will destroy or pull down this temple, and I will rebuild it in three days*-*Ye will crucify me, and I will rise again the third day*. Two good MSS. have the word in the future tense: and my old MS. Bible has it in the present-**Genesis** (ye) fulfillen the mesure of youre (your) fadris.

Verse 33. Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers] What a terrible stroke!-Ye are serpents, and the offspring of serpents. This refers to ^{<4231>}**Matthew 23:31**: they confessed that they were the children of those who murdered the prophets; and they are now going to murder Christ and his followers, to show that they have not *degenerated*-an accursed *seed*, of an accursed *breed*. My old MS. translates this passage oddly-**See serpentis, fruytis of burrownyngis of eddris that sleen her modris**. There seems to be here an allusion to a common opinion, that the young of the adder or viper which are brought forth alive eat their way through the womb of their mothers. Hence that ancient enigma attributed to LACTANTIUS:-

*Non possum nasci, si non occidero matrem.
Occidi matrem: sed me manet exitus idem.
Id mea mors faciet, quod jam mea fecit origo.
Cæl. Firm. Symposium, N. xv.*

*I never can be born, nor see the day,
Till through my parent's womb I eat my way.
Her I have slain; like her must yield my breath;
For that which gave me life, shall cause my death.*

Every person must see with what propriety this was applied to the Jews, who were about to murder the very person who gave them their *being* and all their *blessings*.

Verse 34. Wherefore] To show how my prediction, *Ye will fill up the measure of your fathers*, shall be verified, *Behold, I send* (I am just going to commission them) *prophets, &c. and some ye will kill*, (with legal process,) and some ye will *crucify*, pretend to try and find guilty, and deliver them into the hands of the Romans, who shall, through you, *thus* put them to death. See on ^{<2114>}**Luke 11:49**. By prophets, wise men, and scribes, our Lord intends the evangelists, apostles, deacons, &c., who should be employed in proclaiming his Gospel: men who should equal the ancient prophets, their wise men, and scribes, in all the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit.

Verse 35. Upon the earth] *επι της γης*, *upon this land*, meaning probably the land of *Judea*; for thus the word is often to be understood. The national punishment of all the innocent *blood which had been shed in the land*, shall speedily come upon you, *from the blood of Abel the just*, the first prophet and preacher of righteousness, ^{<81104>}**Hebrews 11:4**; ^{<61035>}**2 Peter 2:5**, *to the blood of Zachariah, the son of Barachiah*. It is likely that our Lord refers to the murder of Zachariah, mentioned ^{<14201>}**2 Chronicles 24:20**, who *said to the people, Why transgress ye the commandments of God, so that ye cannot prosper? Because ye have forsaken the Lord, he hath forsaken you. And they conspired against him and stoned him-at the commandment of the king, in the court of the house of the Lord. And when he died, he said, The Lord look upon and require it:* ^{<14221>}**2 Chronicles 24:21, 22**.

But it is objected, that this Zachariah was called the son of *Jehoiada*, and our Lord calls this one the son of *Barachiah*. Let it be observed,

1. That *double* names were frequent among the Jews; and sometimes the person was called by one, sometimes by the other. Compare ~~<000>~~ **1 Samuel 9:1**, with ~~<1083>~~ **1 Chronicles 8:33**, where it appears that the father of *Kish* had two names, *Abiel* and *Ner*. So *Matthew* is called *Levi*; compare ~~<009>~~ **Matthew 9:9**, with ~~<1024>~~ **Mark 2:14**. So *Peter* was also called *Simon*, and *Lebbeus* was called *Thaddeus*. ~~<0102>~~ **Matthew 10:2, 3**.
2. That Jerome says that, in the Gospel of the Nazarenes, it was *Jehoiada*, instead of *Barachiah*.
3. That *Jehoiada* and *Barachiah* have the very same meaning, the *praise* or *blessing* of *Jehovah*.
4. That as the Lord *required* the blood of *Zachariah* so fully that in a year all the princes of Judah and Jerusalem were destroyed by the Syrians, and *Joash*, who commanded the murder, slain by his own servants, ~~<1043>~~ **2 Chronicles 24:23-25**, and their state grew worse and worse, till at last the temple was burned, and the people carried into captivity by *Nebuzaradan*:—so it should also be with the present race. The Lord would, after the crucifixion of *Christ*, visit upon them the murder of all those righteous men, that their state should grow worse and worse, till at last the temple should be destroyed, and they finally ruined by the Romans. See this prediction in the next chapter: and see *Dr. Whitby* concerning *Zachariah*, the son of *Barachiah*.

Some think that our Lord refers, in the spirit of prophecy, to the murder of *Zacharias*, son of *Baruch*, a rich Jew, who was judged, condemned, and massacred in the temple by *Idumean* zealots, because he was rich, a lover of liberty, and a hater of wickedness. They gave him a mock trial; and, when no evidence could be brought against him of his being guilty of the crime they laid to his charge, viz. a design to betray the city to the Romans, and his judges had pronounced him *innocent*, two of the stoutest of the zealots fell upon him and slew him in the *middle of the temple*. See *Josephus*, WAR, b. iv. chap. 5. s. 5. See *Crevier*, vol. vi. p. 172, *History of the Roman Emperors*. Others imagine that *Zachariah*, one of the minor prophets, is meant, who might have been massacred by the Jews; for, though the account is not come down to us, our Lord might have it from a well known tradition in those times. But the former opinion is every way the most probable.

Between the temple and the altar.] That is, between the sanctuary and the altar of burnt-offerings.

Verse 36. Shall come upon this generation] *επι την γενεαν ταυτην*, upon this race of men, viz. the Jews. This phrase often occurs in this sense in the evangelists.

Verse 37. O Jerusalem, Jerusalem] 1. It is evident that our blessed Lord seriously and earnestly wished the salvation of the Jews. 2. That he did every thing that could be done, consistently with his own perfections, and the liberty of his creatures, to effect this. 3. That his tears over the city, ^{<2194>}**Luke 19:41**, sufficiently evince his sincerity. 4. That these persons nevertheless perished. And 5. That the reason was, they *would not be gathered* together under his *protection*: therefore *wrath*, i.e. punishment, *came upon them to the uttermost*. From this it is evident that there have been persons whom Christ wished to save, and bled to save, who notwithstanding perished, because *they would not come unto him*, ^{<354>}**John 5:40**. The metaphor which our Lord uses here is a very beautiful one. When the hen sees a beast of prey coming, she makes a noise to assemble her chickens, that she may cover them with her wings from the danger. The Roman *eagle* is about to fall upon the Jewish state-nothing can prevent this but their conversion to God through Christ-Jesus cries throughout the land, publishing the Gospel of *reconciliation*-they would not *assemble*, and the *Roman eagle* came and destroyed them. The hen's affection to her brood is so very strong as to become proverbial. The following beautiful Greek epigram, taken from the Anthologia, affords a very fine illustration of this text.

χειμεριας νιφιδεσσι παλυνομενα τιθας ορνις
 τεκνοις ευνιαας αμφεχρε πτερυγας.
 μεσφα μεν ουρανιον κρυος ωλεσεν η γαρ εμεινεν
 αιθερος ουρακιων αντιπαλος νεφεων.
 προκνη και μεδεια, κατ αιδος αιδεσθητε,
 μητερες, ορνιθων εργα διδασκομεναι.
 Anthol. lib. i. Tit. 87: edit. Bosch. p. 344.

*Beneath her fostering wing the HEN defends
 Her darling offspring, while the snow descends;
 Throughout the winter's day unmoved defies
 The chilling fleeces and inclement skies;*

*Till, vanquish'd by the cold and piercing blast,
True to her charge, she perishes at last!
O Fame! to hell this fowl's affection bear;
Tell it to Progne and Medea there:-
To mothers such as those the tale unfold,
And let them blush to hear the story told!-T. G.*

This epigram contains a happy illustration, not only of our Lord's simile, but also of his own conduct. How long had these thankless and unholy people been the *objects* of his *tenderest* cares! For more than 2000 years, they engrossed the most peculiar regards of the most beneficent Providence; and during the *three* years of our Lord's public ministry, his preaching and miracles had but one object and aim, the instruction and salvation of this thoughtless and disobedient people. For *their* sakes, he who was *rich* became *poor*, that they through *his poverty* might be *rich*:- for their sakes, he made himself of *no reputation*, and took upon him the form of a servant, and became obedient unto *death*, even the death of the cross! HE *died*, that THEY might not *perish*, but have everlasting life. Thus, to save their life, he freely abandoned his own.

Verse 38. Behold, your house] ο οἶκος, *the temple*:-this is certainly what is meant. It was once the Lord's *temple*, *God's OWN house*; but now he says, *YOUR temple* or *house*-to intimate that God had *abandoned* it. See Clarke's note on "^{<412>}Matthew 23:21"; see also Clarke on "^{<413>}Luke 13:35".

Verse 39. Ye shall not see me] I will remove my Gospel from you, and withdraw my protection.

Till ye shall say, Blessed] Till after the fulness of the Gentiles is brought in, when the word of life shall again be sent unto you; then will ye rejoice, and bless, and *praise* him *that cometh in the name of the Lord*, with full and final salvation for the lost sheep of the house of Israel. See ^{<512>}Romans 11:26, 27.

Our Lord plainly foresaw that, in process of time, a spiritual domination would arise in his Church; and, to prevent its evil influence, he leaves the strong warnings against it which are contained in the former part of this chapter. As the religion of Christ is completely spiritual, and the influence by which it is produced and maintained must come from heaven; therefore, there could be no *master* or *head* but himself: for as the Church (the

assemblage of true believers) is his *body*, all its intelligence, light, and life, must proceed from him alone. Our forefathers noted this well; and this was one of the grand arguments by which they overturned the papal pretensions to supremacy in this country. In a note on ^{<1230>}**Matthew 23:9**, in a Bible published by Edmund Becke in 1549, the 2nd of Edward VI., we find the following words:—*Call no man your father upon the earth. Here is the Bishoppe of Rome declared a plaine Antichrist, in that he woulde be called the most holpe father; and that all Christen men shoulde acknowledge hym for no lesse then their syyritual father, notwithstandinge these playne wordes of Christe. It is true, nothing can be plainer; and yet, in the face of these commands, the pope has claimed the honour; and millions of men have been so stupid as to concede it. May those days of darkness, tyranny, and disgrace, never return!*

From the 13th to the 39th verse, our Lord pronounces *eight* woes, or rather pathetic declarations, against the scribes and Pharisees. 1. For their unwillingness to let the common people enjoy the pure word of God, or its right explanation: *Ye shut up the kingdom, &c.*, ^{<1231>}**Matthew 23:13.**

2. For their rapacity, and pretended sanctity in order to secure their secular ends: *Ye devour widows houses, &c.*, ^{<1231>}**Matthew 23:14.**

3. For their pretended zeal to spread the kingdom of God by making proselytes, when they had no other end in view than forming instruments for the purposes of their oppression and cruelty: *Ye compass sea and land, &c.*, ^{<1231>}**Matthew 23:15.**

4. For their bad doctrine and false interpretations of the Scriptures, and their dispensing with the most solemn oaths and vows at pleasure: *Ye blind guides, which say, Whosoever shall swear by the temple, it is nothing, &c.*, ^{<1231>}**Matthew 23:16-22.**

5. For their superstition in scrupulously attending to little things, and things not commanded, and omitting matters of great importance, the practice of which God had especially enjoined: *Ye pay tith of mint and cummin, &c.*, ^{<1231>}**Matthew 23:23, 24.**

6. For their hypocrisy, pretended saintship, and endeavouring to maintain decency in their outward conduct, while they had no other object in view than to deceive the people, and make them acquiesce in their oppressive measures: *Ye make clean the outside of the cup,* ^{<1231>}**Matthew 23:25, 26.**

7. For the depth of their inward depravity and abomination, having nothing good, fair, or supportable, but the mere *outside*.-Most hypocrites and wicked men have some good: but these were radically and totally evil: *Ye are like unto whited sepulchres-within full-of all uncleanness,* ^{<12>}**Matthew 23:27, 28.**

8. For their pretended concern for the holiness of the people, which proceeded no farther than to keep them free from such pollutions as they might accidentally and innocently contract, by casually stepping on the place where a person had been buried: and for their affected regret that their fathers had killed the prophets, while themselves possessed and cultivated the same murderous inclinations: *Ye-garnish the sepulchres of the righteous, and say, If we had been, &c.,* ^{<12>}**Matthew 23:29, 30.**

It is amazing with what power and authority our blessed Lord reproves this bad people. This was the last discourse they ever heard from him; and it is surprising, considering their wickedness, that they waited even for a mock trial, and did not rise up at once and destroy him. But the time was not yet come in which he was *to lay down his life*, for no man could *take it from him*.

While he appears in this last discourse with all the authority of a lawgiver and judge, he at the same time shows the tenderness and compassion of a friend and a father: he beholds their awful state-his eye affects his heart, and he weeps over them! Were not the present hardness and final perdition of these ungodly men entirely of themselves? Could Jesus, as the Supreme God, have fixed their reprobation from all eternity by any necessitating decree; and yet weep over the unavoidable consequences of his own sovereign determinations? How absurd as well as shocking is the thought! This is *Jewish* exclusion: *Credat Judæus Apella-non ego.*

ST. MATTHEW

CHAPTER 24.

Christ foretells the destruction of the temple, 1, 2. His disciples inquire when and what shall be the sign of this destruction, 3. Our Lord answers, and enumerates them-false Christs, 5. Wars, famines, pestilences, and earthquakes, 6-8. Persecution of his followers, 9. Apostasy from the truth, 10-13. General spread of the Gospel, 14. He foretells the investment of the city by the Romans, 15-18. The calamities of those times, 19-22. Warns them against seduction by false prophets, 23-26. The suddenness of these calamities, 27, 28. Total destruction of the Jewish polity, 29-31. The whole illustrated by the parable of the fig-tree, 32, 33. The certainty of the event, though the time is concealed, 34-36. Careless state of the people, 37-41. The necessity of watchfulness and fidelity, illustrated by the parable of the two servants, one faithful, the other wicked, 42-51

NOTES ON CHAP. 24.

This chapter contains a prediction of the utter destruction of the city and temple of Jerusalem, and the subversion of the whole political constitution of the Jews; and is one of the most valuable portions of the new covenant Scriptures, with respect to the *evidence* which it furnishes of the *truth* of Christianity. Every thing which our Lord foretold should come on the temple, city, and people of the Jews, has been fulfilled in the most correct and astonishing manner; and witnessed by a writer who was present during the whole, who was himself a Jew, and is acknowledged to be an historian of indisputable veracity in all those transactions which concern the destruction of Jerusalem. Without having designed it, he has written a commentary on our Lord's words, and shown how every tittle was punctually fulfilled, though he knew *nothing* of the Scripture which contained this remarkable prophecy. His account will be frequently referred to in the course of these notes; as also the admirable work of *Bishop Newton* on the prophecies.

Verse 1. And Jesus went out, and departed from, the temple] Or, *And Jesus, going out of the temple, was going away.* This is the arrangement of the words in several eminent manuscripts, versions, and fathers; and is much clearer than that in the common translation. The Jews say the temple was built of white and green-spotted marble. See *Lightfoot*. Josephus says

the stones were white and strong; fifty feet long, twenty-four broad, and sixteen thick. Antiq. b. 15. c. xi. See ^{<4130>}Mark 13:1.

Verse 2. See ye not all these things?] The common text, and many manuscripts, have *ου βλέπετε*, *Do ye not see, or consider?* But the *negative* particle is omitted by several excellent manuscripts, by the Coptic, Sahidic, Armenian, Ethiopic, Slavonic, Vulgate, and Itala versions, and by some of the primitive fathers, who all read it thus, *see, or consider all these things.*

There shall not be left here one stone] These seem to have been the last words he spoke as he left the temple, into which he never afterwards entered; and, when he got to the mount of Olives, he renewed the discourse. From this mount, on which our Lord and his disciples now sat, the whole of the city, and particularly the temple, were clearly seen. This part of our Lord's prediction was fulfilled in the most literal manner. Josephus says, War, book vii. c. 1: "Cæsar gave orders that they should now *demolish the whole city and temple*, *τε πολιν απασαν και τον νεων κατασκεπτειν*, except the three towers, *Phaselus, Hippicus, and Mariamne*, and a part of the western wall, and these were spared; but, for all the rest of the wall, it was laid so completely even with the ground, by those who *dug it up to the foundation*, that there was left nothing to make those that came thither believe it had ever been inhabited." Maimonides, a Jewish rabbin, in Tract. *Taanith*, c. 4, says, "That the very foundations of the temple were digged up, according to the Roman custom." His words are these: "On that ninth day of the month Ab, fatal for vengeance, the wicked Turnus Rufus, of the children of Edom, ploughed up the temple, and the places round about it, that the saying might be fulfilled, *Zion shall be ploughed as a field.*" This Turnus, or rather Terentius Rufus, was left general of the army by Titus, with commission, as the Jews suppose, to destroy the city and the temple, as Josephus observes.

The temple was destroyed 1st. *Justly*; because of the sins of the Jews. 2dly. *Mercifully*; to take away from them the occasion of continuing in Judaism: and 3dly. *Mysteriously*; to show that the ancient sacrifices were abolished, and that the whole Jewish economy was brought to an end, and the Christian dispensation introduced.

Verse 3. Tell us, when shall these things be?] There appear to be *three* questions asked here by the disciples. 1st. *When shall these things be?* viz. *the destruction of the city, temple, and Jewish state.* 2dly. *What shall be*

the sign of thy coming? viz. to *execute* these judgments upon them, and to *establish* thy own Church: and 3dly. *When shall this world end?* When wilt thou come to *judge* the *quicks* and the *deads*? But there are some who maintain that these are but three parts of the *same* question, and that our Lord's answers only refer to the destruction of the Jewish state, and that nothing is spoken here concerning the *LAST* or *judgment day*.

End of the world] **του αἰῶνος**; or, *of the age*, viz. the Jewish economy, which is a frequent *accommodated* meaning of the word **αἰών**, the *proper* meaning of which is, as *Aristotle* (*Deuteronomy Cælo*) observes, *ETERNAL*. **αἰών**, quasi **αἰεὶ ὢν** *continual being*: and no words can more forcibly point out *eternity* than these. See **Clarke's note on** “^{<012133>}**Genesis 21:33**”.

Verse 4. Take heed that no man deceive you.] The world is full of deceivers, and it is only by taking heed to the counsel of Christ that even his followers can escape being ruined by them. From this to ^{<0431>}**Matthew 24:31**, our Lord mentions the signs which should precede his coming.

The *FIRST* sign is *false Christs*.

Verse 5. For many shall come in my name] 1. Josephus says, (*War*, b. ii. c. 13,) that there were many who, pretending to Divine inspiration, deceived the people, leading out numbers of them to the *desert*, pretending that God would there show them the signs of liberty, meaning redemption from the Roman power: and that an Egyptian false prophet led 30,000 men into the desert, who were almost all cut off by *Felix*. See ^{<042138>}**Acts 21:38**. It was a just judgment for God to deliver up that people into the hands of *false Christs* who had rejected the *true one*. Soon after our Lord's crucifixion, Simon Magus appeared, and persuaded the people of Samaria that he was *the great power of God*, ^{<0400>}**Acts 8:9, 10**; and boasted among the Jews that he was the *son of God*.

2. Of the same stamp and character was also *Dositheus*, the Samaritan, who pretended that he was *the Christ* foretold by Moses.

3. About twelve years after the death of our Lord, when *Cuspius Fadus* was procurator of Judea, arose an impostor of the name of *Theudas*, who said he was a *prophet*, and persuaded a great multitude to follow him with their best effects to the river Jordan, which he promised to divide for their passage; and saying these things, says Josephus, *he deceived many*: almost the very words of our Lord.

4. A few years afterwards, under the reign of Nero, while Felix was procurator of Judea, impostors of this stamp were so frequent that some were taken and killed almost every day. Jos. Ant. b. xx. c. 4. and 7.

The SECOND sign, *wars* and *commotions*.

Verse 6. The next signs given by our Lord are **wars and rumours of wars**, &c.] These may be seen in *Josephus*, Ant. b. xviii. c. 9; War, b. ii. c. 10; especially as to the *rumours of wars*, when Caligula ordered his statue to be set up in the temple of God, which the Jews having refused, had every reason to expect a war with the Romans, and were in such consternation on the occasion that they even neglected to till their land.

Verse 7. Nation shall rise against nation] This portended the dissensions, insurrections and mutual slaughter of the Jews, and those of other nations, who dwelt in the same cities together; as particularly at Cæsarea, where the Jews and Syrians contended about the *right* of the city, which ended there in the total expulsion of the Jews, above 20,000 of whom were slain. The whole Jewish nation being exasperated at this, flew to arms, and burnt and plundered the neighbouring cities and villages of the *Syrians*, making an immense slaughter of the people. The *Syrians*, in return, destroyed not a less number of the Jews. At *Scythopolis* they murdered upwards of 13,000. At *Ascalon* they killed 2,500. At *Ptolemais* they slew 2000, and made many prisoners. The *Tyrians* also put many Jews to death, and imprisoned more: the people of *Gadara* did likewise; and all the other cities of *Syria* in proportion, as they hated or feared the Jews. As *Alexandria* the Jews and heathens fought, and 50,000 of the former were slain. The people of *Damascus* conspired against the Jews of that city, and, assaulting them unarmed, killed 10,000 of them. See Bishop *Newton*, and Dr. *Lardner*.

Kingdom against kingdom] This portended the open wars of different *tetrarchies* and *provinces* against each other. 1st. That of the *Jews* and *Galileans* against the *Samaritans*, for the murder of some *Galileans* going up to the feast of Jerusalem, while *Cumanus* was procurator. 2dly. That of the whole nation of the *Jews* against the *Romans* and *Agrippa*, and other allies of the Roman empire; which began when *Gessius Florus* was procurator. 3dly. That of the civil war in *Italy*, while *Otho* and *Vitellius* were contending for the empire. It is worthy of remark, that the Jews themselves say, "In the time of the Messiah, wars shall be stirred up in the world; nation shall rise against nation, and city against city." *Sohar Kadash*. "Again, Rab. Eleasar, the son of Abina, said, When ye see

kingdom rising against kingdom, then expect the immediate appearance of the Messiah.” *Bereshith Rabba*, sect. 42.

The THIRD sign, *pestilence and famine*.

It is farther added, that **There shall be famines, and pestilences**] There was a famine foretold by Agabus, (~~41128~~ **Acts 11:28**.) which is mentioned by *Suetonius*, *Tacitus*, and *Eusebius*; which came to pass in the days of Claudius Cæsar, and was so severe at Jerusalem that Josephus says (Ant. b. xx. c. 2.) many died for lack of food. *Pestilences* are the usual attendants of famines: as the scarcity and badness of provisions generally produce epidemic disorders.

The FOURTH sign, *earthquakes or popular commotions*.

Earthquakes, in divers places.] If we take the word σεισμοι from σειω *to shake*, in the first sense, then it means particularly those popular commotions and insurrections which have already been noted; and this I think to be the true meaning of the word: but if we confine it to *earthquakes*, there were several in those times to which our Lord refers; particularly one at *Crete* in the reign of Claudius, one at *Smyrna*, *Miletus*, *Chios*, *Samos*. See *Grotius*. One at *Rome*, mentioned by *Tacitus*; and one at *Laodicea* in the reign of *Nero*, in which the city was overthrown, as were likewise *Hierapolis* and *Colosse*. See *Tacit.* Annal. lib. xii. and lib. xiv. One at *Campania*, mentioned by *Seneca*; and one at *Rome*, in the reign of *Galba*, mentioned by *Suetonius* in the life of that emperor. Add to all these, a dreadful one in *Judea*, mentioned by *Josephus* (War, b. iv. c. 4.) accompanied by a *dreadful tempest*, *violent winds*, *vehement showers*, and continual *lightnings* and *thunders*; which led many to believe that these things portended some uncommon calamity.

The FIFTH sign, *fearful portents*.

To these St. Luke adds that there *shall be fearful sights and great signs from heaven* (~~42211~~ **Luke 21:11**.) Josephus, in his preface to the Jewish war, enumerates these. 1st. A *star* hung over the city like a *sword*; and a *comet* continued a whole year. 2d. The people being assembled at the feast of *unleavened bread*, at the ninth hour of the night, a *great light* shone about the altar and the temple, and this continued for half an hour. 3d. At the same feast, a *cow* led to sacrifice brought forth a *lamb* in the midst of the temple! 4th. The *eastern gate* of the temple, which was of *solid brass*, and

very *heavy*, and could hardly be shut by *twenty men*, and was fastened by strong *bars* and *bolts*, was seen at the sixth hour of the night *to open of its own accord!* 5th. Before sun-setting there were seen, over all the country, *chariots* and *armies* fighting in the *clouds*, and besieging cities. 6th. At the feast of pentecost, when the priests were going into the inner temple by night, to attend their service, they heard first a motion and noise, and then a voice, as of a multitude, saying, LET US DEPART HENCE! 7th. What Josephus reckons one of the most terrible signs of all was, that one *Jesus*, a country fellow, *four years before the war began*, and when the city was in peace and plenty, came to the feast of tabernacles, and ran crying up and down the streets, day and night: “A voice from the east! a voice from the west! a voice from the four winds! a voice against Jerusalem and the temple! a voice against the bridegrooms and the brides! and a voice against all the people!” Though the magistrates endeavoured by stripes and tortures to restrain him, yet he still cried, with a mournful voice, “Wo, wo to Jerusalem!” And this he continued to do for several years together, going about the walls and crying with a loud voice: “Wo, wo to the city, and to the people, and to the temple!” and as he added, “Wo, wo to myself!” a stone from some sling or engine struck him dead on the spot! It is worthy of remark that Josephus appeals to the testimony of *others*, who saw and heard these fearful things. *Tacitus*, a Roman historian, gives very nearly the same account with that of Josephus. Hist. lib. v.

Verse 8. All these are the beginning of sorrows.] ὀδύνην, *travailing pains*. The whole land of Judea is represented under the notion of a woman in grievous travail; but our Lord intimates, that all that had already been mentioned were only the first pangs and throes, and nothing in comparison of that hard and death-bringing labour, which should afterwards take place.

From the calamities of the *nation* in general, our Lord passes to those of the *Christians*; and, indeed, the sufferings of his followers were often occasioned by the judgments sent upon the land, as the poor Christians were charged with being the cause of these national calamities, and were cruelly persecuted on that account.

Verse 9. Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted] Rather, *Then they will deliver you up to affliction*, εἰς θλίψιν. By a bold figure of speech, *affliction* is here *personified*. They are to be delivered into affliction's own hand, to be harassed by all the modes of inventive torture.

Ye shall be hated of all nations] Both *Jew* and *Gentile* will unite in persecuting and tormenting *you*. Perhaps **παντων των εθνων** means *all the Gentiles*, as in the parallel places in **Mark 13:9-11**, and in **Luke 21:12-15**, the *Jewish* persecution is mentioned *distinctly*. Ye shall be delivered up to COUNCILS and be beaten in SYNAGOGUES, and ye shall stand before governors and kings for my name's sake-be not anxiously careful beforehand what ye shall speak-for ye are not the speakers, but the Holy Spirit will speak by you-I will give you utterance and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to contradict or resist. We need go no farther than the Acts of the Apostles for the completion of these particulars. Some were delivered to *councils*, as Peter and John, **Acts 4:5**. Some were brought before rulers and kings, as Paul before Gallio, **Acts 18:12**, before Felix, Acts 24, before Festus and Agrippa, Acts 25. Some had *utterance and wisdom which their adversaries were not able to resist*: so Stephen, **Acts 6:10**, and Paul, who made even Felix himself tremble, **Acts 24:25**. Some were *imprisoned*, as Peter and John, **Acts 4:3**. Some were *beaten*, as Paul and Silas, **Acts 16:23**. Some were *put to death*, as Stephen, **Acts 7:59**, and James the brother of John, **Acts 12:2**. But if we look beyond the book of the Acts of the Apostles, to the bloody persecutions under *Nero*, we shall find these predictions still more amply fulfilled: in these, numberless Christians fell, besides those two champions of the faith Peter and Paul. And it was, as says Tertullian, *nominis praelium*, a war against the very name of *Christ*; for he who was called Christian had committed crime enough, in bearing the *name*, to be put to death. So true were our Saviour's words, that they should be hated of all men for *his NAME'S sake*.

But they were not only to be hated by the Gentiles, but they were to be betrayed by *apostates*.

Verse 10. Then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another]

To illustrate this point, one sentence out of *Tacitus* (Annal. l. xv.) will be sufficient, who, speaking of the persecution under Nero, says, *At first several were seized, who confessed, and then by THEIR DISCOVERY a great multitude of others were convicted and executed.*

Verse 11. False prophets] Also were to be *raised up*; such as *Simon Magus* and his followers; and the false apostles complained of by St. Paul, **2 Corinthians 11:13**, who were *deceitful workers, transforming*

themselves into the apostles of Christ. Such also were *Hymeneus* and *Philetus*, ^{<5017>}**2 Timothy 2:17, 18.**

Verse 12. The love of many shall wax cold.] By reason of these trials and persecutions from *without*, and those apostasies and false prophets from *within*, the love of many to Christ and his doctrine, and to one another, *shall grow cold*. Some openly deserting the faith, as ^{<4240>}**Matthew 24:10**; others corrupting it, as ^{<4241>}**Matthew 24:11**; and others growing indifferent about it, ^{<4242>}**Matthew 24:12**. Even at this early period there seems to have been a very considerable defection in several Christian Churches; see ^{<8001>}**Galatians 3:1-4**; ^{<5301>}**2 Thessalonians 3:1**, &c.; ^{<5015>}**2 Timothy 1:15.**

Verse 13. But he that shall endure] The persecutions that shall come-*unto the end*; to the destruction of the Jewish polity, without growing cold or apostatizing-*shall be saved*, shall be delivered in all imminent dangers, and have his soul at last brought to an eternal glory. It is very remarkable that not a single Christian perished in the destruction of Jerusalem, though there were many there when *Cestius Gallus* invested the city; and, had he persevered in the siege, he would soon have rendered himself master of it; but, when he unexpectedly and unaccountably raised the siege, the Christians took that opportunity to escape. See *Eusebius*, Hist. Eccles lib. iii. c. 5, and Mr. *Reading's* note there; and see the note here on ^{<4243>}**Matthew 24:20.**

Verse 14. And this Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world] But, notwithstanding these persecutions, there should be a universal publication of the *glad tidings of the kingdom, for a testimony to all nations*. God would have the iniquity of the Jews published every where, before the heavy stroke of his judgments should fall upon them; that all mankind, as it were, might be brought as *witnesses* against their cruelty and obstinacy in crucifying and rejecting the Lord Jesus.

In all the world, εν ολη τη οικουμενη. Perhaps no more is meant here than the *Roman empire*; for it is beyond controversy that πασαν την οικουμενην, ^{<4001>}**Luke 2:1**, means no more than *the whole Roman empire*: as a decree for taxation or enrolment from Augustus Cæsar could have no influence but in the Roman dominions; but see on ^{<4002>}**Luke 2:1**. *Tacitus* informs us, Annal. l. xv., that, as early as the reign of Nero, the Christians were grown so numerous at Rome as to excite the jealousy of the government; and in other parts they were in proportion. However, we

are under no necessity to restrain the phrase to the Roman empire, as, previously to the destruction of Jerusalem, the Gospel was not only preached in the lesser Asia, and Greece, and Italy, the greatest theatres of action then in the world; but was likewise propagated as far *north* as SCYTHIA; as far *south* as ETHIOPIA; as far *east* as PARTHIA and INDIA; and as far *west* as SPAIN and BRITAIN. On this point, Bishop Newton goes on to say, That there is some probability that the Gospel was preached in the British nations by St. Simon the apostle; that there is much greater probability that it was preached here by St. Paul; and that there is an absolute certainty that it was planted here in the times of the apostles, before the destruction of Jerusalem. See his proofs. Dissert. vol. ii. p. 235, 236. edit. 1758. St. Paul himself speaks, ^{<51016>}**Colossians 1:6, 23**, of the Gospel's being come into ALL THE WORLD, *and preached TO EVERY CREATURE under heaven*. And in his Epistle to the Romans, ^{<51018>}**Romans 10:18**, he very elegantly applies to the lights of the Church, what the psalmist said of the lights of heaven. *Their sound went into ALL THE EARTH, and their words unto the END of the WORLD*. What but the wisdom of God could foretell this? and what but the power of God could accomplish it?

Then shall the end come.] When this general publication of the Gospel shall have taken place, then a *period* shall be put to the whole Jewish economy, by the utter destruction of their city and temple.

Verse 15. The abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel] This *abomination of desolation*, St. Luke, (^{<42121>}**Luke 21:20, 21**), refers to the *Roman army*; and this *abomination standing in the holy place* is the *Roman army* besieging Jerusalem; this, our Lord says, is what was spoken of by Daniel the prophet, in the *ninth* and *eleveth* chapters of his prophecy; and *so* let every one who reads these prophecies understand them; and in reference to this very event they are understood by the rabbins. The Roman army is called an abomination, for its ensigns and images, which were so to the Jews. Josephus says, (War, b. vi. chap. 6,) the Romans brought their ensigns into the temple, and placed them over against the eastern gate, and sacrificed to them there. The Roman army is therefore fitly called the *abomination*, and the *abomination which maketh desolate*, as it was to desolate and lay waste Jerusalem; and this army besieging Jerusalem is called by St. Mark, ^{<41314>}**Mark 13:14**, *standing where it ought not*, that is, as in the text here, *the holy place*; as not only the city, but a considerable compass of ground about it, was deemed *holy*, and consequently no *profane* persons should stand on it.

Verse 16. Then let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains]

This counsel was remembered and wisely followed by the Christians afterwards. *Eusebius* and *Epiphanius* say, that at this juncture, after *Cestius Gallus* had raised the siege, and *Vespasian* was approaching with his army, all who believed in Christ left Jerusalem and fled to Pella, and other places beyond the river Jordan; and so they all marvellously escaped the general shipwreck of their country: not one of them perished. See on ^{<02413>}**Matthew 24:13.**

Verse 17. Let him which is on the house top] The houses of the Jews, as well as those of the ancient Greeks and Romans, were *flat-roofed*, and had stairs on the outside, by which persons might ascend and descend without coming into the house. In the eastern walled cities, these flat-roofed houses usually formed continued terraces from one end of the city to the other; which *terraces* terminated at the *gates*. He, therefore, who is walking on the house top, let him *not come down to take any thing out of his house*; but let him instantly pursue his course along the tops of the houses, and escape out at the city gate as fast as he can.

Any thing] Instead of $\tau\iota$, *any thing*, we should read $\tau\alpha$, *the things*; which reading is supported by all the best MSS., versions, and fathers.

Verse 18. Neither let him which is in the field return back] Because when once the army of the Romans sits down before the city, there shall be no more any possibility of escape, as they shall never remove till Jerusalem be destroyed.

Verse 19. And wo unto them (alas! for them) that are with child, &c.] For such persons are not in a condition to make their escape; neither can they bear the miseries of the siege. *Josephus* says the houses were full of *women* and *children* that perished by the famine; and that the mothers snatched the food even out of their own children's mouths. See WAR, b. v. c. 10. But he relates a more horrid story than this, of one *Mary*, the daughter of *Eliezar*, illustrious for her family and riches, who, being stripped and plundered of all her goods and provisions by the soldiers, in hunger, rage, and despair, killed and boiled her own sucking child, and had eaten one half of him before it was discovered. This shocking story is told, WAR, b. vi. c. 3, with several circumstances of aggravation.

Verse 20. But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter] For the hardness of the season, the badness of the roads, the shortness of the days,

and the length of the nights, will all be great impediments to your flight. Rabbi Tanchum observes, “that the favour of God was particularly manifested in the destruction of the first temple, in not obliging the Jews to go out in the *winter*, but in the *summer*.” See the place in *Lightfoot*.

Neither on the Sabbath-day] That you may not raise the indignation of the Jews by travelling on that day, and so suffer that *death* out of the city which you had endeavoured to escape from within. Besides, on the Sabbath-days the Jews not only kept within doors, but the gates of all the cities and towns in every place were kept shut and barred; so that their flight should be on a Sabbath, they could not expect admission into any place of security in the land.

Our Lord had ordered his followers to make their escape from Jerusalem when they should see it encompassed with armies; but how could this be done? God took care to provide amply for this. In the twelfth year of Nero, Cestius Gallus, the president of Syria, came against Jerusalem with a powerful army. He might, says Josephus, WAR, b. ii. c. 19, have assaulted and taken the city, and thereby put an end to the war; but without any just reason, and contrary to the expectation of all, he raised the siege and departed. Josephus remarks, that after Cestius Gallus had raised the siege, “many of the principal Jewish people, πολλοι των επιφανων ιουδαιων, forsook the city, as men do a sinking ship.” Vespasian was deputed in the room of Cestius Gallus, who, having subdued all the country, prepared to besiege Jerusalem, and invested it on every side. But the news of Nero’s death, and soon after that of Galba, and the disturbances that followed, and the civil wars between Otho and Vitellius, held Vespasian and his son Titus in suspense. Thus the city was not actually besieged in form till after Vespasian was confirmed in the empire, and Titus was appointed to command the forces in Judea. It was in those incidental delays that the Christians, and indeed several others, provided for their own safety, by flight. In ^{<21943>} **Luke 19:43**, our Lord says of Jerusalem, *Thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side*. Accordingly, Titus, having made several assaults without success, resolved to surround the city with a wall, which was, with incredible speed, completed in three days! The wall was *thirty-nine* furlongs in length, and was strengthened with *thirteen* forts at proper distances, so that all hope of safety was cut off; none could make his escape from the city, and no provisions could be brought into it. See Josephus, WAR, book v. c. 12.

Verse 21. For then shall be great tribulation] No history can furnish us with a parallel to the calamities and miseries of the Jews:-rapine, murder, famine, and pestilence *within*: fire and sword, and all the horrors of war, *without*. Our Lord wept at the foresight of these calamities; and it is almost impossible for any humane person to read the relation of them in Josephus without weeping also. St. Luke, ~~42122~~**Luke 21:22**, calls these the *days of vengeance, that all things which were written might be fulfilled*. 1. These were the days in which all the calamities predicted by *Moses, Joel, Daniel*, and other *prophets*, as well as those predicted by our *Saviour*, met in one common centre, and were fulfilled in the most terrible manner on that generation. 2. These were the days of vengeance in another sense, as if God's judgments had certain periods and revolutions; for it is remarkable that the temple was burned by the Romans in the same month, and on the same day of the month, on which it had been burned by the Babylonians. See Josephus, WAR, b. vi. c. 4.

Verse 22. Except those days should be shortened] Josephus computes the number of those who perished in the siege at *eleven hundred thousand*, besides those who were slain in other places, WAR, b. vi. c. 9; and if the Romans had gone on destroying in this manner, the whole nation of the Jews would, in a short time, have been entirely extirpated; but, *for the sake of the elect, the Jews*, that *they* might not be *utterly destroyed*, and for the *Christians* particularly, the days were shortened. These, partly through the fury of the zealots on one hand, and the hatred of the Romans on the other; and partly through the difficulty of subsisting in the mountains without houses or provisions, would in all probability have been all destroyed, either by the sword or famine, if the days had not been shortened. The besieged themselves helped to shorten those days by their divisions and mutual slaughters; and by fatally deserting their strong holds, where they never could have been subdued, but by famine alone. So well fortified was Jerusalem, and so well provided to stand a siege, that the enemy *without* could not have prevailed, had it not been for the factions and seditions *within*. When *Titus* was viewing the fortifications after the taking of the city, he could not help ascribing his success to God. "We have fought," said he, "with God on our side; and it is God who pulled the Jews out of these strong holds: for what could *machines* or the *hands of men* avail against such towers as these?" WAR, b. vi. c. 9.

Verse 23. Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo here is Christ] Our Lord had cautioned his disciples against false Christs and prophets before,

ⲙⲁⲧⲏⲛⲏ **Matthew 24:11**; but he seems here to intimate that there would be *especial* need to attend to this caution about the time of the siege. And in fact many such impostors did arise about that time, promising deliverance from God; and the lower the Jews were reduced, the more disposed they were to listen to such deceivers. Like a man drowning, they were willing to catch even at a straw, while there was any prospect of being saved. But as it was to little purpose for a man to take upon him the character of *the Christ*, without miracles to avouch his Divine mission, so it was the common artifice of these impostors to show *signs* and *wonders*, **σημεία και τέρατα**; the very words used by Christ in this prophecy, and by Josephus in his history: ANT. b. xx. c. 7. Among these *Simon Magus*, and *Dositheus*, mentioned before; and *Barcocab*, who, St. Jerome says, pretended to vomit flames. And it is certain these and some others were so dexterous in imitating miraculous works that they deceived many; and such were their works, that if the *elect*, the *chosen persons*, the *Christians*, had not had the fullest evidence of the truth of Christ's mission and miracles, they must have been *deceived* too: but, having had these proofs, they could not possibly be deceived by these impostors. This is simply the meaning of this place; and it is truly astonishing that it should be brought as a proof for the doctrine (whether *true* or *false* is at present out of the question) of the *necessary* and *eternal perseverance of the saints*! How abundant the Jews were in magic, divination, sorcery, incantation, &c., see proved by Dr. *Lightfoot* on this place.

Verse 25. Behold, I have told you before.] That is, I have forewarned you.

Verse 26. If they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert] Is it not worthy of remark that our Lord not only foretold the appearance of these impostors, but also the *manner* and *circumstances* of their conduct? Some he mentions as appearing in the *desert*. Josephus says, ANT. b. xx. c. 7, and WAR, book ii. c. 13: That many impostors and cheats persuaded the people to follow them to the *desert*, promising to show them *signs* and *wonders* done by the providence of God, is well attested. An Egyptian false prophet, mentioned by Josephus, ANT. b. xx. c. 7, and in the Acts, ~~ⲁⲓⲧⲏⲥ~~ **Acts 21:38**, *led out into the DESERT four thousand men, who were murderers*, but these were all taken or destroyed by *Felix*. Another promised salvation to the people, if they would follow him to the DESERT, and he was destroyed by *Festus*, ANT. b. xx. c. 7. Also, one *Jonathan*, a weaver,

persuaded a number to follow him to the DESERT, but he was taken and burnt alive by Vespasian. See WAR, b. vii. c. 11.

As some conducted their deluded followers to the DESERT, so did others to the *secret chambers*. Josephus mentions a false prophet, WAR, b. vi. c. 5, who declared to the people in the city, that God commanded them to go up *into the temple*, and there they should receive the signs of deliverance. A multitude of men, women, and children, went up accordingly; but, instead of deliverance, the place was set on fire by the Romans, and 6,000 perished miserably in the flames, or in attempting to escape them.

Verse 27. For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west] It is worthy of remark that our Lord, in the most particular manner, points out the very *march* of the Roman army: they entered into Judea on the EAST, and carried on their conquest WESTWARD, as if not only the extensiveness of the ruin, but the very *route* which the army would take, were intended in the comparison of the *lightning issuing from the east, and shining to the west*.

Verse 28. For wheresoever the carcass is] *πτωμα*, *the dead carcass*. The Jewish nation, which was morally and judicially dead.

There will the eagles] The Roman armies, called so partly from their strength and fierceness, and partly from the *figure* of these animals which was always wrought on their *ensigns*, or even in brass, placed on the tops of their ensign-staves. It is remarkable that the Roman fury pursued these wretched men *wheresoever* they were found. They were a *dead carcass* doomed to be *devoured*; and the Roman eagles were the commissioned devourers. See the pitiful account in Josephus, WAR, b. vii. c. 2, 3, 6, 9, 10, and 11.

Verse 29. Immediately after the tribulation, &c.] Commentators generally understand this, and what follows, of the end of the world and Christ's coming to judgment: but the word *immediately* shows that our Lord is not speaking of any *distant* event, but of something immediately consequent on calamities already predicted: and that must be the destruction of Jerusalem. "The Jewish heaven shall perish, and the *sun* and *moon* of its glory and happiness shall be darkened-brought to nothing. The *sun* is the religion of the *Church*; the *moon* is the government of the *state*; and the *stars* are the judges and doctors of both. Compare ^{<231310>} **Isaiah 13:10**; ^{<231317>} **Ezekiel 32:7, 8, &c.**" *Lightfoot*.

In the prophetic language, great commotions upon earth are often represented under the notion of commotions and changes in the heavens:-

The fall of *Babylon* is represented by the stars and constellations of heaven withdrawing their light, and the sun and moon being darkened. See <3130>**Isaiah 13:9, 10.**

The destruction of *Egypt*, by the heaven being covered, the sun enveloped with a cloud, and the moon withholding her light. <3317>**Ezekiel 32:7, 8.**

The destruction of the *Jews* by *Antiochus Epiphanes* is represented by *casting down some of the host of heaven*, and the *stars* to the ground. See <7810>**Daniel 8:10.**

And this very destruction of *Jerusalem* is represented by the Prophet Joel, <3023>**Joel 2:30, 31**, by showing wonders in heaven and in earth-*darkening the sun, and turning the moon into blood*. This general mode of describing these judgments leaves no room to doubt the propriety of its application in the present case.

The falling of stars, i.e. those meteors which are called *falling stars* by the common people, was deemed an omen of evil times. The heathens have marked this:-

*Sæpe etiam stellas, vento impendente videbis
Præcipites coelo labi, noctisque per umbram
Flammarum longos a tergo albescere tractus.
VIRG. Geor. i. ver. 365.*

*And oft before tempestuous winds arise
The seeming stars fall headlong from the skies,
And, shooting through the darkness, gild the night
With sweeping glories, and long trails of light.
Dryden.*

Again the same poet thus sings:-

*SOL tibi signa dabit: solem quis dicere falsum
Audeat? Ille etiam coecos instare tumultus
Sæpe monet: fraudemque et operta tumescere bella
Ille etiam extincto miseratus Cæsare Romam,
Cum caput obscura nitidum ferrugine textit,
Impiaque æternam timuerunt sæcula noctem.
Ibid. ver. 462.*

*The sun reveals the secrets of the sky,
And who dares give the source of light the lie?
The change of empires often he declares,
Fierce tumults, hidden treasons, open wars.*

*He first the fate of Cæsar did foretell,
And pitied Rome, when Rome in Cæsar fell:
In iron clouds concealed the public light,
And impious mortals found eternal night.*

Dryden.

Verse 30. Then shall appear the sign of the Son of man] The plain meaning of this is, that the destruction of Jerusalem will be such a remarkable instance of Divine vengeance, such a signal manifestation of Christ's power and glory, that all the *Jewish tribes* shall mourn, and many will, in consequence of this manifestation of God, be led to acknowledge Christ and his religion. By *της γης*, *of the land*, in the text, is evidently meant here, as in several other places, the *land of Judea* and its *tribes*, either its then *inhabitants*, or the Jewish people wherever found.

Verse 31. He shall send his angels] *τους αγγελους*, *his messengers*, the *apostles*, and their successors in the Christian ministry.

With a great sound of a trumpet] Or, *a loud-sounding trumpet*—the earnest affectionate call of the Gospel of peace, life, and salvation.

Shall gather together his elect] The *Gentiles*, who were now *chosen* or *elected*, in place of the rebellious, obstinate *Jews*, according to Our Lord's prediction, ^{<0081>}**Matthew 8:11,12**, and ^{<2138>}**Luke 13:28,29**. *For the children of the kingdom*, (the *Jews* who were *born* with a *legal right* to it, but had now finally *forfeited* that right by their iniquities) *should be thrust out*. It is worth serious observation, that the Christian religion spread and prevailed mightily *after* this period: and nothing contributed more to the success of the Gospel than the *destruction of Jerusalem* happening in the very *time* and *manner*, and with the very *circumstances*, so particularly foretold by our Lord. It was *after this period* that the kingdom of Christ began, and his reign was established in almost every part of the world.

To St. Matthew's account, St. Luke adds, ^{<2124>}**Luke 21:24**, *They shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shalt be led away captive into all nations; and Jerusalem shall be trodden down by the Gentiles, till the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled*. The number of those who fell by the sword was very

great. ELEVEN HUNDRED THOUSAND perished during the siege. Many were slain at other places, and at other times. By the commandment of *Florus*, the first author of the war, there were slain at Jerusalem 3,600, Jos. WAR, b. ii. c. 14. By the inhabitants of *Cæsarea*, above 20,000. At *Scythopolis*, above 13,000. At *Ascalon*, 2,500. At *Ptolemais*, 2,000. At *Alexandria*, 50,000. At *Joppa*, when taken by *Cestius Gallus*, 8,400. In a mountain called *Asamon*, near *Sepporis*, above 2,000. At *Damascus*, 10,000. In a battle with the Romans at *Ascalon*, 10,000. In an *ambuscade* near the same place, 8,000. At *Japha*, 15,000. Of the *Samaritans*, on Mount *Gerizim*, 11,600. At *Jotapa*, 40,000. At *Joppa*, when taken by *Vespasian*, 4,200. At *Tarichea*, 6,500. And after the city was taken, 1,200. At *Gamala*, 4,000, besides 5,000 who threw themselves down a precipice. Of those who fled with *John*, of *Gischala*, 6,000. Of the *Gadarenes*, 15,000 slain, besides countless multitudes drowned. In the village of *Idumea*, above 10,000 slain. At *Gerasa*, 1,000. At *Machærus*, 1,700. In the wood of *Jardes*, 3,000. In the castle of *Masada*, 960. In *Cyrene*, by *Catullus* the governor, 3,000. Besides these, many of every age, sex, and condition, were slain in the war, who are not reckoned; but, of those who are reckoned, the number amounts to upwards of 1,357,660, which would have appeared incredible, if their own historian had not so particularly enumerated them. See Josephus, WAR, book ii. c. 18, 20; book iii. c. 2, 7, 8, 9; book iv. c. 1, 2, 7, 8, 9; book vii. c. 6, 9, 11; and Bp. Newton, vol. ii. p. 288-290.

Many also were led away captives into all nations. There were taken at *Japha*, 2,130. At *Jotapa*, 1,200. At *Tarichea*, 6,000 chosen young men, who were sent to Nero; others sold to the number of 30,400, besides those who were given to Agrippa. Of the *Gadarenes* were taken 2,200. In *Idumea* above 1,000. Many besides these were taken in *Jerusalem*; so that, as Josephus says, the number of the captives taken in the whole war amounted to 97,000. Those above seventeen years of age were sent to the works in *Egypt*; but most were distributed through the Roman provinces, to be destroyed in their theatres by the sword, and by the wild beasts; and those under seventeen years of age were sold for slaves. Eleven thousand in one place perished for want. At *Cæsarea*, *Titus*, like a thorough-paced infernal savage, murdered 2,500 Jews, in honour of his brother's birthday; and a greater number at *Berytus* in honour of his father's. See Josephus, WAR, b. vii. c. 3. s. 1. Some he caused to kill each other; some were thrown to the wild beasts; and others burnt alive. And all this was done by

a man who was styled, *The darling of mankind!* Thus were the Jews miserably tormented, and distributed over the Roman provinces; and continue to be distressed and dispersed over all the nations of the world to the present day. Jerusalem also was, according to the prediction of our Lord, to be *trodden down by the Gentiles*. Accordingly it has never since been in the possession of the *Jews*. It was first in subjection to the *Romans*, afterwards to the *Saracens*, then to the *Franks*, after to the *Mamalukes*, and now to the *Turks*. Thus has the prophecy of Christ been most literally and terribly fulfilled, on a people who are still preserved as continued monuments of the truth of our Lord's prediction, and of the truth of the Christian religion. See more in Bp. Newton's Dissert. vol. ii. p. 291, &c.

Verse 32. Learn a parable of the fig-tree] That is, These signs which I have given you will be as infallible a proof of the approaching ruin of the Jewish state as the budding of the trees is a proof of the coming summer.

Verse 34. This generation shall not pass] $\eta \gamma\epsilon\nu\epsilon\alpha \alpha\upsilon\tau\eta$, *this race*; i.e. the Jews shall not cease from being a *distinct people*, till all the counsels of God relative to *them* and the *Gentiles* be fulfilled. Some translate $\eta \gamma\epsilon\nu\epsilon\alpha \alpha\upsilon\tau\eta$, *this generation*, meaning the persons who were then living, that they should not die before these signs, &c., took place: but though this was true, as to the calamities that fell upon the Jews, and the destruction of their government, temple, &c., yet as our Lord mentions Jerusalem's continuing to be under the power of the Gentiles till the fulness of the Gentiles should come in, i.e. till all the nations of the world should receive the Gospel of Christ, after which the Jews themselves should be converted unto God, ^{<5125>}**Romans 11:25**, &c., I think it more proper not to restrain its meaning to the few years which preceded the destruction of Jerusalem; but to understand it of the care taken by Divine providence to preserve them as a *distinct people*, and yet to keep them out of their own land, and from their temple service. See on ^{<4133>}**Mark 13:30**. But still it is literally true in reference to the destruction of Jerusalem. John probably lived to see these things come to pass; compare ^{<40628>}**Matthew 16:28**, with ^{<432122>}**John 21:22**; and there were some rabbins alive at the time when Christ spoke these words who lived till the city was destroyed, viz. *Rabban Simeon*, who perished with the city; *R. Jochanan ben Zaccai*, who outlived it; *R. Zadoch*, *R. Ismael*, and others. See *Lightfoot*.

The war began, as Josephus says, Ant. b. xx. c. 11. s. 1, in the second year of the government of *Gessius Florus*, who succeeded *Albinus*, successor of

Porcius Festus, mentioned ^{<4027>}**Acts 24:27**, in the month of *May*, in the *twelfth* year of *Nero*, and the *seventeenth* of *Agrippa*, mentioned Acts 25 and 26, that is, in *May*, A. D. 66.

The temple was burnt August 10, A. D. 70, the same day and month on which it had been burnt by the king of Babylon: Josephus, Ant. b. xx. c. 11. s. 8.

The city was taken September 8, in the second year of the reign of Vespasian, or the year of Christ 70. Ant. b. vi. c. 10.

That was the end of the siege of Jerusalem, which began, as Josephus several times observes, about the fourteenth day of the month *Nisan*, or our *April*. See War, b. v. c. 3. s. 1, c. 13. s. 7; b. vi. c. 9. s. 3.

Dr. Lardner farther remarks, There is also an ancient inscription to the honour of Titus, “who, by his father’s directions and counsels, had subdued the Jewish nation and destroyed Jerusalem, which had never been destroyed by any generals, kings, or people, before.” The inscription may be seen in GRUTER, vol. i. p. 244. It is as follows:-

IMP. TITO. CÆSARI. DIVI. VESPASIANI. F
VESPASIANO. AUG. PONTIFICI. MAXIMO
TRIB. POT. X. IMP. XVII. COS. VIII. P. P.
PRINCIPI. SUO. S. P. Q. R.
QUOD. PRÆCEPTIS. PATRIS. CONSILIISQUE. ET
AUSPICIIS. GENTEM. JUDÆORUM. DOMUIT. ET
URBEM. HIEROSOLYMAM. OMNIBUS. ANTE. SE
DUCIBUS. REGIBUS. GENTIBUSQUE. AUT. FRUSTRA.
PETITAM. AUT. OMNINO. INTENTATAM. DELEVIT.

For this complete conquest of Jerusalem, Titus had a triumphal arch erected to his honour, which still exists. It stands on the *Via Sacra*, leading from the forum to the amphitheatre. On it are represented the spoils of the temple of God, such as the golden table of the show-bread, the golden candlestick with its seven branches, the ark of the covenant, the two golden trumpets, &c., &c.; for a particular account see the note on ^{<12531>}**Exodus 25:31**. On this arch, a correct model of which, taken on the spot, now stands before me, is the following inscription:-

SENATUS
POPULUSQUE ROMANUS

DIVO TITO. DIVI VESPASIANI. F
VESPASIANO AUGUSTO.

“*The Senate and People of Rome, to the Divine Titus, son of the Divine Vespasian; and to Vespasian the Emperor.*”

On this occasion, a medal was struck with the following inscription round a laureated head of the emperor:-*IMP.erator J.ulus CÆS.ar VESP.asianus AUG.ustus. P.ontifex M.aximus, TR.ibunitia, P.otestate P.ater P.atrice CO.nS.ul VIII.*-On the obverse are represented a *palm* tree, the emblem of the land of Judæa; the emperor with a *trophy* standing on the left; *Judea*, under the figure of a distressed woman, sitting at the foot of the tree weeping, with her head bowed down, supported by her left hand, with the legend *JUDÆA CAPTA. S.enatus C.onsultus.* at the bottom. This is not only an extraordinary fulfilment of our Lord’s prediction, but a literal accomplishment of a prophecy delivered about 800 years before, ^{<2136>}**Isaiah 3:26**, *And she, desolate, shall sit upon the ground.*

Verse 36. But of that day and hour] ωρα, here, is translated *season* by many eminent critics, and is used in this sense by both sacred and profane authors. As the *day* was not known, in which Jerusalem should be invested by the Romans, therefore our Lord advised his disciples to pray that it might not be on a *Sabbath*; and as the *season* was not known, therefore they were to pray that it might not be in the *winter*; ^{<1131>}**Matthew 24:20**. See Clarke on ^{<1132>}**Mark 13:32**”.

Verses 37. - 38. As the days of Noah-they were eating and drinking] That is, they spent their time in rapine, luxury, and riot. The design of these verses seems to be, that the desolation should be as general as it should be unexpected.

Verse 39. And knew not] *They considered not*-did not lay Noah’s warning to heart, till it was too late to profit by it: so *shall it be*-and so it *was* in this coming of the Son of man.

Verses 40. - 41. Then shall two men-two women-one shall be taken, and the other left.] The meaning seems to be, that so general should these calamities be, that no *two persons*, wheresoever found, or about whatsoever employed, should be *both* able to effect their escape; and that *captivity* and the *sword* should have a complete triumph over this unhappy people.

Two women shall be **grinding**] Women alone are still employed in grinding the corn in the east; and it is only when despatch is required, or the uppermost millstone is heavy, that a *second* woman is added. See Wakefield, and Harmer, Obs. vol. i. 253. That they were formerly thus employed, see ^{<2116>}**Exodus 11:5**, and the note there. See also ^{<2370>}**Isaiah 47:2**.

Verse 42. Watch therefore] Be always on your guard, that you may not be taken unawares, and that you may be properly prepared to meet God in the way either of *judgment* or *mercy*, whensoever he may come. This advice the followers of Christ took, and therefore they escaped; the miserable Jews rejected it, and were destroyed. Let us learn wisdom by the things which they suffered.

Verse 43. If the good man of the house had known] “As a *master* of a *family* who expected a *thief* at *any time* of the *night*, would take care to be *awake*, and ready to protect his house; so do ye, who know that the Son of man *will* come. Though the *day* and *hour* be *uncertain*, continue *always* in a state of *watchfulness*, that he may not come upon you *unawares*.”

WAKEFIELD.

Verse 45. Who then is a faithful and wise servant] All should live in the same expectation of the coming of Christ, which a servant has with respect to the return of his master, who, in departing for a season, left the management of his affairs to him; and of which management he is to give an exact account on his master’s return.

Here is an abstract of the duties of a minister of Christ.

1. He is appointed, not by himself, but by the vocation and mission of *his Master*.
2. He must look on himself, not as the *master* of the family, but as the *servant*.
3. He must be scrupulously *faithful* and exact in fulfilling the commands of his Master.
4. His *fidelity* must be ever accompanied by *wisdom* and *prudence*.
5. He must give the domestics—the sacred family, their food; and this food must be such as to afford them *true nourishment*. And

6. This must be done in *its season*. There are certain portions of the bread of life which lose their effect by being administered out of proper season, or to improper persons.

Verse 46. Blessed is that servant] His blessedness consists in his master's approbation.

Verse 47. He shall make him ruler over all his goods.] O heavenly privilege of a faithful minister of Christ! He shall receive from God a power to dispense all the blessings of the new covenant; and his word shall ever be accompanied with the demonstration of the Holy Ghost to the hearts of all that hear it. Much of a preacher's *usefulness* may be lost by his *unfaithfulness*.

Verse 48. But, and if that evil servant] Here are three characters of a bad minister. 1. He has little or no faith in the *speedy coming* of Christ, either to *punish* for *wickedness*, or to *pardon* and *sanctify* those who believe. It may be, he does not outwardly profess this, but he says it in his *heart*, and God searches his heart, and knows that he professes to teach what he does not believe. 2. He governs with an absolute dominion, oppressing his colleagues and doing violence to the followers of Christ. *And shall begin to smite*, &c. 3. He leads an irregular life does not love the company of the children of God, but *eats* and *drinks with the drunkards*, preferring the tables of the great and the rich, whose god is their belly, and thus *feeds himself without fear*. Great God! save thine inheritance from being ravaged by such wolves!

Verse 50. The lord of that servant] Here are *three* punishments which answer to the *three* characteristics of the *bad minister*. 1. A sudden death, and the weight of God's judgments falling upon him, without a moment to avert it: this answers to his *infidelity* and *forgetfulness*. *He shall come in a day in which he looked not for him*. 2. A *separation* from the communion of saints, and from all the gifts which he has abused: this answers to the abuse of his authority in the Church of Christ. 3. He shall have tears and eternal pains, in company with all such hypocrites as himself: and this answers to his voluptuous life, pampering the flesh at the expense of his soul.

Verse 51. Cut him asunder] This refers to an ancient mode of punishment used in several countries. Isaiah is reported to have been *sawed ASUNDER*. That it was an ancient mode of punishment is evident from what Herodotus

says: that *Sabacus*, king of Ethiopia, had a vision, in which he was commanded *μεσους διαταμειν*, *to cut in two*, all the Egyptian priests, lib. ii. And in lib. vii. where Xerxes ordered one of the sons of Pythius *μεσον διαταμειν*, *to be cut in two*, and one half placed on each side of the way, that his army might pass through between them. See Raphelius also, in his notes from Herodotus and Polybius. This kind of punishment was used among the Persians: see ^{<27018>}**Daniel 2:5; 3:29**. Story of Susannah, ver. 55, 59. See also ^{<101231>}**2 Samuel 12:31**, and ^{<131018>}**1 Chronicles 20:3**. It may also have reference to that mode of punishment in which the different members were chopped off seriatim, first the *feet*, then the *hands*, next the *legs*, then the *arms*, and lastly the *head*. This mode of punishment is still in use among the *Chinese*. But we find an exact parallel among the Turks, in the following passage from W. Lithgow's Travels, p. 153. London 4to. edit. "If a Turk should happen to kill another Turk, his punishment is thus: After he is adjudged to death, he is brought forth to the market place; and a blocke being brought hither of four foot high, the malifactor is stript naked, and then laid thereon with his belly downward; they draw in his middle together so small with running cords that they strike his body a-two with one blow: his hinder parts they cast to be eaten by hungry dogs kept for the same purpose; and the forequarters and head they throw into a grievous fire, made there for the same end. And this is the punishment for manslaughter."

This is the very same punishment, and for the same offence, as that mentioned by our Lord, the killing of a fellow servant-one of the same nation, and of the same religion.

THE reader has no doubt observed, in the preceding chapter, a series of the most striking and solemn predictions, fulfilled in the most literal, awful, and dreadful manner. Christ has foretold the ruin of the Jewish people, and the destruction of their polity; and in such a circumstantial manner as none else could do, but He, under whose eye are all events, and in whose hands are the government and direction of all things. Indeed he rather *declared* what *he would do*, than *predicted* what *should come to pass*. And the *fulfilment* has been as *circumstantial* as the *prediction*. Does it not appear that the *predicted point* was so literally referred to by the *occurring fact*, by which it was to have its accomplishment, as to leave no room to doubt the *truth* of the *prediction*, or the *certainty* of the event by which it was *fulfilled*? Thus the wisdom of God, as also his justice and providence, have had a plenary manifestation.

But this *wisdom* appears, farther, in preserving such a *record* of the *prediction*, and such *evidence* of its *accomplishment*, as cannot possibly be doubted. The *New Testament*, given by the inspiration of God, and handed down uncorrupted from father to son, by both friends and enemies, perfect in its credibility and truth, inexpugnable in its evidences, and astonishingly circumstantial in details of future occurrences, which the wisdom of God alone could foreknow—that New Testament is the *record* of these predictions. The *history* of the *Romans*, written by so many hands; the *history* of the *Jews*, written by one of *themselves*; *triumphal arches*, *coins*, *medals*, and *public monuments* of different kinds, are the *evidence* by which the fulfilment of the *record* is demonstrated. Add to this the *preservation* of the Jewish people; a people scattered through all nations, yet subsisting as a *distinct body*, without *temple*, *sacrifices*, or *political* government; and who, while they attempt to suppress the truth, yet reluctantly stand forth as an unimpeachable *collateral* evidence, that the solemn record, already alluded to, is *strictly* and *literally* true! Who that has ever consulted the Roman historians of the reigns of Vespasian and Titus, the history of Josephus, and the 24th chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel, and who knows any thing of the *present state* of the Jews over the face of the earth, or even of those who sojourn in England, can doubt for a moment the truth of this Gospel, or the infinite and all-comprehensive knowledge of Him who is its author! Here then is one portion of Divine Revelation that is incontrovertibly and absolutely proved to be the *truth of God*. Reader! if he, who, while he predicted the ruin of this disobedient and refractory people, *wept* over their city and its inhabitants, has so, minutely fulfilled the *threatenings* of his *justice* on the unbelieving and disobedient, will he not as *circumstantially* fulfil the *promises* of his grace to all them that believe? The existence of his revelation, the continuance of a Christian Church upon earth, the certainty that there is one individual saved from his sins by the grace of the Gospel, and walking worthy of his vocation are continued proofs and evidences that he is still the same; that he will fulfil every jot and tittle of that word on which he has caused thee to trust; and save to the uttermost all that come unto the Father by him. The word of the Lord endureth for ever; and they who trust in him shall never be confounded.

ST. MATTHEW

CHAPTER 25.

The parable of the ten virgins, five of whom were wise, and five foolish, 1-12. The necessity of being constantly prepared to appear before God, 13. The parable of the talents, 14-30. The manner in which God shall deal with the righteous and the wicked in the judgment of the great day, 31-46.

NOTES ON CHAP. 25.

Verse 1. Then shall the kingdom of heaven] The state of Jews and professing Christians—the state of the visible Church at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem, and in the day of judgment: for the parable appears to relate to both those periods. And particularly at the time in which Christ shall come to judge the world, it shall appear what kind of reception his Gospel has met with. This parable, or something very like it, is found in the Jewish records: so in a treatise entitled RESHITH CHOCMAH, *the beginning of wisdom*, we read thus: “Our wise men of blessed memory say, Repent whilst thou hast strength to do it, whilst thy *lamp burns*, and thy *oil is not extinguished*; for if thy *lamp be gone out*, thy *oil* will profit thee nothing.” Our doctors add, in MEDRASH: “The holy blessed God said to Israel, My sons, repent whilst the gates of repentance stand open; for I receive a gift at present, but when I shall sit in judgment, in the age to come, I will receive none.” Another parable, mentioned by *Kimchi*, on ^{צפ"ב} **Isaiah 65:13**. “Rabbi Yuchanan, the son of Zachai, spoke a parable concerning a *king*, who *invited* his servants, but set them no time to come: the *prudent* and *wary* among them *adorned* themselves and, standing at the door of the king’s house, said, Is any thing wanting in the house of the king? (*i.e.* Is there any work to be done?) But the *foolish* ones that were among them went away, and working said, When shall the feast be in which there is no labour? Suddenly the king sought out his servants: those who were *adorned entered in*, and they who were still polluted entered in also. The king was *glad* when he met the *prudent*, but he was *angry* when he met the *foolish*: he said, Let the *prudent sit down* and *eat*—let the others *stand* and *look on*.” Rabbi Eliezer said, “Turn to God one day before your death.” His disciples said, “How can a man know the day of his death?” He answered them, “Therefore you should turn to God *to-day*, perhaps you

may die *to-morrow*; thus every day will be employed in returning.” See *Kimchi* in ^{<23513>}**Isaiah 65:13.**

Virgins] Denoting the *purity* of the Christian doctrine and character. In this parable, the *bridegroom* is generally understood to mean *Jesus Christ*. The *feast*, that state of felicity to which he has promised to raise his genuine followers. The *wise*, or *prudent*, and *foolish virgins*, those who *truly enjoy*, and those who *only profess* the *purity* and *holiness* of his religion. The *oil*, the grace and salvation of God, or that faith which works by love. The *vessel*, the *heart* in which this *oil* is contained. The *lamp*, the profession of enjoying the burning and shining light of the Gospel of Christ. *Going forth*; the whole of their sojourning upon earth.

Verse 2. Five of them were wise] Or, *provident*, φρονιμοι—they took care to make a proper provision beforehand, and left nothing to be done in the last moment.

Five were foolish] μωροι, which might be translated *careless*, is generally rendered *foolish*; but this does not agree so well with φρονιμοι, *provident*, or *prudent*, in the first clause, which is the proper meaning of the word. μωρος in the Etymologicon, is thus defined, μη ορα το δεον, *he who sees not what is proper or necessary*. These did not see that it was necessary to have *oil in their vessels*, (the salvation of God in their souls,) as well as a burning *lamp* of religious profession, ^{<41213>}**Matthew 25:3, 4.**

Verse 4. Took oil in their vessels] They not only had a sufficiency of oil in their lamps, but they carried a *vessel* with oil to recruit their lamps, when it should be found expedient. This the *foolish* or *improvident* neglected to do: hence, when the oil that was in their lamps burned out, they had none to pour into the lamp to maintain the flame.

Verse 5. The bridegroom tarried] The coming of the bridegroom to an individual may imply his death: his coming to the world—the final judgment. The *delay*—the time from a man’s birth till his death, in the first case; in the second, the time from the *beginning* to the *end* of the world.

Slumbered and slept.] Or, ενυσταξαν και εκαθευδον, *they became drowsy and fell asleep*. As sleep is frequently used in the sacred writings for *death*, so *drowsiness*, which *precedes* sleep, may be considered as pointing out the *decays* of the constitution, and the *sicknesses* which precede death. The other explanations which are given of this place must

be unsatisfactory to every man who is not warped by some point in his creed, which must be supported at every expense. Carelessness disposed them to drowsiness, drowsiness to sleep, deep sleep, which rendered them as unconscious of their danger as they were before inattentive to their duty. The Anglo-Saxon has hit the meaning of the original well-[Anglo-Saxon] of which my old MS. Bible gives a literal version, in the English of the 14th century: *forsothe-alle nappeden and sleptyn.*

Verse 6. At midnight there was a cry] The Jewish weddings were generally celebrated in the night; yet they usually began at the rising of the evening star; but in this case there was a more than ordinary *delay*.

Behold, the bridegroom cometh] What an awful thing to be summoned to appear before the Judge of quick and dead! The following is an affecting relation, and *fas est ab hoste doceri*. “When Rabbi Jochanan ben Zachai was sick, his disciples came to visit him; and when he saw them he began to weep. They say to him, Rabbi! the light of Israel, the right hand pillar, the strong hammer, wherefore dost *thou* weep? He answered them, If they were carrying me before a king of flesh and blood, who is here today, and to-morrow in the grave; who, if he were angry with me, his anger would not last for ever: if he put me in prison, his prison would not be everlasting; if he condemned me to death, that death would not be eternal; whom I could soothe with words or bribe with riches; yet even in these circumstances I should weep. But now I am going before the King of kings, the holy and the blessed God, who liveth and endureth for ever and for ever; who, if he be angry with me, his anger will last for ever; if he put me in prison, his bondage will be everlasting; if he condemn me to death, that death will be eternal; whom I cannot soothe with words nor bribe with riches: when, farther, there are before me *two ways*, the one to hell and the other to paradise, and I know not in which they are carrying me, shall I not weep?” TALMUD *Beracoth*, fol. 29.

Verse 7. Trimmed their lamps.] *εκοσμησαν*, *adorned* them. I have seen some of the eastern lamps or lanterns, the body of which was a skeleton of wood and threads, covered with a very thin *transparent membrane*, or very fine *gauze*, and *decorated* with *flowers* painted on it. It is probable that the nuptial lamps were highly decorated in this way; though the act mentioned here may mean no more than preparing the lamps for burning.

The following account of the celebration of a wedding in Persia, taken from the *Zend Avesta*, vol. ii. p. 558, &c., may cast some light on this place.

“The day appointed for the marriage, about *five o’clock in the evening*, the bridegroom comes to the house of the bride, where the *mobed*, or priest, pronounces for the first time the nuptial benediction. He then brings her to his own house, gives her some refreshment, and afterwards the assembly of her relatives and friends reconduct her to her father’s house. When she arrives, the *mobed* repeats the nuptial benediction, which is generally done about MIDNIGHT; *immediately after*, the bride, accompanied with a part of her attending troop, (the rest having returned to their own homes,) is reconducted to the house of her husband, where she generally arrives about *three o’clock in the morning*. Nothing can be more brilliant than these nuptial solemnities in India. Sometimes the assembly consists of not less than two thousand persons, all richly dressed in gold and silver tissue; the friends and relatives of the bride, encompassed with their domestics, are all mounted on horses richly harnessed. The goods, wardrobe, and even the bed of the *bride*, are carried in triumph. The *husband*, richly mounted and magnificently dressed, is accompanied by *his* friends and relatives, the friends of the bride following him in covered carriages. At intervals, during the procession, *guns* and *rockets* are *fired*, and the spectacle is rendered grand beyond description, by a prodigious number of LIGHTED TORCHES, and by the SOUND of a *multitude of musical instruments*.”

There are certain *preparations* which most persons believe they must make at the approach of death; but, alas! it is often too late. The *lamp* is *defiled*, the *light* almost *out*, and the *oil expended*; and what *adorning* is a wretched sinner, struggling in the agonies of death, capable of preparing for his guilty soul!

Verse 8. Our lamps are gone out.] *σβεννυονται*, *are going out*. So then it is evident that they were *once* lighted. They had once hearts *illuminated* and *warmed* by faith and love; but they had *backslidden* from the salvation of God, and now they are excluded from heaven, because, through their *carelessness*, they have let the light that was in them become *darkness*, and have not applied in *time* for a *fresh supply* of the salvation of God.

A Jewish rabbin supposes God addressing man thus: *-I give thee my lamp, give thou me thy lamp; if thou keep my lamp I will keep thy lamp; but if thou extinguish my lamp I will extinguish thy lamp.* That is, I give thee my WORD and testimonies to be a *light* unto thy feet and a *lanthorn* to thy steps, to *guide* thee safely through life; give me thy SOUL and all its concerns, that I may *defend* and *save* thee from all evil: *keep* my WORD, *walk* in my ways, and I will *keep* thy SOUL that nothing shall injure it; but if thou *trample* under foot my laws, I will cast thy *soul* into *outer darkness*.

Verse 9. Lest there be not enough for us and you] These had all been *companions* in the Christian course, and there was a time when they might have been *helpful* to each other; but that *time* is now *past* for ever-none has a particle of grace to spare, not even to help the soul of the dearest relative! The grace which every man receives is just enough to save his *own soul*; he has no *merits* to *bequeath* to the *Church*; no work of *supererogation* which can be placed to the account of another.

Go ye rather to them that sell, and buy] By leaving out the particle $\delta\epsilon$, *but*, (on the indisputable authority of ABDGHKS, and HV, of Matthai, with sixteen others, the *Armenian*, *Vulgate*, and all the *Itala* but one,) and transposing a very little the members of the sentence, the sense is more advantageously represented, and the reading smoother: *Rather go to them that sell, and buy for yourselves, lest there be not enough for us and you.* *Beza*, *Mill*, *Bengel*, and *Griesbach*, approve of the omission of the particle $\delta\epsilon$.

Verse 10. While they went to buy, the bridegroom came] What a dismal thing it is, not to discover the emptiness of one's heart of all that is good, till it is too late to make any successful application for relief! God alone knows how many are thus deceived.

And they that were ready] *They who were prepared*-who had not only a burning *lamp* of an evangelical profession, but had *oil* in their *vessels*, the *faith* that works by *love* in their hearts, and their lives *adorned* with all the fruits of the Spirit.

The door was shut.] Sinners on a death-bed too often meet with those deceitful merchants, who promise them salvation for a *price* which is of *no value* in the sight of God. *Come unto me*, says Jesus, *and buy*: there is no salvation but through his blood-no hope for the sinner but that which is founded upon his sacrifice and death. *The door was shut*-dreadful and fatal

words! No *hope* remains. Nothing but *death* can shut this door; but death may surprise us in our sins, and then despair is our only portion.

Verse 11. Afterwards came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord] Earnest *prayer*, when used in *time*, may do much good: but it appears, from this parable, that there may come a time when prayer even to Jesus may be too late!-viz. when *the door is shut*-when death has separated the body and the soul.

Verse 12. I know you not.] As if he had said, Ye are not of my company-ye were neither with the bride nor the bridegroom: ye slept while the others were in procession. I do not *acknowledge* you for my disciples-ye are not like him who is *love*-ye refused to receive his grace-ye sinned it away when ye had it; now you are necessarily excluded from that kingdom where nothing but *love* and *purity* can dwell.

Verse 13. Watch therefore] If to *watch* be to employ ourselves *chiefly* about the business of our salvation, alas! how few of those who are called *Christians* are there who do *watch*! How many who *slumber*! How many who are asleep! How many seized with a *lethargy*! How many *quite dead*!

Wherein the Son of man cometh.] These words are omitted by many excellent MSS., most of the versions, and several of the fathers. *Griesbach* has left them out of the text: *Grotius, Hammond, Mill, and Bengel*, approve of the omission.

Verse 14. Called his own servants] God never makes the children of men *proprietors* of his goods. *They* are formed by his power, and upheld by his bounty; and they hold their lives and their goods, as in many of our ancient tenures, *quamdiu domino placuerit-at the will of their Lord*.

Verse 15. Unto one he gave five talents-to every man according to his several ability] The duties men are called to perform are *suit*ed to their situations, and the *talents* they receive. The *good* that any man has he has *received from God*, as also the *ability* to *improve* that good. God's graces and temporal mercies are *suit*ed to the *power* which a man has of *improving* them. To give eminent gifts to persons incapable of properly improving them, would be only to lead into a snare. The talent which each man has suits his *own* state best; and it is only *pride* and *insanity* which lead him to *desire* and *envy* the graces and talents of another. *Five* talents would be *too much* for some men: *one* talent would be *too little*. He who

receives *much*, must make *proportionate* improvement; and, from him who has received *little*, the improvement only of that *little* will be required. As *five talents*, in one case, are sufficient to answer the *purpose* for which they were given; so also are *two* and *one*.

The man who improves the grace he has received, however *small*, will as surely get to the kingdom of God, as he who has received most from his master, and improved all.

There is a parable something like this in *Sohar Chadash*, fol. 47: "A certain king gave a deposit to three of his servants: the first kept it; the second lost it; the third spoiled one part of it, and gave the rest to another to keep. After some time, the king came and demanded the deposit. Him who had preserved it, the king praised, and made him governor of his house. Him who had lost it, he delivered to utter destruction, so that both his name and his possessions were blotted out. To the third, who had spoiled a part and given the rest to another to keep, the king said, Keep him, and let him not go out of my house, till we see what the other shall do to whom he has entrusted a part: if he shall make a proper use of it, this man shall be restored to liberty; if not, he also shall be punished." See *Schoettgen*. I have had already occasion to remark how greatly every Jewish parable is improved that comes through the hands of Christ.

In this parable of our Lord, four things may be considered:-

- I. The *master* who distributes the talents.
- II. The *servants* who *improved* their talents.
- III. The *servant* who *buried* his talent. And
- IV. His *punishment*.

1. The master's *kindness*. The servants *had* nothing-*deserved* nothing-*had no claim* on their master, yet he, in his KINDNESS, *delivers unto them his goods*, not for his *advantage*, but for their *comfort* and *salvation*.

2. The master distributes these goods *diversely*;-*giving to one five, to another, two, and to another one*. No person can complain that he has been *forgotten*; the master gives to *each*. None can complain of the *diversity* of the gifts; it is the *master* who has done it. The master has an absolute right over his own goods, and the servants cannot find fault with the distribution. He who has *little* should not *envy* him who has received *much*, for he has the *greater labour*, and the *greater account* to give. He who has *much* should not despise him who has *little*, for the *sovereign master* has

made the *distinction*; and his *little*, suited to the *ability* which God has given him, and fitted to the *place* in which God's providence has fixed him, is sufficiently calculated to answer the *purpose* of the *master*, in the salvation of the servant's soul.

3. The master distributes his talents with WISDOM. He gave to each *according to his several ability*, i.e. to the *power* he had to *improve* what was given. It would not be *just* to make a servant *responsible* for what he is *naturally incapable* of *managing*; and it would not be *proper* to give *more* than could be *improved*. The powers which men have, God has given; and as he best knows the extent of these powers, so he suits his graces and blessings to them in the most wise, and effectual way. Though he may *make one vessel for honour*, (i.e. a more honourable place or office,) *and another for dishonour*, (a less honourable office,) yet *both* are for the *master's use*-both are *appointed* and *capacitated to show forth his glory*.

II. The servants who *improved* their talents.

These persons are termed **δουλοι**, *slaves*, such as were the property of the master, who might dispose of them as he pleased. *Then he that had received the five talents went and traded,* ^{<41516>} **Matthew 25:16.**

1. The work was *speedily* begun-*as soon* as the master gave the talents and departed, *so soon* they began to labour. There is not a moment to be lost-every moment has its grace, and every grace has its employment, and every thing is to be done for eternity.

2. The work was *perseveringly* carried on; *after a long time the lord of those servants cometh,* ^{<41519>} **Matthew 25:19.** The master was *long* before he returned, but they did not *relax*. The longer time, the greater improvement. God gives every man just time enough to live, in this world, to glorify his Maker, and to get his soul saved. Many *begin* well, and *continue* faithful for a time-but how few *persevere to the end*! Are there none who seem to have outlived their glory, their character, their usefulness?

3. Their work was crowned with *success*. They *doubled* the sum which they had received. Every grace of God is capable of great improvement. Jesus himself, the pure, immaculate Jesus, *grew in wisdom and favour with God,* ^{<4152>} **Luke 2:52.**

4. They were *ready* to give in a *joyful* account when their master came and called for them. 1st. They come without *delay*: they *expected* his coming; and it was with an eye to *this* that they *continued* their labour-they endured as seeing him who is invisible. 2dly. They come without *fear*; the master before whom they appear has always loved them, and given them the fullest proofs of his affection for them: his love to them has begotten in them love to him; and their *obedience* to his orders sprung from the love they bore to him. He that loveth me, says Jesus, will *keep* my words. 3d. They render up their accounts without *confusion*: he who received *five* brought *five* others; and he who had received *two* brought *two* more: nothing was to be *done* when their master called; all their business was *fully prepared*. 4th. They gave up *every thing* to their master, without attempting to *appropriate* any thing. Their ability was *his*, the talents *his*, and the continued *power* to improve them, *his*. All is of God, and all must be returned to him.

5. Their *recompense* from their gracious master. 1st. They receive *praise*. *Well done, good and faithful servants,* ^{<1022>}**Matthew 25:21**. What a glorious thing to have the *approbation* of God, and the testimony of a good conscience! They were *good*, pure and upright within-*faithful*, using to God's glory the blessings he had given. 2d. They receive gracious *promises*. *Ye have been faithful over a little, I will set you over much*. These promises refer not only to a *future* glory, but to an *increase* of God's grace and mercy *here*; for the more faithfully a man improves what God has already given him, the more he shall have from his gracious Master: for he giveth *more grace*, till he fills the faithful soul with his own *fulness*. 3d. They receive GLORY. *Enter into the joy of your Lord*. As ye were *partakers* of my nature on *earth*, be ye *sharers* of my glory in *heaven*. The joy, the happiness wherewith I am happy, shall be your eternal portion! O, what is all we can *do*, all we can *suffer*, even the most *lingering* and *cruel martyrdom*, in comparison of this unbounded, eternal joy!

III. Of the servant who *buried* his talent.

He that had received one went and digged in the earth, and hid his Lord's money, ^{<12518>}**Matthew 25:18**.

1. See the *ingratitude* of this servant. His master gave him a talent, *capable* of being improved to his own present and eternal advantage; but he slights the mercy of his lord.

2. See his *idleness*. Rather than exert himself to *improve* what he has received, he goes and *hides* it.

3. See his gross *error*. He DIGS to *hide it*-puts himself to *more trouble* to render the mercy of God to him of none effect, than he would have had in combating and *conquering* the world, the devil, and the flesh.

4. See his *injustice*. He *takes* his master's money, and neither *improves* nor *designs* to improve it, even while he is *living* on and *consuming* that bounty which would have been sufficient for a *faithful servant*. How much of this *useless lumber* is to be found in the Church of Christ! But suppose the man be a *preacher*-what a terrible account will *he* have to give to God-consuming the *provision* made for a *faithful pastor*, and so *burying*, or *misusing* his talent, as to do *no good*, to immortal souls!

5. Hear the *absurdity* of his *reasoning*. *Lord, I knew thee that thou art a hard* (or *avaricious*) *man, reaping where thou hast not sown, &c.,*

~~1024~~ **Matthew 25:24**. See this meaning of **σκληρος** proved by *Kypke*. The wicked excuse of this faithless servant *confuted itself* and *condemned him*. Nevertheless it is on this very *model* that sinners in general seek to *justify* themselves; and the conclusion turns always against them. *I knew thee to be a hard man*. How awfully *deceived* and deeply *depraved* must that person be, who not only attempts to *excuse* his follies, but to *charge* his crimes on GOD himself!

I was afraid-Why? Because thou wert an *enemy* to thy *soul*, and to thy *God*.-*I was afraid-of what?* that he would require *more* than he did *give*. How could this be? Did he not give thee the talent *freely*, to show thee his *benevolence*? And did he not suit it to thy *ability*, that he might show thee his *wisdom, justice, and goodness*, in not making thee *responsible* for *more* than thou couldst *improve*?

IV. Behold the awful *punishment* of this faithless servant.

1. He is *reproached*. *Thou wicked and slothful servant! Wicked*-in thy heart: *slothful*-in thy work. THOU *knewest that I reap where I sowed not*. Thou art condemned by thy own mouth-*whose* is the unemployed *talent*? Did I not give thee this? And did I require the improvement of *two* when I gave thee but *one*?-Thou knowest I did not.

2. He is *stripped* of what he *possessed*. *Take-the talent from him*. O terrible word!-Remove the *candlestick* from that *slothful, worldly-minded*

Church: take away the *inspirations* of the Holy Spirit from that *lukewarm, Christless Christian*, who only lives to resist them and render them of none effect. *Dispossess* that *base, man-pleasing minister* of his ministerial gifts; let his *silver* become *brass*, and his *fine gold*, *dross*. He loved the *present* world more than the *eternal* world, and the *praise* of *men* more than the *approbation* of *God*. *Take away the talent from him!*

3. He is *punished* with an everlasting *separation* from God and the glory of his power. *Cast forth the unprofitable servant*, ^{<1253>}**Matthew 25:30**. Let him have nothing but *darkness*, who refused to walk in the *light*: let him have nothing but *misery-weeping and gnashing of teeth*, who has refused the *happiness* which God provided for him.

Reader, if the *careless virgin*, and the *unprofitable servant*, against whom no *flagrant* iniquity is *charged*, be punished with an *outer darkness*, with a *hell of fire*: of what *soerer* punishment must he be judged worthy, who is a *murderer*, an *adulterer*, a *fornicator*, a *blasphemer*, a *thief*, a *liar*, or in any respect an *open violater* of the *laws* of God? The *careless virgins*, and the *unprofitable servants*, were *saints* in comparison of millions, who are, notwithstanding, dreaming of an endless heaven, when fitted only for an endless hell!

Verse 27. With usury.] **σὺν τόκῳ**, with its produce-not usury; for that is *unlawful* interest, more than the money can properly produce.

Verse 29. Unto every one that hath shall be given] See Clarke on ^{<10312>}**Matthew 13:12**".

Verse 30. Weeping and gnashing of teeth.] See Clarke ^{<10812>}**Matthew 8:12**", a note necessary for the illustration of this, and the foregoing parable.

Verse 31. When the Son of man shall come] This must be understood of Christ's coming at the *last day*, to judge mankind: though all the preceding part of the chapter may be applied also to the destruction of Jerusalem.

Holy angels] The word **ἄγιοι** is omitted by many excellent manuscripts, versions, and fathers. *Mill* and *Bengel* approve of the omission, and *Griesbach* has left it out of the text. It is supposed by some that our Lord will have *other* angels (messengers) with him in that day, besides the *holy* ones. The *evil* angels may be in attendance to take, as their prey, those who shall be found on his left hand.

The throne of his glory] That glorious throne on which his glorified human nature is seated, at the right hand of the Father.

Verse 32. All nations] Literally, *all the nations*-all the *Gentile* world; the Jews are necessarily included, but they were spoken of in a particular manner in the preceding chapter.

He shall separate them] Set each kind *apart* by themselves.

As a shepherd divideth, &c.] It does not appear that *sheep* and *goats* were ever *penned* or *housed* together, though they might feed in the same pasture; yet even this was not done but in separate flocks; so Virgil, *Eclog.* vii. v. 2.

*Compulerantque greges Corydon et Thyrsis in unum;
Thyrsis OVES, Corydon distentas lacte CAPELLAS.*

*“Thyrsis and Corydon drove their flocks together:
Thyrsin his sheep; and Corydon his goats, their udders distended with milk.”*

These two shepherds had *distinct* flocks, which fed in the same pasture, but *separately*; and they are only now *driven together*, for the convenience of the two shepherds, during the time of their musical contest.

Verse 33. He shall set the sheep, &c.] The *right hand* signifies, among the rabbins, *approbation* and *eminence*: the *left hand*, *rejection*, and *disapprobation*. Hence in *Sohar Chadash* it is said, “The *right hand* is given, the *left* also is given-to the *Israelites* and the *Gentiles* are given *paradise* and *hell*-this *world*, and the *world to come*.” The *right* and *left* were emblematical of endless beatitude and endless misery among the Romans. Hence Virgil:-

*Hic locus est, partes ubi se via findit in ambas,
Dextera, quæ Ditis magni sub moenia tendit:
Hac iter Elysium nobis; at læva malorum
Exercet poenas, et ad impia Tartara mittit.
Æn. vi. 540.*

*Here in two ample roads the way divides,
The right direct, our destined journey guides,
By Pluto’s palace, to the Elysian plains;
The left to Tartarus, where bound in chains
Loud howl the damn’d in everlasting pains. PITT.*

Of the good and faithful servants he *approves*, and therefore *exalts* them to his *glory*; of the slothful and wicked he *disapproves*, and casts them into *hell*.

SHEEP, which have ever been considered as the emblems of *mildness*, *simplicity*, *patience*, and *usefulness*, represent here the *genuine* disciples of Christ.

GOATS, which are naturally *quarrelsome*, *lascivious*, and excessively *ill-scented*, were considered as the symbols of *riotous*, *profane*, and *impure* men. They here represent all who have lived and died in their sins. See ^{<2647>} **Ezekiel 34:17**, and ^{<3810>} **Zechariah 10:3**.

Verse 34. Ye blessed of my Father] This is the king's address to his followers; and contains the *reason* why they were found in the practice of all righteousness, and were now brought to this state of glory—they were *blessed*—came as *children*, and received the *benediction* of the *Father*, and *became*, and *continued* to be, members of the heavenly *family*.

Inherit] The inheritance is only for the *children* of the family—if *sons*, then *heirs*, ^{<8007>} **Galatians 4:7**, but not otherwise. The sons only shall enjoy the father's *estate*.

Prepared for you] That is, the kingdom of glory is designed for *such* as you—you who have received the *blessing* of the *Father*, and were *holy*, *harmless*, *undefiled*, and *separated* from *sinners*.

From the foundation of the world] It was God's *purpose* and *determination* to admit none into his heaven but those who were made partakers of his *holiness*, ^{<38124>} **Hebrews 12:14**. The rabbins say, Seven things were created before the *foundation* of the world. 1. The *law*. 2. *Repentance*. 3. *Paradise*. 4. *Hell*. 5. The *throne of God*. 6. The *temple*; and 7. The *name of the Messiah*.

Verse 35. I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat] Every thing which is done to a follower of Christ, whether it be *good* or *evil*, he considers as done to himself, see ^{<4054>} **Matthew 25:40**; ^{<4004>} **Acts 9:4, 5**; ^{<3860>} **Hebrews 6:10**. Of all the fruits of the Spirit, none are mentioned here but those that spring from *love*, or *mercy*; because these give men the nearest conformity to God. Jesus had said, *Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy*; and he here shows how this promise shall be fulfilled. The rabbins say: "As often as a poor man presents himself at thy door, the holy blessed

God stands at his right hand: if thou give him alms, know that he who stands at his right hand will give thee a reward. But if thou give him not alms, he who stands at his right hand will punish thee.” *Vaiyikra Rabba*, s. 34, fol. 178.

A stranger, and ye took me in] **συνηγάγετε με**, *ye entertained me*: *Kypke* has fully proved that this is the meaning of the original. Literally, **συναγειν** signifies *to gather together*. *Strangers* are sometimes so destitute as to be ready to perish for lack of food and raiment: a supply of these things keeps their souls and bodies *together*, which were about to be separated through lack of the necessaries of life. The word may also allude to a provision made for a *poor family*, which were *scattered abroad*, perhaps begging their bread, and who by the ministry of benevolent people are *collected*, relieved, and put in a way of getting their bread. O blessed work! to be the instruments of preserving human life, and bringing comfort and peace into the habitations of the wretched!

While writing this, (Nov. 13, 1798,) I hear the bells loudly ringing in commemoration of the birth-day of E. *Colson*, Esq., a native of this city, (Bristol,) who spent a long life and an immense fortune in relieving the miseries of the distressed. His works still praise him in the gates; his name is revered, and his birth-day held sacred, among the inhabitants. Who has heard the bells ring in commemoration of the birth of any *deceased hero* or *king*? Of so much more *value*, in the sight even of the multitude, is a life of *public usefulness* than one of *worldly glory* or *secular state*. But how high must such a person rank in the sight of God, who, when Christ in his *representatives* was hungry, gave him food; when thirsty, gave him drink; when naked clothed him; when sick and in prison, visited him! Thou blessed of my Father! come. Thou hast been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, and now thou shalt eternally enjoy the true riches.

The Supreme God is represented in the *Bhagvat Geeta* as addressing mankind, when he had just formed them, thus: “Those who dress their meat *but for themselves*, eat the bread of *sin*.” *Geeta*, p. 46.

Verse 36. I was sick, and ye visited me] Relieving the strangers, and visiting the sick, were in high estimation among the Jews. One of their sayings on this head is worthy of notice: “He who neglects to visit the sick is like him who has shed blood.” That is, as he has neglected, when it was in his power, to *preserve* life, he is as guilty in the sight of the Lord as he is who has committed murder. See *Kypke* in loco.

Verse 37. Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, &c.] This barbarous expression, *an hungered*, should be banished out of the text, wheresoever it occurs, and the simple word *hungry* substituted for it. Whatever is done for Christ's *sake*, is done through Christ's *grace*; and he who does the work attributes to Jesus both the *will* and the *power* by which the work was done, and seeks and expects the kingdom of heaven not as a *reward*, but as a *gift of pure unmerited mercy*. Yet, while workers together with his grace, God attributes to *them* that which they do through his influence, as if they had done it independently of him. God has a right to form what estimate he pleases of the works wrought through himself: but man is never safe except when he attributes all to his Maker.

Verse 40. Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren] The meanest follower of Christ is acknowledged by him as his *brother*! What infinite condescension! Those, whom many would scorn to set with the *dogs* of their flock, are brothers and sisters of the blessed Jesus, and shall soon be set among the *princes* of his people.

Verse 41. Depart from me, ye cursed] Or, *Ye cursed! depart.*-These words are the address of the king to the sinners; and contain the *reason* why they are to be separated from blessedness: *Ye are cursed*, because ye have *sinned*, and *would not come unto me that ye might have life.*-No work of *piety* has proceeded from your *hand*, because the carnal mind, which is enmity against me, reigned in your *heart*; and ye would not have *me* to reign over you. *Depart!* this includes what some have termed the punishment of *loss* or *privation*. Ye cannot, ye, shall not be united to *me*-*Depart!* O terrible word! and yet a worse is to come.

Into everlasting fire] This is the *punishment of sense*. Ye shall not only be *separated* from me, but ye shall be *tormented*, awfully, everlastingly tormented in that place of separation.

Prepared for the devil and his angels] The devil and his angels sinned *before* the creation of the world, and the place of torment was *then* prepared for *them*: it never was designed for *human souls*; but as the wicked are *partakers* with the devil and his angels in their *iniquities*, in their rebellion against God, so it is right that they should be *sharers* with them in their *punishment*. We see here, plainly, *why* sinners are destroyed, not because there was no salvation for them, but because they neglected to *receive* good, and *do* good. As they received not the Christ who was offered to them, so they could not do the work of righteousness which was

required of them. They are *cursed*, because they *refused* to be *blessed*; and they are *dammned*, because they *refused* to be *saved*.

Verse 42. I was an hungered, and ye gave me no meat] I put it in your power to do good, and ye would not. A *variety* of occasions offered themselves to you, but ye neglected them all, so that my *blessings* in your hands, not being *improved*, according to my order, became a *curse* to you.

Verse 43. I was a stranger] If men were sure that Jesus Christ was actually somewhere in the land, in great personal distress, hungry, thirsty, naked, and confined, they would doubtless run unto and relieve him. Now Christ assures us that a man who is hungry, thirsty, naked, &c., is his *representative*, and that whatever we do to such a one he will consider as done to himself; yet this testimony of Christ is not regarded! Well, he will be just when he judges, and righteous when he punishes.

Verse 44. Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, &c.] It is want of *faith* which in general produces *hard-heartedness* to the poor. The man who only sees with eyes of flesh is never likely to discover Christ in the person of a man destitute of the necessaries of life. Some pretend *not to know* the distressed; because they have no desire to relieve them; but we find that this ignorance will not avail them at the bar of God.

Verse 46. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment] No appeal, no remedy, to all eternity! No *end* to the punishment of those whose *final* impenitence manifests in them an eternal *will* and *desire* to sin. By dying in a *settled opposition* to God, they cast themselves into a *necessity* of continuing in an *eternal aversion* from him.

But some are of opinion that this punishment shall have an *end*: this is as likely as that the glory of the righteous shall have an *end*: for the same word is used to express the *duration* of the punishment, **κολασιν αιωνιον**, as is used to express the duration of the state of glory: **ζωην αιωνιον**. I have seen the best things that have been written in favour of the final redemption of damned spirits; but I never saw an answer to the argument against that doctrine, drawn from this verse, but what sound learning and criticism should be ashamed to acknowledge. The original word **αιων** is certainly to be taken here in its proper grammatical sense, *continued being*, **αιειων**, NEVER ENDING. Some have gone a *middle way*, and think that the wicked shall be *annihilated*. This, I think, is contrary to the text; if they *go into punishment*, they *continue to exist*; for that which

ceases to be, ceases to suffer. See Clarke's note on "⁴⁻⁰¹²¹³³Genesis 21:33", where the whole subject is explained.

A very good improvement of the parable of the wise and foolish virgins is made by *Salvian*, a very pious writer of the fifth century, (Epist. ad. Ecclus. Cath. lib. ii.,) the substance of which, in Mr. *Bulkley's* translation, is as follows:-

Ego unum scio, &c. "One thing I know, that the lamps of the foolish virgins are said to have gone out for want of the oil of good works; but thou, whoever thou art, thinkest that thou hast *oil* in *abundance*, and so did they; for, if they had not believed themselves to have had it, they would have provided themselves with it; for since afterwards, as the Lord says, they would gladly have borrowed, and sought it so eagerly, no doubt they would have done so before, had they not been deceived by the confidence of having it. Thou thinkest thyself *wise*, and these did not imagine themselves to be *foolish*: thou thinkest that thy *lamp* has *light*, and they lost their light because they thought they should have it. For why did they prepare their lamps if they did not think they should be *lighted*? In a word, their lamps, I suppose, must have afforded some *degree of light*; for since we read of their being afraid that their lamps should go out, they certainly had something which they feared would be extinguished. Nor was it a groundless fear; their lamps *did go out*, and that pure light of virginity which appeared profited them nothing, for want of a supply of *oil*. From whence we understand that what is but a little, is in a manner nothing. You have therefore need of a lamp plentifully filled, that your light may be lasting. And if those which we light up here for a short time so soon fail, unless copiously supplied with oil, how much must thou stand in need of that thy lamp may shine to eternity?"

This writer was a priest of Marseilles, in 430. He bewailed the profligacy of his times so much, and so pathetically, that he has been styled the *Jeremiah of the fifth century*. Were he still upon earth, he would find equal reason to deplore the wickedness and carelessness of mankind.

From what our Lord has here said, we may see that God indispensably requires of every man to bring forth *good fruit*; and that a *fruitless tree* shall be inevitably cut down, and cast into the fire. Let it be also remarked that God does not here *impute* to his own children the good works which Jesus Christ did *for them*. No! Christ's feeding the multitudes in Judea will not be imputed to them, while persons in their own neighbourhood are

perishing through want, and they have wherewithal to relieve them. He gives them a power that they may glorify his name by it and have, in their own souls, the continued satisfaction which arises from succouring the distressed. Let it be farther remarked, that Christ does not say here that they have *purchased* the eternal life by these good deeds. No! for the *power* to work, and the *means* of working, came both from God. They first had redemption through his blood, and then his Spirit worked in them to *will* and to *do*. They were therefore only *workers together* with him, and could not be said, in any sense of the word, to purchase *God's glory*, with his own *property*. But though God works *in* them, and *by* them, he does not obey *for* them. The works of piety and mercy THEY perform, under the influence and by the aid of his grace. Thus God *preserves* the *freedom* of the human soul, and *secures* his *own glory* at the same time. Let it be remarked, farther, that the punishment inflicted on the foolish virgins, the slothful servant, and the cursed who are separated from God, was not because of their personal crimes; but because they were not *good*, and were not *useful* in the world. Their lives do not appear to have been stained with *crimes*, -but they were not adorned with *virtues*. They are sent to hell because they *did no good*. They were not renewed in the image of God; and hence did not bring forth fruit to his glory. If these *harmless* people are sent to perdition, what must the end be of the *wicked* and *profligate*!

ST. MATTHEW

CHAPTER 26.

Christ predicts his being betrayed and crucified, 1, 2. The chief priests, scribes, and elders consult about his death, 3-5. A woman anoints his head at Bethany, at which the disciples are offended, but Christ vindicates her conduct, 6-13. Judas, for thirty pieces of silver, engages with the chief priests to betray him, 14-16. He eats a passover with his disciples, and assures them of his approaching death, and that one of them would betray him, 17-21. On each asking, Is it I? Christ asserts that Judas is the traitor, 22-25. Having eaten his last supper, he institutes the eucharist, to be observed in his Church as a memorial of his sacrificial death, 26-29. They sing a hymn, go to the mount of Olives, and he again announces his approaching death and resurrection, 30-32. Peter asserts his resolution to be faithful to his Master, and Christ foretells his denial and apostasy, 33-35. He goes to Gethsemane; the transactions there, 36-46. Judas comes with the high priest's mob and betrays him with a kiss, 47-50. Peter cuts off the ear of the high priest's servant; Christ discourses with the multitude, 51-55. The disciples flee, and he is led to Caiaphas, 56, 57. Peter follows at a distance, 58. They seek false witnesses, and question our Lord, who declares himself to be the Christ, 59-64. They accuse him of blasphemy, and abuse him, 65-68. Peter's denial and repentance, 69-75.

NOTES ON CHAP. 26.

Verse 1. **When Jesus had finished all these sayings]** He began these sayings on Mount Olivet, ^{<1240>}**Matthew 24:1**, and continued them till he entered into Bethany, whither he was going.

Verse 2. **The passover]** A feast instituted in Egypt, to commemorate the destroying angel's *passing over* the houses of the Israelites, when he slew the firstborn of the Egyptians. See the whole of this business largely explained in the Notes on ^{<1220>}**Exodus 12:1-27**. This feast began on the fourteenth day of the first moon, in the first month, Nisan, and it lasted only *one* day; but it was immediately followed by the days of *unleavened bread*, which were *seven*, so that the whole lasted eight days, and all the eight days are sometimes called the feast of the passover, and sometimes the *feast* or *days of unleavened bread*. See ^{<1221>}**Luke 22:1-7**. The three most signal benefits vouchsafed to the Israelites were,

1. *The deliverance from the slavery of Egypt*; to commemorate which they kept *the feast of unleavened bread*, and the passover.
2. *The giving of the law*; to commemorate which, they kept *the feast of weeks*.
3. Their sojourning in the wilderness, and entrance into the *promised land*; to commemorate which, they kept *the feast of tabernacles*.

See these largely explained, ^{<12314>}**Exodus 23:14**; ^{<12312>}**Leviticus 23:2-40**.

The Son of man is betrayed, (rather *delivered up*,) to be crucified.] With what amazing calmness and precision does our blessed Lord speak of this awful event! What a proof does he here give of his *prescience* in so correctly predicting it; and of his love in so cheerfully undergoing it! Having *instructed* his disciples and the Jews by his *discourses*, *edified* them by his *example*, *convinced* them by his *miracles*, he now prepares to *redeem* them by his *blood*! These two verses have no proper connection with this chapter, and should be joined to the preceding.

Verse 3. Then assembled together the chief priests] That is, during the two days that preceded the passover.

The high priest, who was called Caiaphas] *Caiaphas* succeeded *Simon*, son of *Camith*, about A. D. 16, or, as Calmet thinks, 25. He married the daughter of *Annas*, who was joined with him in the priesthood. About *two* years after our Lord's crucifixion, *Caiaphas* and *Pilate* were both deposed by *VITELLIUS*, then governor of Syria, and afterwards emperor. *Caiaphas*, unable to bear this disgrace, and the stings of his conscience for the murder of Christ, killed himself about A. D. 35. See Joseph. Ant. b. xviii. c. 2-4.

Verse 4. And consulted that they might take Jesus by subtilty] The providence of God frustrated their artful machinations; and that event which they wished to conduct with the greatest *privacy* and *silence* was transacted with all possible *celebrity*, amidst the thousands who resorted to Jerusalem, at this season, for the keeping of the *passover*. It was, doubtless, of the very first importance that the crucifixion of Christ, which was preparatory to the most essential achievement of Christianity, viz. his resurrection from the grave, should be exhibited before *many witnesses*, and in the most open manner, that infidelity might not attempt, in future, to invalidate the evidences of the Christian religion, by alleging *that these things were done in a corner*. See WAKEFIELD in loco.

Verse 5. Not on the feast day, lest there be an uproar] It was usual for the Jews to punish criminals at the public festivals; but in this case they were afraid of an insurrection, as our Lord had become very popular. The providence of God directed it thus, for the reason given in the preceding note.

He who observes a festival on motives purely *human* violates it in his heart, and is a *hypocrite* before God. It is likely they feared the *Galileans*, as being the countrymen of our Lord, more than they feared the people of Jerusalem.

Verse 6. In Bethany] For a solution of the difficulties in this verse, about the *time* of the anointing, see the observations at the end of this chapter.

Simon the LEPER] This was probably no more than a surname, as Simon the CANAANITE, ^{<4000>}**Matthew 10:4**, and *Barsabas JUSTUS*, ^{<4012>}**Acts 1:23**, and several others. Yet it might have been some person that Christ had healed of this disease. See ^{<4015>}**Matthew 11:5**.

Verse 7. There came unto him a woman] There is much contention among commentators about the transaction mentioned here, and in ^{<812>}**John 12:3**; some supposing them to be different, others to be the same. Bishop Newcome's view of the subject I have placed at the end of the chapter.

Some think that the *woman* mentioned here was *Mary*, the sister of Lazarus; others *Mary Magdalene*; but against the former opinion it is argued that it is not likely, had this been *Mary* the sister of Lazarus, that *Matthew* and *Mark* would have suppressed her name. Besides, say they, we should not confound the repast which is mentioned here, with that mentioned by *John*, ^{<812>}**John 12:3**. This one was made only *two* days before the passover, and that one *six* days before: the one was made at the house of *Simon the leper*, the other at the house of *Lazarus*, ^{<8120>}**John 12:1, 2**. At this, the woman poured the oil on the *head* of Christ; at the other, *Mary* anointed Christ's *feet* with it. See *Clarke* on "^{<4140>}**Mark 14:3**", and see *Clarke's notes at the end of this chapter*. "^{<4075>}**Matthew 26:75**"

Verse 8. His disciples] One of them, viz. *Judas*. This mode of speaking was common among the Hebrews. So, ^{<4074>}**Matthew 27:44**, *the thieves also*, i.e. *one* of them. So, ^{<4087>}**Matthew 28:17**, *some doubted*, i.e. *one*,

Thomas. See also ^{<01004>}Genesis 8:4; ^{<071217>}Judges 12:7; ^{<10017>}Nehemiah 6:7, &c. By a figure called among rhetoricians *enallage*, the *plural* is put for the *singular*; it is, however, possible that Judas, who made the objection, was followed in the sentiment by the rest of the disciples.

Verse 9. And given to the poor.] How often does charity serve as a cloak for covetousness! God is sometimes robbed of his right under the pretence of devoting what is withheld to some charitable purpose, to which there was no intention ever to give it.

Verse 10. Why trouble ye the woman?] Or, *Why do ye put the woman to pain?* See this sense of **κοπους παρεχειν**, established by *Kypke* in loco. A generous mind is ever *pained* when it is denied the opportunity of doing good, or when its proffered kindness is refused.

Verse 11. Ye have the poor always with you] And, consequently, have the opportunity of doing them good at any time; *but me ye have not always*; my bodily presence is about to be removed from you for ever. The woman, under a presentiment of my death is preparing me for my burial.

Verse 12. She did it for my burial.] Or, *She hath done it to embalm me*-**ενταφιασαι** me. **Τη Σεπτuαγιντ uσε ενταφιαστης** for the person whose office it was to *embalm*, ^{<01502>}Genesis 50:2, and **ενταφιαζω** for the Hebrew **cnh** which signifies to *prepare with spices*, or *aromatics*, ^{<01503>}Genesis 50:3. Our Lord took this opportunity to tell them, once more, that he was shortly to die.

Verse 13. Wheresoever this Gospel shall be preached] Another remarkable proof of the prescience of Christ. Such a matter as this, humanly speaking, depended on mere *fortuitous* circumstances, yet so has God disposed matters, that the thing has continued, hitherto, as firm and regular as the ordinances of heaven.

For a memorial of her.] As embalming *preserves* the body from *corruption*, and she has done this good work to *embalm* and *preserve* this body, so will I order every thing concerning this transaction to be carefully recorded, to *preserve* her memory to the latest ages. The actions which the world blames, through the spirit of envy, covetousness, or malice, God takes delight to *distinguish* and *record*.

Verse 14. Then-Judas] After this supper at Bethany, Judas returned to Jerusalem, and made his contract with the chief priests.

Verse 15. Thirty pieces of silver.] τριακοντα αργυρια, *thirty silverlings*; but στατηρας, *stater*s, is the reading of the Codex Bezae, three copies of the *Itala*, *Eusebius*, and *Origen* sometimes; and στατηρας αργυριου, *silver stater*s, is the reading of the famous Basil MS. No. 1, in Griesbach, and one copy of the *Itala*.

A *stater* was the same as the shekel, and worth about 3s. English money, according to Dean Prideaux: a goodly price for the Saviour of the world! *Thirty stater*s, about 4l. 10s. the common price for the meanest slave! See ^{<0213>}**Exodus 21:32**. The rabbins say, thirty ἡμίς *selain* of pure silver was the standard price for a slave, whether *good* or *bad*, *male* or *female*. See tract *Erachin*, fol. 14, and *Shekalim*, cap. 1. Each *selaa* weighed 384 barley-corns; the same number was contained in a shekel; and therefore the *shekel* and the *selaa* were the same. See Clarke's notes on ^{<0120>}**Genesis 20:16**", and see Clarke ^{<0232>}**Exodus 38:24**".

Verse 16. He sought opportunity] ευκαιριαν, a convenient or fit opportunity. Men seldom leave a crime imperfect: when once sin is *conceived*, it meets, in general, with few obstacles, till it brings forth *death*. How deceitful, how deeply damning, is the love of money! Well might a heathen exclaim, while contemplating the grave of a person who was murdered for the sake of his wealth:-

----- Quid non mortalia pectora cogis
AURI SACRA FAMES?
VIRG. *Æn.* iii. 56

“O! cursed lust of gold! what wilt thou not compel the human heart to perpetrate?.” Judas is deservedly considered as one of the most infamous of men, his conduct base beyond description, and his motives vile. But how many, since his time, have walked in the same way! How many, for the sake of worldly wealth, have renounced the religion of their Lord and Master, and sold Jesus, and their interest in heaven, for a short-lived portion of secular good! From ^{<0126>}**John 12:6**, we learn that Judas, who was treasurer to our Lord and his disciples, (for he carried the bag,) was a thief, and frequently purloined a portion of what was given for the support of this holy family. Being disappointed of the prey he hoped to have from the sale of the precious ointment, ^{<0219>}**Matthew 26:9**, he sold his Master to make up the sum. A thorough *Jew*!

Verse 17. Now the first day of the feast of unleavened bread] As the feast of unleavened bread did not begin till the day after the passover, the *fifteenth* day of the month, ^{<1235>}**Leviticus 23:5, 6,** ^{<1236>}**Numbers 28:16, 17,** *this* could not have been, properly, the *first* day of that feast; but as the Jews began to eat unleavened bread on the *fourteenth*, ^{<1218>}**Exodus 12:18,** this day was often termed *the first of unleavened bread*. The evangelists use it in this sense, and call even the paschal day by this name. See ^{<1142>}**Mark 14:12;** ^{<1217>}**Luke 22:7.**

Where wilt thou that we prepare] How astonishing is this, that HE who created all things, whether visible or invisible, and by whom all things were upheld, should so *empty* himself as not to be *proprietor* of a single house in his whole creation, to eat the last passover with his disciples! This is certainly a mystery, and so, less or more is every thing that God does. But how inveterate and destructive must the nature of sin be, when such *emptying* and *humiliation* were necessary to its destruction! It is worthy of note what the Talmudists say, that the inhabitants of Jerusalem did not let out their houses to those who came to the annual feasts; but afforded all accommodations of this kind gratis. A man might therefore go and request the use of any room, on such an occasion, which was as yet unoccupied. The earthen jug, and the skin of the sacrifice, were left with the host. See *Lightfoot*, vol. ii. p. 21.

Verse 18. Go-to such a man] **τον δεινα** It is probable that this means some person with whom Christ was well acquainted, and who was known to the disciples. *Grotius* observes that the Greeks use this form when they mean some *particular person* who is so well known that there is no need to specify him by name. The circumstances are more particularly marked in ^{<1218>}**Luke 22:8,** &c.

My time is at hand] That is, the time of my crucifixion. *Kypke* has largely shown that **καρπος** is often used among the Greeks for *affliction* and *calamity*. It might be rendered here, *the time of my crucifixion is at hand*.

Verse 19. And the disciples did] The disciples that were sent on this errand were Peter and John. See ^{<1218>}**Luke 22:8.**

They made ready the passover] That is, they provided the lamb, &c., which were appointed by the law for this solemnity. Mr. Wakefield justly observes, “that the Jews considered the passover as a *sacrificial* rite; *Josephus* calls it **θυσιαν**, A SACRIFICE; and *Trypho*, in *Justin Martyr*,

speaks of *προβατον του πασχα θυειν*, SACRIFICING *the paschal lamb*. But what comes nearer to the point is this, that *Maimonides*, one of the most eminent of the Jewish rabbins, has a particular treatise on the *paschal sacrifice*; and throughout that piece, speaks of the lamb as a *victim*, and of the solemnity itself as a *sacrifice*. And R. *Bechai*, in his commentary on ^{<1821>}**Leviticus 2:11**, says that the paschal sacrifice was of a *piacular* nature, in order to *expiate* the guilt contracted by the idolatrous practices of the Israelites In Egypt.” It was highly necessary that this should be considered as an *expiatory sacrifice*, as it typified that Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. For much more on this important subject than can, with propriety, be introduced into these notes, see a *Discourse on the Eucharist*, lately published by the author of this work.

Verse 20. Now when the even was come, he sat down with the twelve.]

It is a common opinion that our Lord ate the passover some hours before the Jews ate it; for the Jews, according to custom, ate theirs at the *end* of the *fourteenth* day, but Christ ate his the preceding even, which was the beginning of the same sixth day, or Friday; the Jews begin their day at *sunsetting*, we at midnight. Thus Christ ate the passover on the *same day* with the Jews, but not on the *same hour*. Christ kept this passover the beginning of the fourteenth day, the precise day and hour in which the Jews had eaten their first passover in Egypt. See ^{<12126>}**Exodus 12:6-12**. And in the same part of the same day in which the Jews had sacrificed their first paschal lamb, viz. *between the two evenings*, about the *ninth hour*, or 3 o'clock, Jesus Christ our passover was sacrificed for us: for it was at this hour that he yielded up his last breath; and then it was that, the sacrifice being *completed*, Jesus said, IT IS FINISHED. See ^{<12126>}**Exodus 12:6**, &c., and ^{<15146>}**Deuteronomy 16:6**, &c. See Clarke on “^{<181828>}**John 18:28**”, and the Treatise on the Eucharist, referred to see Clarke “^{<10519>}**Matthew 26:19**”; and see Clarke’s notes on “^{<10526>}**Matthew 26:26**” and following verses.

Verse 21. One of you shall betray me.] Or, *will deliver me up*. Judas had already *betrayed* him, ^{<10515>}**Matthew 26:15**, and he was now about to *deliver* him into the hands of the chief priests, according to the agreement he had made with them.

Verse 22. They were exceeding sorrowful] That is, the *eleven* who were innocent; and the hypocritical traitor, Judas, endeavoured to *put on* the appearance of sorrow. Strange! Did he not know that Christ knew the secrets of his soul! Or had his love of money so far blinded him, as to

render him incapable of discerning even this, with which he had been before so well acquainted?

Verse 23. He that dippeth his hand] As the Jews ate the passover a whole family together, it was not convenient for them all to dip their bread in the *same* dish; they therefore had several little dishes or plates, in which was the juice of the bitter herbs, mentioned ⁽¹²¹³⁸⁾**Exodus 12:8**, on different parts of the table; and those who were nigh one of these, dipped their bread in it. As Judas is represented as dipping in the *same* dish with Christ, it shows that he was either near or opposite to him. If this man's heart had not been hardened, and his conscience seared beyond all precedent, by the deceitfulness of his sin, would he have showed his face in this sacred assembly, or have thus put the seal to his own perdition, by eating of this sacrificial lamb? Is it possible that he could feel no compunction? Alas! having delivered *himself* up into the hands of the devil, he was capable of delivering up his *Master* into the hands of the chief priests; and thus, when men are completely hardened by the deceitfulness of sin, they can outwardly perform the most solemn acts of devotion, without feeling any sort of inward concern about the matter.

Verse 24. The Son of man goeth] That is, is about to die. *Going, going away, departing, &c.*, are frequently used in the best Greek and Latin writers, for *death*, or *dying*. The same words are often used in the Scriptures in the same sense.

It had been good for that man] Can this be said of any sinner, in the common sense in which it is understood, if there be any redemption from hell's torments? If a sinner should suffer millions of millions of years in them, and get out at last to the enjoyment of heaven, then it was well for him that he had been born, for still he has an *eternity of blessedness* before him. Can the doctrine of the *non-eternity* of hell's torments stand in the presence of this saying? Or can the doctrine of the *annihilation* of the wicked consist with this declaration? It would have been well for that man if he had never been born! Then he must be in some state of *conscious existence*, as *non-existence* is said to be *better* than that *state* in which he is now found. It was common for the Jews to say of any flagrant transgressor, *It would have been better for him had he never been born*. See several examples in *Schoettgen*. See the case of Judas argued at the end of Acts 1.

Verse 25. Judas-said, Master, is it I?] What excessive impudence! He knew, in his conscience, that he had already *betrayed* his Master, and was waiting now for the servants of the chief priests, that he might *deliver* him into their hands; and yet he says, (hoping that he had transacted his business so privately that it had not yet transpired,) *Master, is it I?* It is worthy of remark, that each of the other disciples said **κυριε**, LORD, *is it I?* But Judas *dares* not, or *will* not, use this august title, but simply says **ραββι**, TEACHER, *is it I?*

Thou hast said.] **συ ειπας**, or **ἠψυρμα ἠψτα** *atun amaritun*, “Ye have said,” was a common form of expression for YES. IT IS SO. “When the Zipporenses inquired whether Rabbi Judas was dead? the son of Kaphra answered, *Ye have said,*” i.e. He is dead. See *Schoettgen. Hor. Hebr.* p. 225.

Verse 26. Jesus took bread] This is the first institution of what is termed the LORD’S SUPPER. To every part of this ceremony, as here mentioned, the utmost attention should be paid.

To do this, in the most effectual manner, I think it necessary to set down the text of the three evangelists who have transmitted the whole account, collated with that part of St. Paul’s First Epistle to the Corinthians which speaks of the same subject, and which, he assures us, he received by Divine revelation. It may seem strange that, although (^{<430>}**John 13:1-38**) mentions all the circumstances preceding the holy supper, and, from ^{<440>}**Matthew 14:1-36** the circumstances which succeeded the breaking of the bread, and in chapters 15, 16, and 17, the discourse which followed the administration of the cup; yet he takes no notice of the Divine institution at all. This is generally accounted for on his knowledge of what the other three evangelists had written; and on his conviction that their relation was true, and needed no additional confirmation, as the matter was amply established by the conjoint testimony of three such respectable witnesses.

<p>MATT. 26:26. And as they were eating, Jesus took bread and blessed it (ευλογησας and blessed God) and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat, this is my body.</p>	<p>◀1142▶ MARK 14:22. And as they did eat, Jesus took bread and blessed (ευλογησας, blessed God) and brake it, and to them, and said, Take, eat, this is my body.</p>	<p>◀2219▶ LUKE 22:19. And he took bread and gave thanks, (ευχαριστησας, i.e. to God,) and gave brake it, and gave unto them, saying: This is my body which is given for you: This do in remembrance of me.</p>	<p>1 COR. 11:23. The Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread; V. 24. And when he had given thanks (και ευχαριστησας, i.e. to God) he brake it, and said, Take, eat, this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me.</p>
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After giving the bread, the discourse related, ◀6140▶ John 14:1-31, inclusive, is supposed by Bishop Newcome to have been delivered by our Lord, for the comfort and support of his disciples under their present and approaching trials.

<p>MATT. 26:27. And he took the cup, and gave thanks (ευχαριστησας,) and gave it to them, saying: Drink ye all of it. V. 28. For this is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many or the remission of sins. V. 29. But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.</p>	<p>◀1143▶ MARK 14:23. And he took the cup; and when he had given thanks, (ευχαριστησας,) he gave it to them; and they all drank of it. V. 24. And he said unto them, This is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many. V. 25. Verily I say unto you, I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine until that day that I drink it new in the kingdom of God.</p>	<p>◀2221▶ LUKE 22:20. Likewise also the cup, after supper, saying: This cup is the New Testament in my blood, which is shed for you.</p>	<p>1 COR 11:25. After the same manner also, he took the cup, when he had supped, saying: This cup is the New Testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.</p>
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After this, our Lord resumes that discourse which is found in the 15th, 16th, and 17th chapters of John, beginning with the last verse of chap. 14, Arise, let

us go hence. *Then succeed the following words, which conclude the whole ceremony.*

MATT 26:30.	<4146> MARK	<42239> LUKE 22:39.	<61401> JOHN 14:1.
And when they had sung a hymn, they went out into the Mount of Olives.	14:26. And when they had sung a hymn, they went out into the Mount of Olives.	And he came out, and went as he was wont to the Mount of Olives. And his disciples also followed him.	When Jesus had spoken these words, he went forth with his disciples over the brook Kedron.

From the preceding harmonized view of this important transaction, as described by *three* EVANGELISTS and *one* APOSTLE, we see the first institution, nature, and design of what has been since called THE LORD'S SUPPER. To every circumstance, as set down here, and the mode of expression by which such circumstances are described, we should pay the deepest attention.

Verse 26. As they were eating] Either an *ordinary* supper, or the *paschal lamb*, as some think. See the observations at the end of this chapter.

Jesus took bread] Of what kind? *Unleavened* bread, certainly, because there was no other kind to be had in all Judea at this time; for this was the first day of unleavened bread, (<42617> **Matthew 26:17**,) i.e. the 14th of the month Nisan, when the Jews, according to the command of God, (<42125> **Exodus 12:15-20; 23:15; 34:25**,) were to purge away all *leaven* from their houses; for he who sacrificed the passover, having leaven in his dwelling, was considered to be such a transgressor of the Divine law as could no longer be tolerated among the people of God; and therefore was to be cut off from the congregation of Israel. *Leo* of Modena, who has written a very sensible treatise on the *customs of the Jews*, observes, "That so strictly do some of the Jews observe the precept concerning the removal of all leaven from their houses, during the celebration of the paschal solemnity, that they either provide vessels entirely *new* for baking, or else have a set for the purpose, which are dedicated solely to the service of the passover, and never brought out on any other occasion."

To this divinely instituted custom of removing all leaven previously to the paschal solemnity, St. Paul evidently alludes, <41806> **1 Corinthians 5:6-8**. *Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out*

therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ, our passover, is sacrificed for us; therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the UNLEAVENED bread of sincerity and truth.

Now, if any respect should be paid to the primitive institution, in the celebration of this Divine ordinance, then, *unleavened, unyeasted* bread should be used. In every sign, or type, the thing *signifying* or pointing out that which is *beyond* itself should either have certain *properties*, or be accompanied with certain *circumstances*, as *expressive as possible* of the thing *signified*. *Bread*, simply considered in itself, may be an emblem apt enough of the *body* of our Lord Jesus, which was given for us; but the design of God was evidently that it should not only point out this, but also the *disposition* required in those who should celebrate both the *antitype* and the *type*; and this the apostle explains to be *sincerity* and *truth*, the reverse of *malice* and *wickedness*. The very *taste* of the bread was instructive: it pointed out to every communicant, that he who came to the table of God with *malice* or *ill-will* against any soul of man, or with *wickedness*, a profligate or sinful life, might expect to eat and drink judgment to himself, as not discerning that the Lord's body was sacrificed for this very purpose, *that all sin might be destroyed*; and that sincerity, **ειλικρινεια**, such purity as *the clearest light can discern no stain in*, might be diffused through the whole soul; and that *truth*, the law of righteousness and true holiness, might regulate and guide all the actions of life. Had the bread used on these occasions been of the common kind, it would have been perfectly unfit, or improper, to have communicated these *uncommon significations*; and, as it was *seldom* used, its rare occurrence would make the emblematical representation more deeply impressive; and the *sign*, and the thing *signified*, have their due correspondence and influence.

These circumstances considered, will it not appear that the use of *common bread* in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper is highly improper? He who can say, "*This is a matter of no importance*," may say with equal propriety, the *bread* itself is of no importance; and another may say, the *wine* is of no importance; and a third may say, "*neither the bread nor wine is any thing, but as they lead to spiritual references*; and, the spiritual reference being once understood, the signs are useless." Thus we may, through affected spirituality, refine away the whole ordinance of God; and, with the *letter* and *form* of religion, abolish religion itself. Many have already acted in this

way, not only to their loss, but to their ruin, by showing how profoundly wise they are above what is written. Let those, therefore, who consider that *man shall live by every word which proceeds from the mouth of God*, and who are conscientiously solicitous that each Divine institution be not only preserved, but observed in all its original integrity, attend to this circumstance. The *Lutheran Church* makes use of unleavened bread to the present day.

And blessed it] Both St. *Matthew* and St. *Mark* use the word **ευλογησας**, *blessed*, instead of **ευχαριστησας**, *gave thanks*, which is the word used by St. *Luke* and St. *Paul*. But instead of **ευλογησας**, *blessed*, **ευχαριστησας**, *gave thanks*, is the reading of ten MSS. in uncial characters, of the *Dublin Codex rescriptus*, published by Dr. Barrett, and of more than one hundred others, of the greatest respectability. This is the reading also of the *Syriac* and *Arabic*, and is confirmed by several of the primitive fathers. The terms, in this case, are nearly of the same import, as both *blessing* and *giving thanks* were used on these occasions. But what was it that our Lord blessed? Not the *bread*, though many think the contrary, being deceived by the word **IT**, which is improperly *supplied* in our version. In all the four places referred to above, whether the word *blessed* or *gave thanks* is used, it refers not to the *bread*, but to *God*, the dispenser of every good. Our Lord here conforms himself to that constant Jewish custom, viz. of acknowledging God as the author of every good and perfect gift, by *giving thanks* on *taking the bread* and *taking the cup* at their ordinary meals. For every Jew was forbidden to eat, drink, or use any of God's creatures without rendering him thanks; and he who acted contrary to this command was considered as a person who was guilty of sacrilege. From this custom we have derived the decent and laudable one of saying grace (*gratas* thanks) before and after meat. The Jewish form of blessing, probably that which our Lord used on this occasion, none of my readers will be displeased to find here, though it has been mentioned once before. On taking the *bread* they say:- **χραη ἴμ μϋ Ι αχωμη μΙ w[h**
Ël m wnyhl a hta Ēwrb

Baruch atta Elohinoo, Melech, haolam, ha motse Lechem min haarets.

Blessed be thou, our God, King of the universe, who bringest forth bread out of the earth!

Likewise, on taking the cup, they say:- ḥpgh yrp arwb μl w[h Ēl m
wnyhl a Ēwrb

Baruch Elohinoo, Melech, haolam, Bore perey haggephen.

Blessed be our God, the King of the universe, the Creator of the fruit it of the vine!

The Mohammedans copy their example, constantly saying before and after meat:-

[-Arabic-]

Bismillahi arahmani arraheemi.

In the name of God, the most merciful, the most compassionate.

No blessing, therefore, of the *elements* is here intended; *they* were already blessed, in being sent as a gift of mercy from the bountiful Lord; but God the sender is blessed, because of the liberal provision he has made for his worthless creatures. *Blessing* and *touching* the *bread* are merely *Popish ceremonies*, unauthorized either by Scripture or the practice of the pure Church of God; necessary of course to those who pretend to *transmute*, by a kind of spiritual incantation, the *bread* and *wine* into the *real body* and *blood of Jesus Christ*; a measure the grossest in folly, and most stupid in nonsense, to which God in judgment ever abandoned the fallen spirit of man.

And brake it] We often read in the Scriptures of *breaking* bread, but never of *cutting* it. The Jewish people had nothing similar to our high-raised *loaf*: their bread was made broad and thin, and was consequently very brittle, and, to divide it, there was no need of a knife.

The *breaking* of the *bread* I consider essential to the proper performance of this solemn and significant ceremony: because this act was designed by our Lord to shadow forth the *wounding*, *piercing*, and *breaking* of his body upon the cross; and, as all this was essentially necessary to the making a *full atonement* for the sin of the world, so it is of vast importance that this apparently little circumstance, the *breaking of the bread*, should be carefully attended to, that the godly communicant may have every necessary assistance to enable him to discern the Lord's body, while engaged in this most important and Divine of all God's ordinances. But who does not see that *one* small cube of *fermented*, i.e. *leavened* bread,

previously divided from the mass with a knife, and separated by the fingers of the minister, can never answer the end of the institution, either as to the *matter* of the bread, or the *mode* of dividing it?

Man is naturally a dull and heedless creature, especially in spiritual things, and has need of the utmost assistance of his *senses*, in union with those expressive rites and ceremonies which the *Holy Scripture*, not *tradition*, has sanctioned, in order to enable him to arrive at spiritual things, through the medium of earthly similitudes.

And gave it to the disciples] Not only the *breaking*, but also the DISTRIBUTION, of the bread are necessary parts of this rite. In the Romish Church, the bread is not *broken* nor *delivered* to the people, that THEY may *take* and *eat*; but the consecrated wafer is put upon their tongue by the priest; and it is generally understood by the communicants, that they should not masticate, but swallow it *whole*.

“That the *breaking* of this bread to be *distributed*,” says Dr. Whitby, “is a necessary part of this rite is evident, first, by the continual mention of it by St. Paul and all the evangelists, when they speak of the institution of this sacrament, which shows it to be a necessary part of it. 2dly, Christ says, *Take, eat, this is my body, BROKEN for you,* ~~<6112>~~ **1 Corinthians 11:24**. But when the elements are *not broken*, it can be no more said, *This is my body broken for you*, than where the elements are *not given*. 3dly, Our Lord said, *Do this in remembrance of me*: i.e. ‘Eat this bread, broken in remembrance of my body broken on the cross:’ now, where no body *broken* is *distributed*, there, nothing can be eaten in memorial of his *broken body*. Lastly, The apostle, by saying, *The bread which we BREAK, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?* sufficiently informs us that the eating of his *broken* body is necessary to that end, ~~<61010>~~ **1 Corinthians 10:10**. Hence it was that this rite, of *distributing* bread *broken*, continued for a thousand years, and was, as *Humbertus* testifies, observed in the Roman church in the eleventh century.” WHITBY *in loco*.

At present, the opposite is as boldly practised as if the real Scriptural rite had never been observed in the Church of Christ.

This is my body.] Here it must be observed that Christ had nothing in his hands, at this time, but part of that unleavened bread which he and his

disciples had been eating at supper, and therefore he could mean no more than this, viz. that the bread which he was now breaking *represented* his body, which, in the course of a few hours, was to be crucified for them. Common sense, unsophisticated with superstition and erroneous creeds,-and reason, unawed by the secular sword of sovereign authority, could not possibly take any other meaning than this plain, consistent, and rational one, out of these words. “But,” says a false and absurd creed, “Jesus meant, when he said, HOC EST CORPUS MEUM, *This is my body*, and HIC EST CALIX SANGUINIS MEI, *This is the chalice of my blood*, that the bread and wine were *substantially changed* into his body, including flesh, blood, bones, yea, the whole Christ, in his immaculate humanity and adorable divinity!” And, for denying this, what rivers of righteous blood have been shed by state persecutions and by religious wars! Well it may be asked, “Can any man of sense believe, that, when Christ took up that bread and broke it, it was his own body which he held in his own hands, and which himself broke to pieces, and which he and his disciples ate?” He who can believe such a congeries of absurdities, cannot be said to be a *volunteer in faith*; for it is evident, the man can neither have faith nor reason, as to *this* subject.

Let it be observed, if any thing farther is necessary on this point, that the *paschal lamb*, is called the *passover*, because it *represented* the destroying angel’s passing over the children of Israel, while he slew the firstborn of the Egyptians; and our Lord and his disciples call this lamb the *passover*, several times in this chapter; by which it is demonstrably evident, that they could mean no more than that the lamb sacrificed on this occasion was a *memorial* of, and REPRESENTED, the means used for the preservation of the Israelites from the blast of the destroying angel.

Besides, our Lord did not say, *hoc est corpus meum*, (*this is my body*), as he did not speak in the *Latin* tongue; though as much stress has been laid upon this quotation from the Vulgate as if the original of the three evangelists had been written in the Latin language. Had he spoken in Latin, following the idiom of the Vulgate, he would have said, *Panis hic corpus meum significat*, or, *Symbolum est corporis mei:-hoc poculum sanguinem meum representat*, or, *symbolum est sanguinis mei:-this bread signifies my body; this cup represents my blood*. But let it be observed that, in the Hebrew, Chaldee, and Chaldeo-Syriac languages, as used in the Bible, there is no term which expresses to *mean*, *signify*, *denote*, though both the Greek and Latin abound with them: hence the Hebrews use a figure, and

say, *it is*, for, *it signifies*. So ^{<01426>}**Genesis 41:26, 27.** *The seven kine ARE (i.e. represent) seven years. This IS (represents) the bread of affliction which our fathers ate in the land of Egypt.* ^{<27074>}**Daniel 7:24.** *The ten horns ARE (i.e. signify) ten kings. They drank of the spiritual Rock which followed them, and the Rock WAS (represented) Christ.* ^{<61008>}**1 Corinthians 10:4.** And following this Hebrew idiom, though the work is written in Greek, we find in ^{<60121>}**Revelation 1:20,** *The seven stars ARE (represent) the angels of the seven Churches: and the seven candlesticks ARE (represent) the seven Churches.* The same form of speech is used in a variety of places in the New Testament, where this sense must necessarily be given to the word. ^{<01338>}**Matthew 13:38, 39.** *The field IS (represents) the world: the good seed ARE (represent or signify) the children of the kingdom: the tares ARE (signify) the children of the wicked one. The enemy IS (signifies) the devil: the harvest IS (represents) the end of the world: the reapers ARE (i.e. signify) the angels.* ^{<41089>}**Luke 8:9.** *What might this parable BE? τις ειη η παραβολη αυτη:- What does this parable SIGNIFY?* ^{<80736>}**John 7:36.** *τις εστιν αυτος ο λογος: What is the SIGNIFICATION of this saying?* ^{<61006>}**John 10:6.** *They understood not what things they WERE, τινα ην, what was the SIGNIFICATION of the things he had spoken to them.* ^{<441017>}**Acts 10:17.** *τι αν ειη οραμα, what this vision MIGHT BE; properly rendered by our translators, what this vision should MEAN.* ^{<80424>}**Galatians 4:24.** *For these ARE the two covenants, αυται γαρ εισιν αι δυο διαθηκαι, these SIGNIFY the two covenants.* ^{<21536>}**Luke 15:26.** *He asked, τι ειη ταυτα, what these things MEANT.* See also ^{<21836>}**Luke 18:36.** After such unequivocal testimony from the Sacred writings, can any person doubt that, *This bread is my body*, has any other meaning than, *This bread REPRESENTS my body?*

The *Latins* use the verb, *sum*, in all its forms, with a similar latitude of meaning. So, *ESSE oneri ferendo, he is ABLE to bear the burthen: bene ESSE, to LIVE sumptuously: male ESSE, to LIVE miserably: recte ESSE, to ENJOY good health: EST mihi fistula, I POSSESS a flute: EST hodie in rebus, he now ENJOYS a plentiful fortune: EST mihi namque domi pater, I HAVE a father at home, &c.: ESSE solvendo, to be ABLE to pay: FUIMUS Troes, FUIT Ilium; the Trojans are EXTINCT, Troy is NO MORE.*

In *Greek* also, and *Hebrew*, it often signifies to live, to die, to be killed. **ουκ EIMI, I am DEAD, or a dead man.** ^{<00218>}**Matthew 2:18:** *Rachel weeping for her children, οτι ουκ εισι, because they WERE MURDERED.*

<04236> **Genesis 42:36:** *Joseph is not, wḥnyā āšwy Yoseph einennu, ιωσηφ ουκ ΕΣΤΙΝ, Sept., Joseph is DEVoured by a WILD BEAST.* <50417> **Romans 4:17:** *Calling the things that ARE not, as if they were ALIVE. So Plutarch in Laconicis: "This shield thy father always preserved; preserve thou it, or may thou not BE," Η μη ΕΣΟ, may thou PERISH. ΟΥΚ ΟΝΤΕΣ νομοι, ABROGATED laws. ΕΙΜΙ εν εμοι, I POSSESS a sound understanding. εις πατερα υμιν ΕΣΟΜΑΙ, I will PERFORM the PART of a father to you. ΕΙΜΙ της πολεως της δε, I AM an INHABITANT of that city.* <540107> **1 Timothy 1:7:** *Desiring to BE teachers of the law, θελοντες ΕΙΝΑΙ νομοδιδασκαλοι, desiring to be REPUTED teachers of the law, i.e. ABLE divines. τα ΟΝΤΑ, the things that ARE, i.e. NOBLE and HONOURABLE men: τα μη ΟΝΤΑ, the things that are not, viz. the VULGAR, or those of IGNOBLE BIRTH.*

Tertullian seems to have had a correct notion of those words of our Lord, Acceptum panem et distributum discipulis, corpus illum suum fecit, HOC EST CORPUS MEUM dicendo, id est, FIGURA corporis mei. Advers. Marc. l. v. c. 40. "Having taken the bread, and distributed that body to his disciples, he made it his body by saying, This is my body, i.e. a FIGURE of my body."

That our Lord neither spoke in *Greek* nor *Latin*, on this occasion, needs no proof. It was, most probably, in what was formerly called the *Chaldaic*, now the *Syriac*, that our Lord conversed with his disciples. Through the providence of God, we have complete versions of the Gospels in this language, and in them it is likely we have the precise words spoken by our Lord on this occasion. In <41335> **Matthew 26:26, 27**, the words in the Syriac version are, [Syriac] *hanau pagree, This is my body*, [Syriac] *hanau demee, This is my blood*, of which *forms of speech* the Greek is a verbal translation; nor would any man, even in the present day, speaking in the same language, use, among the people to whom it was vernacular, other terms than the above to express, *This represents my body*, and *this represents my blood*.

As to the ancient *Syrian Church* on the Malabar coast, it is a fact that it never held the doctrine of transubstantiation, nor does it appear that it was ever heard of in that Church till the year 1599, when Don Alexis Menezes, Archbishop of Goa, and the Jesuit *Fransic Rez*, invaded that Church, and by tricks, impostures, and the assistance of the heathen governors of *Cochin*, and other places, whom they gained over by bribes and presents, overthrew the whole of this ancient Church, and gave the oppressed people

the rites, creeds, &c., of the papal Catholic Church in its place. Vid. La Croz. Hist. du Ch. des Indes.

This was done at the Synod of Diamper, which began its sessions at Agomale, June 20, 1599. The tricks of this unprincipled prelate, the tool of Pope *Clement VIII.*, and *Philip II.*, King of Portugal, are amply detailed by Mr. *La Croze*, in the work already quoted.

But this form of speech is common, even in our own language, though we have terms enow to fill up the ellipsis. Suppose a man entering into a museum, enriched with the remains of ancient Greek sculpture: his eyes are attracted by a number of curious busts; and, on inquiring what they are, he learns, this is Socrates, that Plato, a third Homer; others Hesiod, Horace, Virgil, Demosthenes, Cicero, Herodotus, Livy, Caesar, Nero, Vespasian, &c. Is he deceived by this information? Not at all: he knows well that the busts he sees are not the *identical persons* of those ancient philosophers, poets, orators, historians, and emperors, but only REPRESENTATIONS of their persons in sculpture, between which and the originals there is as essential a difference as between a human body, instinct with all the principles of rational vitality, and a block of marble. When, therefore, Christ took up a piece of bread, brake it, and said, *This IS my body*, who, but the most stupid of mortals, could imagine that he was, at the same time, handling and breaking his own body! Would not any person, of plain common sense, see as great a difference between the *man* Christ Jesus, and the *piece of bread*, as between the block of marble and the philosopher it *represented*, in the case referred to above? The truth is, there is scarcely a more common form of speech in any language than, *This IS*, for, *This REPRESENTS* or *SIGNIFIES*. And as our Lord refers, in the whole of this transaction, to the ordinance of the passover, we may consider him as saying: "This bread is now my body, in that sense in which the paschal lamb has been my body hitherto; and this cup is my blood of the New Testament, in the same sense as the blood of bulls and goats has been my blood under the Old: Exodus 24; Heb 9. That is, the paschal lamb and the sprinkling of blood represented my sacrifice to the present time this bread and this wine shall represent my body and blood through all future ages; therefore, *Do this in remembrance of me.*"

St. Luke and St. Paul add a circumstance here which is not noticed either by St. Matthew or St. Mark. After, *this is my body*, the former adds, *which is given for you*; the latter, *which is broken for you*; the sense of which is:

“As God has in his bountiful providence given you bread for the sustenance of your lives, so in his infinite grace he has given you my body to save your souls unto life eternal. But as this bread must be *broken* and masticated, in order to its becoming proper nourishment, so my body must be *broken*, i.e. *crucified*, for you, before it can be the bread of life to your souls. As, therefore, your life depends on the bread which God’s bounty has provided for your bodies, so your eternal life depends on the sacrifice of my body on the cross for your souls.” Besides, there is here an allusion to the offering of sacrifice—an innocent creature was brought to the altar of God, and its blood (the life of the beast) was poured out *for*, or in behalf of, the person who brought it. Thus Christ says, alluding to the sacrifice of the paschal lamb, *This is my body*, **το υπερ υμων διδομενον**, which IS GIVEN *in your stead*, or *in your behalf*; a free GIFT, from God’s endless mercy, for the salvation of your souls. *This is my body*, **το υπερ υμων κλωμενον**, (**<6112> 1 Corinthians 11:24**), which is *broken-sacrificed in your stead*; as without the breaking (piercing) of the body, and spilling of the blood, there was no remission.

In this solemn transaction we must weigh every word, as there is none without its appropriate and deeply emphatic meaning. So it is written, **<6112> Ephesians 5:2**. *Christ hath loved us, and given himself*, **επερ ημων**, *on our account, or in our stead, an offering and a SACRIFICE (θυσια) to God for a sweet-smelling savour*; that, as in the sacrifice offered by Noah, **<61021> Genesis 8:21**, (to which the apostle evidently alludes,) from which it is said, *The Lord smelled a sweet savour*, **j j ynh j yr riach hanichoach**, *a savour of rest*, so that he became appeased towards the earth, and determined that there should no more be a flood to destroy it; in like manner, in the offering and sacrifice of Christ *for* us, God is appeased towards the human race, and has in consequence decreed that *whosoever believeth in him shall not perish, but have everlasting life*.

Verse 27. And he took the cup] **μετα το δειπνησαι**, *after having supped*, **<6221> Luke 22:20**, and **<61125> 1 Corinthians 11:25**. Whether the supper was on the *paschal lamb*, or whether it was a *common* or *ordinary meal*, I shall not wait here to inquire: see at the end of this chapter. In the parallel place, in Luke 22, we find our Lord taking the cup, **<62217> Luke 22:17**, and again **<62219> Luke 22:19**; by the former of which was probably meant the *cup of blessing*, **hkrbh swk kos haberakah**, which the master of a family took, and, after *blessing* God, gave to each of his guests by way

of welcome: but this *second* taking the cup is to be understood as belonging to the very important rite which he was now instituting, and on which he lays a very remarkable stress. With respect to the *bread*, he had before simply said, *Take, eat, this is my body*; but concerning the *cup* he says, *Drink ye all of this*: for as this pointed out the very *essence* of the institution, viz. the *blood of atonement*, it was necessary that each should have a particular application of it; therefore he says, *Drink ye ALL of THIS*. By this we are taught that the *cup* is essential to the sacrament of the Lord's Supper; so that they who deny the *cup* to the *people* sin against God's institution; and they who receive not the cup are not partakers of the body and blood of Christ. If either could without mortal prejudice be omitted, it might be the *bread*; but the *cup*, as pointing out the blood poured out, i.e. the *life*, by which alone the great sacrificial act is performed, and remission of sins procured, is absolutely indispensable. On this ground it is demonstrable, that there is not a priest under heaven, who denies the cup to the people, that can be said to celebrate the Lord's Supper at all; nor is there one of their votaries that ever received the holy sacrament. All pretension to this is an absolute farce, so long as the *cup*, the emblem of the atoning blood, is denied. How strange is it, that the very men who plead so much for the bare *literal* meaning of *this is my body*, in the preceding verse, should deny all meaning to *drink YE ALL of this cup*, in this verse! And though Christ has in the most positive manner enjoined it, they will not permit one of the laity to taste it! O, what a thing is man—a constant contradiction to *reason* and to *himself*.

I have just said that our blessed Lord lays remarkable stress on the administration of the *cup*, and on *that* which himself assures us is *represented* by it. As it is peculiarly emphatic, I beg leave to set down the original text, which the critical reader will do well minutely to examine: τουτο γαρ εστι το αιμα μου το της καινης διαθηκης, το περι πολλων εκχυνομενον εις αφεσιν αμαρτιων. The following literal translation and paraphrase do not exceed its meaning:-

For THIS is THAT blood of mine which was pointed out by all the sacrifices under the Jewish law, and particularly by the shedding and sprinkling of the blood of the paschal lamb. *THAT blood* of the sacrifice slain for the ratification of *the new covenant*. *THE blood* ready to be *poured out for the multitudes*, the whole Gentile world as well as the Jews, *for the taking away of sins; sin*, whether original or actual, in all its *power and guilt*, in all its internal *energy and pollution*.

And gave thanks] See the *form* used on this occasion, on ~~4035~~ **Matthew 26:26**; and see the MISHNA, TRACT **twkrb** *Beracoth*.

Verse 28. For this is my blood of the New Testament] This is the reading both here and in St. Mark; but St. Luke and St. Paul say, *This cup is the New Testament in my blood*. This passage has been strangely mistaken: by *New Testament*, many understand nothing more than the *book* commonly known by this name, containing the *four Gospels, Acts of the Apostles, apostolical Epistles, and book of the Revelation*; and they think that the *cup of the New Testament* means no more than merely that cup which the book called the New Testament enjoins in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. As this is the case, it is highly necessary that this term should be explained. The original, **η καινη διαθηκη**, which we translate, *The New Testament*, and which is the general title of all the contents of the book already described, simply means, *the new COVENANT*. *Covenant*, from *con, together, and venio, I come*, signifies an agreement, contract, or compact, between two parties, by which both are mutually bound to do certain things, on certain conditions and penalties. It answers to the Hebrew **tyrb** *berith*, which often signifies, not only the *covenant or agreement*, but also the sacrifice which was slain on the occasion, by the blood of which the covenant was ratified; and the contracting parties professed to subject themselves to such a death as that of the victim, in case of violating their engagements. An oath of this kind, on slaying the covenant sacrifice, was usual in ancient times: so in Homer, when a covenant was made between the Greeks and the Trojans, and the throats of lambs were cut, and their blood poured out, the following form of *adjuration* was used by the contracting parties:-

ζεῦ κυδιστε, μεγαυστε, και αθανατοι θεοι αλλοι,
 οποτεροι προτεροι υπερ ορκια πημνηειαν,
 οδε σφ̄ εγκεφαλος χαμαδις ρεοι, ως οδε οινος,
 αυτων, και τεκεων, αλοχοι δ̄ αλλοισι μιγειεν.

*All glorious Jove, and ye, the powers of heaven!
 Whoso shall violate this contract first,
 So be their blood, their children's and their own,
 Poured out, as this libation, on the ground
 And let their wives bring forth to other men!
 ILIAD l. iii. v. 298-301.*

Our blessed Saviour is evidently called the **διαθηκη**, **tyrb berith**, or covenant sacrifice, ^{<23016>} **Isaiah 42:6; 49:8;** ^{<38011>} **Zechariah 9:11.** And to those Scriptures he appears to allude, as in them the Lord promises to *give him for a covenant (sacrifice) to the Gentiles, and to send forth, by the blood of this covenant (victim) the prisoners out of the pit.* The passages in the sacred writings which allude to this grand sacrificial and atoning act are almost innumerable. See the *Preface* to Matthew.

In this place, our Lord terms his blood *the blood of the NEW covenant*; by which he means that grand plan of *agreement, or reconciliation*, which God was now establishing between himself and mankind, by the passion and death of his Son, through whom alone men could draw nigh to God; and this *NEW covenant* is mentioned in contradistinction from the *OLD covenant*, **η παλαια διαθηκη**, ^{<0114>} **2 Corinthians 3:14**, by which appellative all the books of the Old Testament were distinguished, because they pointed out the way of reconciliation to God by the blood of the *various victims* slain under the law; but *now*, as the *Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world*, was about to be offered up, a *NEW and LIVING way* was thereby constituted, so that no one henceforth could come unto the Father but by HIM. Hence all the books of the New Testament, which bear unanimous testimony to the doctrine of salvation by faith through the blood of Jesus, are termed, **η καινη διαθηκη**, *The NEW covenant.* See the *Preface*.

Dr. Lightfoot's Observations on this are worthy of serious notice. "*This is my blood of the New Testament.* Not only the *seal* of the covenant, but the *sanction* of the new covenant. The end of the *Mosaic economy*, and the confirming of a *new one*. The confirmation of the *old covenant* was by the *blood of bulls and goats*, Exodus 24, Heb 9, because blood was still to be shed: the confirmation of the *new* was by a *cup of wine*, because under the new covenant there is no farther shedding of blood. As it is here said of the cup, *This cup is the New Testament in my blood*; so it might be said of the *cup of blood*, Exodus 24, *That cup was the Old Testament in the blood of Christ*: there, all the articles of that covenant being read over, *Moses* sprinkled all the people with blood, and said, *This is the blood of the covenant which God hath made with you*; and thus the *old covenant* or testimony was confirmed. In like manner, *Christ*, having published all the articles of the *new covenant*, he takes the cup of wine, and gives them to drink, and saith. *This is the New Testament in my blood*; and thus the new covenant was established."-*Works*, vol. ii. p. 260.

Which is shed (εκχυνομενον, *poured out*) **for many**] εκχεω and εκχυω, *to pour out*, are often used in a *sacrificial* sense in the *Septuagint*, and signify to *pour out* or *sprinkle* the blood of the sacrifices before the altar of the Lord, by way of atonement. See ^{<121615>} **2 Kings 16:15**; ^{<18815>} **Leviticus 8:15; 9:9**; ^{<12912>} **Exodus 29:12**; ^{<18407>} **Leviticus 4:7, 14, 17, 30, 34**; and in various other places. Our Lord, by this very remarkable mode of expression, teaches us that, as his body was to be broken or crucified, **υπερ ημων**, *in our stead*, so here the blood was to be poured out to make an *atonement*, as the words, *remission of sins*, sufficiently prove for *without shedding of blood there was no remission*, ^{<81022>} **Hebrews 9:22**, nor any remission by shedding of blood, but in a *sacrificial* way. See the passages above, and on ^{<1836>} **Matthew 26:26**.

The whole of this passage will receive additional light when collated with ^{<25311>} **Isaiah 53:11, 12**. *By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify MANY, for he shall bear their iniquities-because he hath Poured out his soul unto death, and he bare the sin of MANY*. The *pouring out of the soul unto death*, in the prophet, answers to, *this is the blood of the new covenant which is poured out for you*, in the evangelists; and the **μυβρ**, *rabbim, multitudes*, in Isaiah, corresponds to the MANY, **πολλων**, of Matthew and Mark. The passage will soon appear plain, when we consider that *two* distinct classes of persons are mentioned by the prophet. 1. The Jews. ^{<25314>} **Isaiah 53:4**. *Surely he hath borne OUR griefs, and carried OUR sorrows*. ^{<25315>} **Isaiah 53:5**. *But he was wounded for OUR transgressions, he was bruised for OUR iniquities, the chastisement of OUR peace was upon him*. ^{<25316>} **Isaiah 53:6**. *All WE like sheep have gone astray, and the Lord hath laid upon him the iniquity of US all*. 2. The GENTILES. ^{<25311>} **Isaiah 53:11**. *By his knowledge, wt [db bedaato, i.e. by his being made known, published as Christ crucified among the Gentiles, he shall justify μυβρ rabbim, the multitudes, (the GENTILES,) for he shall (also) bear THEIR offences, as well as OURS, the Jews,* ^{<25314>} **Isaiah 53:4**, &c. It is well known that the Jewish dispensation, termed by the apostle as above, **η παλαια διαθηκη**, *the OLD covenant*, was *partial* and *exclusive*. None were particularly interested in it save the descendants of the twelve sons of Jacob: whereas the Christian dispensation, **η καινη διαθηκη**, *the NEW covenant*, referred to by our Lord in this place, was *universal*; for as *Jesus Christ by the grace of God tasted death for EVERY man*, ^{<81029>} **Hebrews 2:9**, and is that *Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the WORLD*, ^{<81029>} **John**

1:29, who *would have ALL MEN to be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth*, ^{<5404>}**1 Timothy 2:4**, even *that knowledge of Christ crucified, by which they are to be justified*, ^{<2331>}**Isaiah 53:11**, therefore he has commanded his disciples to *go into all the world, and preach the Gospel to EVERY CREATURE*, ^{<4165>}**Mark 16:15**. The reprobate race, those who were *no people, and not beloved*, were to be called in; for the Gospel was to be preached to *all the world*, though it was to *begin at Jerusalem*, ^{<4247>}**Luke 24:47**. For this purpose was the blood of the new covenant sacrifice poured out for the *multitudes*, that there might be but one fold, as there is but one Shepherd; and that God might be ALL and in ALL.

For the remission of sins.] εἰς ἀφεσις ἁμαρτιῶν, *for (or, in reference to) the taking away of sins*. For, although the blood is shed, and the atonement made, no man's sins are taken away until, as a true penitent, he returns to God, and, feeling his utter incapacity to save himself, believes in Christ Jesus, who is the justifier of the ungodly.

The phrase, ἀφεσις τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν, *remission of sins*, (frequently used by the Septuagint,) being thus explained by our Lord, is often used by the evangelists and the apostles; and does not mean merely the *pardon of sins*, as it is generally understood, but the *removal or taking away of sins*; not only the *guilt*, but also the very *nature of sin*, and the *pollution of the soul* through it; and comprehends all that is generally understood by the terms *justification and sanctification*. For the use and meaning of the phrase ἀφεσις ἁμαρτιῶν, see ^{<4004>}**Mark 1:4**; ^{<4017>}**Luke 1:77; 3:3; 24:47**; ^{<4023>}**Acts 2:38; 5:31; 10:43; 13:38; 26:18**; ^{<5014>}**Colossians 1:14**; ^{<5018>}**Hebrews 10:18**.

Both St. Luke and St. Paul add, that, after giving the bread, our Lord said, *Do this in remembrance of me*. And after giving the cup, St. Paul alone adds, *This do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me*. The account, as given by St. Paul, should be carefully followed, being fuller, and received, according to his own declaration, by especial revelation from God. See ^{<6123>}**1 Corinthians 11:23**, *For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, &c.* See the harmonized view above.

Verse 29. I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine] These words seem to intimate no more than this: We shall not have another opportunity of eating this bread and drinking this wine together; as in a few hours my crucifixion shall take place.

Until that day when I drink it new with you] That is, I shall no more drink of the produce of the vine with you; but shall drink *new* wine-wine of a widely different nature from this—a wine which the kingdom of God alone can afford. The term *new* in Scripture is often taken in this sense. So the *NEW heaven*, the *NEW earth*, the *NEW covenant*, the *NEW man*—mean a *heaven, earth, covenant, man*, of a very *different* nature from the former. It was our Lord's invariable custom to illustrate heavenly things by those of earth, and to make that which had *last* been the subject of conversation the means of doing it. Thus he uses *wine* here, of which they had lately drunk, and on which he had held the preceding discourse, to point out the supreme blessedness of the kingdom of God. But however pleasing and useful wine may be to the body and how helpful soever, as an ordinance of God. It may be to the soul in the holy sacrament; yet the wine of the kingdom, the spiritual enjoyments at the right hand of God, will be infinitely more precious and useful. From what our Lord says here, we learn that the sacrament of his supper is a *type* and a *pledge*, to genuine Christians, of the felicity they shall enjoy with Christ in the kingdom of glory.

Verse 30. And when they had sung a hymn] ὑμνησαντες means, probably, no more than a kind of *recitative* reading or chanting. As to the *hymn* itself, we know, from the universal consent of Jewish antiquity, that it was composed of Psalms 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, and 118, termed by the Jews **l l h hallel**, from **hy-wl l h halelu-yah**, the first word in Psalm 113. These six Psalms were always sung at every paschal solemnity. They sung this great hallel on account of the *five* great benefits referred to in it; viz.

1. The Exodus from Egypt, ^{<19B40>}**Psalm 114:1.** *When Israel went out of Egypt, &c.*
2. The miraculous division of the Red Sea, ^{<19B43>}**Psalm 114:3.** *The sea saw it and fled.*
3. The promulgation of the law, ^{<19B44>}**Psalm 114:4.** *The mountains skipped like lambs.*
4. The resurrection of the dead, ^{<19B49>}**Psalm 116:9.** *I will walk before the Lord in the land of the living.*
5. The passion of the Messiah, ^{<19B51>}**Psalm 115:1.** *Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, &c.*

See Schoettgen, *Hor. Hebr.* p. 231, and my *Discourse on the nature and design of the Eucharist*, 8vo. Lond. 1808.

Verse 31. All ye shall be offended] Or rather, *Ye will all be stumbled*-*παντες υμεις σκανδαλισθησεσθε*-ye will all forsake me, and lose in a great measure your confidence in me.

This night] The time of trial is just at hand.

I will smite the shepherd] It will happen to you as to a flock of sheep, whose shepherd has been slain-the leader and guardian being removed, the whole flock shall be scattered, and be on the point of becoming a prey to ravenous beasts.

Verse 32. But after I am risen again] Don't lose your confidence; for though I shall appear for a time to be wholly left to wicked men, and be brought under the power of death, yet I will rise again, and triumph over all *your* enemies and mine.

I will go before you] Still alluding to the case of the shepherd and his sheep. Though the shepherd has been smitten and the sheep scattered, the shepherd shall revive again, collect the scattered flock, and *go before them*, and lead them to peace, security, and happiness.

Verse 33. Peter-said unto him, Though all men shall be offended-yet will I never] The presumptuous person imagines he can do every thing, and can do nothing: thinks he can excel all, and excels in nothing: promises every thing, and performs nothing. The humble man acts a quite contrary part. There is nothing we know so little of as ourselves-nothing we see less of than our own weakness and poverty. The strength of pride is only for a moment. Peter, though vainly confident, was certainly sincere-he had never been put to a sore trial, and did not know his own strength. Had this resolution of his been formed in the strength of God, he would have been enabled to maintain it against earth and hell. This most awful denial of Christ, and his abandoning him in the time of trial, was sufficient to have disqualified him for ever from being, in any sense, *head of the Church*, had such a supremacy been ever designed him. Such a supremacy was never given him by Christ; but the *fable* of it is in the Church of Rome, and the mock Peter, not Peter the apostle, is there and there only to be found.

Verse 34. Jesus said] Our Lord's answer to Peter is very emphatic and impressive. *Verily*-I speak a solemn weighty truth, *thou wilt* not only be

stumbled, fall off, and forsake thy Master, but thou wilt even deny that thou hast, or ever had, any knowledge of or connection with me; and this thou wilt do, not by little and little, through a long process of time, till the apostasy, daily gathering strength, shall be complete; but thou wilt do it this very night, and that not once only, but thrice; and this thou wilt do also in the earlier part of the night, before even a cock shall crow. Was not this warning enough to him not to trust in his own strength, but to depend on God?

Verse 35. Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee.] He does not take the warning which his Lord gave him—he trusts in the warm, sincere attachment to Christ which he now feels, not considering that this must speedily fail, unless supported by the power of God.

Verse 36. A place called Gethsemane] A garden at the foot of the mount of Olives. The name seems to be formed from ἡ γαθ, a press, and ἔλαιον, oil; probably the place where the produce of the mount of Olives was prepared for use. The garden of the oilpress, or olive-press.

Sit ye here] Or, *stay* in this place, *while I go and pray yonder:* and employ ye the time as I shall employ it—in watching unto prayer.

Verse 37. And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee] That is, James and John; the same persons who had beheld his transfiguration on the mount—that they might contemplate this agony in the light of that glory which they had there seen; and so be kept from being stumbled by a view of his present humiliation.

Began to be sorrowful] λύπαισθαί, from λύω, to dissolve—exquisite sorrow, such as *dissolves* the natural vigour, and threatens to *separate* soul and body.

And very heavy.] Overwhelmed with anguish—ἀδημονεῖν. This word is used by the Greeks to denote the *most extreme anguish* which the soul can feel—*excruciating anxiety and torture of spirit.*

Verse 38. Then saith he] *Then saith—Jesus:*—I have added the word *Jesus*, ὁ ἰησοῦς, on the authority of a multitude of eminent MSS. See them in *Griesbach.*

My soul is exceeding sorrowful, (or, is surrounded with exceeding sorrow,) even unto death.] This latter word explains the two former: My

soul is so dissolved in sorrow, my spirit is filled with such agony and anguish, that, if speedy succour be not given to my *body*, death must be the speedy consequence.

Now, the grand expiatory sacrifice begins to be offered: in this garden Jesus enters fully into the sacerdotal office; and now, on the altar of his immaculate divinity, begins to offer his own body-his own life-a lamb without spot, for the sin of the world. St. Luke observes, ~~<4224B>~~ **Luke 22:43, 44**, that there appeared unto him an angel from heaven strengthening him; and that, *being in an agony*, his *sweat was like great drops of blood falling to the ground*. How exquisite must this anguish have been, when it forced the very blood through the coats of the veins, and enlarged the pores in such a preternatural manner as to cause them to empty it out in large successive drops! In my opinion, the principal part of the redemption price was paid in this unprecedented and indescribable agony.

Bloody sweats are mentioned by many authors; but none was ever such as this-where a person in *perfect health*, (having never had any *predisposing sickness* to induce a debility of the system,) and in the *full vigour of life*, about *thirty-three* years of age, suddenly, through mental pressure, *without any fear of death*, sweat great drops of blood; and these continued, during his wrestling with God to fall to the ground.

To say that all this was occasioned by the fear he had of the ignominious death which he was about to die confutes itself-for this would not only rob him of his divinity, for which purpose it is brought, but it deprives him of all excellency, and even of manhood itself. The prospect of death could not cause him to suffer thus, when he knew that in less than three days he was to be restored to life, and be brought into an eternity of blessedness. His agony and distress can receive no consistent explication but on this ground-*He SUFFERED, the JUST for the UNJUST, that he might BRING us to GOD*. O glorious truth! O infinitely meritorious suffering! And O! above all, the *eternal love*, that caused him to undergo such sufferings for the sake of *SINNERS*!

Verse 39. Fell on his face] See Clarke's note on "~~<42244>~~ **Luke 22:44**". This was the ordinary posture of the supplicant when the favour was great which was asked, and deep humiliation required. The head was put between the knees, and the forehead brought to touch the earth-this was not only a humiliating, but a very *painful* posture also.

This cup] The word *cup* is frequently used in the Sacred Writings to point out *sorrow, anguish, terror, death*. It seems to be an allusion to a very ancient method of punishing criminals. A cup of poison was put into their hands, and they were obliged to drink it. Socrates was killed thus, being obliged by the magistrates of Athens to drink a cup of the juice of hemlock. To death, by the *poisoned cup*, there seems an allusion in ^{<809>}**Hebrews 2:9**, *Jesus Christ, by the grace of God, TASTED death for every man*. The whole world are here represented as standing guilty and condemned before the tribunal of God; into every man's hand the *deadly cup* is put, and he is required to drink off the poison-Jesus enters, takes every man's cup out of his hand, and drinks off the poison, and thus tastes or suffers the death which every man otherwise must have undergone.

Pass from me] Perhaps there is an allusion here to several criminals standing in a row, who are all to drink of the same cup; but, the judge extending favour to a certain one, the *cup passes by him* to the next.

Instead of **προελθων μικρον**, *going a little forward*, many eminent MSS. have **προσελθων**, *coming a little forward*-but the *variation* is of little moment. At the close of this verse several MSS. add the clause in ^{<2243>}**Luke 22:43**, *There appeared an angel, &c.*

Verse 40. He-saith unto Peter] He addressed himself more particularly to this apostle, because of the profession he had made, ^{<4263>}**Matthew 26:33**; as if he had said: "Is this the way you testify your affectionate attachment to me? Ye all said you were ready to die with me; what, then, cannot you watch **ONE hour**?"

Instead of **ουκ ισχυσατε**, *could YE not*, the *Codex Alexandrinus*, the later *Syriac* in the margin, three of the *Itala*, and *Juvencus*, read **ουκ ισχυσας**, *couldst THOU not*-referring the reproach immediately to *Peter*, who had made the promises mentioned before.

Verse 41. That ye enter not into temptation] If ye cannot endure a little fatigue when there is no suffering, how will ye do when the temptation, the great trial of your fidelity and courage, cometh? *Watch*-that ye be not taken unawares; and *pray*-that when it comes ye may be enabled to bear it.

The spirit-is willing, but the flesh is weak] Your *inclinations* are *good*-ye are truly *sincere*; but your *good purposes* will be overpowered by

your *timidity*. Ye wish to continue steadfast in your adherence to your Master; but your *fears* will lead you to desert him.

Verse 42. O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me] *If it be not possible*-to redeem fallen man, *unless I drink this cup*, unless I suffer death for them; *thy will be done*-I am content to suffer whatever may be requisite to accomplish the great design. In this address the *humanity* of Christ most evidently appears; for it was his *humanity* alone that could *suffer*; and if it did not appear that he had *felt* these sufferings, it would have been a presumption that he had *not* suffered, and consequently made no *atonement*. And had he not appeared to have been perfectly *resigned* in these sufferings, his sacrifice could not have been a *free-will* but a *constrained* offering, and therefore of no use to the salvation of mankind.

Verse 43. Their eyes were heavy.] That is, they could not keep them open. Was there nothing *preternatural* in this? Was there no influence here from the powers of darkness?

Verse 44. Prayed the third time] So St. Paul-I besought the Lord **THRICE** that it might depart from me, ^{<4712>}**2 Corinthians 12:8**. This *thrice* repeating the same petition argues deep earnestness of soul.

Verse 45. Sleep on now, and take your rest] Perhaps it might be better to read these words interrogatively, and paraphrase them thus: *Do ye sleep on still?* Will no warnings avail? Will no danger excite you to watchfulness and prayer? *My hour*-in which I am to be delivered up, is at *hand*; therefore now think of your own personal safety.

The Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.] **αμαρτωλων**, viz. the *Gentiles* or *heathens*, who were generally distinguished by this appellation from the Jews. Here it probably means the Roman cohort that was stationed on festivals for the defence of the temple. By the Romans he was adjudged to death; for the Jews acknowledged that they had no power in capital cases. See the note on ^{<40910>}**Matthew 9:10**.

Verse 46. Rise, let us be going] That is, to meet them, giving thereby the fullest proof that I know all their designs, and might have, by flight or otherwise, provided for my own safety; but I go willingly to meet that death which their malice designs me, and, through it, provide for the life of the world.

Verse 47. Judas, one of the twelve] More deeply to mark his base ingratitude and desperate wickedness-HE *was* ONE *of the* TWELVE-and he is a TRAITOR, and one of the *vilest* too that ever disgraced human nature.

A great multitude with swords and staves] They did not come as officers of justice, but as a desperate mob. *Justice* had nothing to do in this business. He who a little before had been one of the leaders of the flock of Christ is now become the leader of ruffians and murderers! What a terrible fall!

Verse 48. Gave them a sign] How *coolly deliberate* is this dire apostate! The man *whom I shall kiss*-how deeply *hypocritical*! That is he, *hold him fast, seize him*-how diabolically *malicious*!

Hail, Master] A usual compliment among the Jews. Judas pretends to wish our Lord continued *health* while he is meditating his destruction! How many *compliments of this kind* are there in the world! Judas had a pattern in *Joab*, who, while he pretends to inquire tenderly for the health of *Amasa*, thrust him through with his sword; but the disciple here vastly outdoes his master, and through a motive, if possible, still more base. Let all those who use *unmeaning* or *insidious* compliments rank for ever with *Joab* and *Judas*.

And kissed him.] *And tenderly kissed him*-this is the proper meaning of the original word *κατεφιλησεν*, he *kissed him again and again*-still pretending the most affectionate attachment to him, though our Lord had before unmasked him.

Verse 50. Jesus said-Friend] Rather, *companion*, *εταίρε*, (*not FRIEND,*) *wherefore, rather, against whom* (*εφ' δ*, the reading of all the best MSS.) *art thou come?* How must these words have cut his very soul, if he had any sensibility left! Surely, thou, who hast so long been my *companion*, art not come against *me*, thy Lord, Teacher and Friend! What is the human heart not capable of, when abandoned by God, and influenced by Satan and the love of money!

Laid hands on Jesus] But not before they had felt that proof of his sovereign power by which they had all been struck down to the earth,
<BIB6> **John 18:6.** It is strange that, after this, they should dare to approach him; but the Scriptures must be fulfilled.

Verse 51. One of them which were with Jesus] This was Peter-*struck a servant of the high priest's*, the servant's name was Malchus, ^{<B1810>}**John 18:10**, and smote off his ear. In ^{<A2251>}**Luke 22:51**, it is said, *Jesus touched and healed it*. Here was another miracle, and striking proof of the Divinity of Christ. Peter did not *cut* the ear, merely, *he cut it OFF*, **αφειλεν**. Now to heal it, Jesus must either take up the ear and put it on again, or else create a new one-either of these was a miracle, which nothing less than *unlimited power* could produce. **See Clarke's note on "^{<B1810>}John 18:10"**.

Verse 52. Put up again thy sword into his place] Neither Christ nor his religion is to be defended by the secular arm. God is sufficiently able to support his ark: Uzzah need not stretch out his hand on the occasion. Even the *shadow* of public justice is not to be resisted by a private person, when coming from those in public authority. The cause of a Christian is the cause of God: sufferings belong to one, and vengeance to the other. Let the cause, therefore, rest in *his* hands, who will do it ample justice.

Shall perish with the sword] Instead of **απολουνται**, *shall perish*, many excellent MSS., versions, and fathers, have **αποθανουνται**, *shall die*. The general meaning of this verse is, they who contend in battle are likely, on both sides, to become the sacrifices of their mutual animosities. But it is probably a prophetic declaration of the Jewish and Roman states. The Jews put our Lord to death under the sanction of the Romans-both took the sword against Christ, and both perished by it. The Jews by the sword of the Romans, and the Romans by that of the Goths, Vandals, &c. The event has verified the prediction-the Jewish government has been destroyed upwards of 1700 years, and the Roman upwards of 1000. Confer with this passage, ^{<B1914>}**Psalm 2:4, 9; 110:1, 5, 6**. But how came Peter to have a sword? Judea was at this time so infested with robbers and cut-throats that it was not deemed safe for any person to go unarmed. He probably carried one for his mere personal safety.

Verse 53. More than twelve legions of angels?] As if he had said, Instead of you *twelve*, one of whom is a traitor, my Father can give me more than *twelve legions of angels* to defend me. A legion, at different times, contained different numbers; 4,200, 5,000, and frequently 6,000 men; and from this saying, taking the latter number, which is the common rate, may we not-safely believe that the angels of God amount to more than 72,000?

Verse 54. But how then] Had I such a defence-*shall the Scriptures be fulfilled*, which say, *that thus it must be?* That is, that I am to suffer and die for the sin of the world. Probably the Scriptures to which our Lord principally refers are Psa 22, 69, and especially Isaiah 53, and ^{<7024>}**Daniel 9:24-27**. Christ shows that they had no power against him but what he *permitted*; and that he willingly gave up himself into their hands.

Verse 55. Are ye come out as against a thief] At this time Judea was much infested by robbers, so that armed men were obliged to be employed against them-to this our Lord seems to allude. **See Clarke on** ^{<4062>}**Matthew 26:52**".

I sat daily with you] Why come in this hostile manner? Every day, for four days past, ye might have met with me in the temple, whither I went to teach you the way of salvation. **See Clarke on** ^{<4217>}**Matthew 21:17**".

Verse 56. But all this was done] This is probably the observation of the evangelist. **See Clarke on** ^{<4023>}**Matthew 2:23**".

Then all the disciples forsook him and fled.] O what is man! How little is even his utmost *sincerity* to be depended on! Jesus is abandoned by all!-even *zealous* Peter and *loving* John are among the fugitives! Was ever *master* so served by his *scholars*? Was ever *parent* so treated by his *children*? Is there not as much zeal and love among them all as might make one *martyr* for God and truth? Alas! no. He had but twelve who professed inviolable attachment to him; one of these betrayed him, another denied him with oaths, and the rest run away and utterly abandon him to his implacable enemies! Are there not found among his disciples still, 1st. Persons who betray him and his cause? 2dly. Persons who deny him and his people? 3dly. Persons who abandon him, his people, his cause, and his truth? Reader! dost *thou* belong to any of these classes?

Verse 57. They-led him away to Caiaphas] John says, ^{<6183>}**John 18:13**, that they led him *first to Annas*; but this appears to have been done merely to do him honour as the father-in-law of Caiaphas, and his colleague in the high priesthood. But as the Sanhedrin was assembled at the house of Caiaphas, it was there he must be brought to undergo his mock trial: but **see Clarke on** ^{<6183>}**John 18:13**".

Verse 58. Peter followed him afar off] Poor Peter! this is the *beginning* of his dreadful fall. His *fear* kept him from *joining* the company, and

publicly acknowledging his Lord; and his *affection* obliged him to follow at a *distance* that he might see the end.

And sat with the servants, to see the end.] When a man is weak in faith, and can as yet only follow Christ at a distance, he should avoid all dangerous places, and the company of those who are most likely to prove a snare to him. Had not Peter got to the *high priest's palace*, and *sat down* with the *servants*, he would not thus have denied his Lord and Master.

Servants-officers, ὑπηρέτων. Such as we term serjeants, constables, &c.

Verse 59. All the council sought false witness] What a prostitution of justice!-they first resolve to ruin him, and then seek the proper means of effecting it: they declare him criminal, and after that do all they can to fix some crime upon him, that they may appear to have some shadow of justice on their side when they put him to death. It seems to have been a common custom of this vile court to employ false witness, on any occasion, to answer their own ends. See this exemplified in the case of Stephen, ^{<4061>}**Acts 6:11-13.**

Verse 60. Though many false witnesses came] There is an unaccountable confusion in the MSS. in this verse: without stating the variations, which may be seen in *Griesbach*, I shall give that which I believe to be the genuine sense of the evangelist. *Then the chief priests and elders, and all the council, sought false witness against Jesus, to put him to death; but they found it not, though many false witnesses came up. At last two false witnesses came up, saying; This man said, &c.* It is the property of falsity to be ever inconsistent, and to contradict itself; therefore they could not find *two consistent testimonies*, without which the Jewish law did not permit any person to be put to death. However, the hand of God was in this business: for the credit of Jesus, and the honour of the Christian religion, he would not permit him to be condemned on a *false* accusation; and, therefore, at last they were obliged to change their ground, and, to the eternal confusion of the unrighteous council, he is condemned on the very evidence of his own innocence, purity, and truth!

Verse 61. I am able to destroy the temple of God] 1st. These words were not fairly quoted. Jesus had said, ^{<4019>}**John 2:19**, *Destroy this temple, and I will build it again in three days.* 2dly. The *inuendo* which they produce, applying these words to a pretended design to destroy the temple at *Jerusalem*, was utterly unfair; for these words *he spoke of the temple of*

his body. It is very easy, by means of a few small *alterations*, to render the most holy things and innocent persons odious to the world, and even to take away the life of the innocent.

Verse 62. Answerest thou nothing?] The accusation was so completely frivolous that it merited no notice: besides, Jesus knew that they were determined to put him to death, and that his hour was come; and that therefore remonstrance or defence would be of no use: he had often before borne sufficient testimony to the truth.

Verse 63. I adjure thee by the living God] I put thee to thy oath. To this solemn adjuration Christ immediately replies, because he is now called on, in the name of God, to bear *another* testimony to the truth. The authority of God in the most worthless magistrate should be properly respected. However necessary our Lord saw it to be silent, when the accusations were frivolous, and the evidence contradictory, he felt no disposition to continue this silence, when questioned concerning a *truth*, for which he came into the world to shed his blood.

Verse 64. Thou hast said] That is, I *am* the Christ, the promised *Messiah*, (see Clarke on “^{<4025>}Matthew 26:25”); and you and this whole nation shall shortly have the fullest proof of it: for *hereafter*, in a few years, *ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power*, fully invested with absolute dominion, *and coming in the clouds of heaven*, to execute judgment upon this wicked race. See ^{<4240>}Matthew 24:30. Our Lord appears to refer to ^{<20713>}Daniel 7:13: *One like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, &c.* This may also refer to the final judgment.

Verse 65. The high priest rent his clothes] This rending of the high priest’s garments was expressly contrary to the law, ^{<61005>}Leviticus 10:6; 21:10. But it was a common method of expressing violent grief, ^{<013729>}Genesis 37:29, 34; ^{<180121>}Job 1:20, and *horror* at what was deemed *blasphemous* or *impious*. ^{<121837>}2 Kings 18:37; 19:1; ^{<41444>}Acts 14:14. All that heard a blasphemous speech were obliged to rend their clothes, and never to sew them up again. See *Lightfoot*.

He hath spoken blasphemy] *Quesnel’s* note on this is worthy of notice. “See here a false zeal, a mask of religion, and a passionate and seditious way of proceeding, tending only to incense and stir up others, all which are common to those who would oppress truth by cabal, and without proof. By crying out, ‘heresy, blasphemy, and faction,’ though contrary to all

appearance, men fail not to stir up those in power, to gain the simple, to give some shadow of authority to the ill-disposed, to cast devout but ignorant people into scruples, and thereby to advance the mystery of iniquity, which is the mystery of all ages.” This was the very plan his Catholic brethren adopted in this country, in the reign of Queen Mary, called the bloody queen, because of the many murders of righteous men which she sanctioned at the mouth of her Catholic priesthood.

Verse 66. He is guilty of death.] ενοχος θανατου εστι, *he is liable to death.* All the *forms* of justice are here violated. The judge becomes a *party* and *accuser*, and proceeds to the verdict without examining whether all the prophecies concerning the Messiah, and the innumerable miracles which he wrought, did not justify him. *Examination* and *proof* are the ruin of all *calumnies*, and of the authors of them, and therefore they take care to keep off from these two things. See *Quesnel*.

Verse 67. Then did they spit in his face] This was done as a mark of the most profound contempt. See ^{<1816>}**Job 16:10; 30:10;** ^{<2806>}**Isaiah 50:6;** ^{<3301>}**Micah 5:1.** The judges now delivered him into the hands of the *mob*.

And buffeted him] Smote him with their fists, εκολαφισαν. This is the translation of Theophylact. κολαφιζειν, says he, means, “to beat with the hand, the *fingers being clenched*. συγκαμτομενων των δακτυλων, or, to speak more briefly, to buffet with the *fist*.”

Smote him with the palms of their hands] ερραπισαν. ραπιζω, says Suidas, means “παταξαι την γναθον απλη τη χειρι, *to smite the cheek with the open hand*.” Thus they offered him *indignity* in all its various and vexatious forms. Insults of this kind are never forgiven by the world: Jesus not only takes no revenge, (though it be completely in his power,) but bears all with meekness, without even one word of reply.

Verse 68. Prophecy unto us, thou Christ] Their conduct toward him now was expressly prophesied of, by a man whose Divine mission they did not pretend to deny; see ^{<2806>}**Isaiah 50:6.** It appears that, before they buffeted him, *they bound up his eyes*, See ^{<4146>}**Mark 14:65.**

Verse 69. A damsel came unto him] *A maid servant*, παιδισκη. See this translation vindicated by *Kypke*.

Thou also wast with Jesus] What a noble opportunity had Peter now to show his zeal for the insulted cause of truth, and his attachment to his

Master. But, alas! he is shorn of his strength. *Constables and maid servants* are no company for an apostle, except when he is delivering to them the message of salvation. *Evil communications corrupt good manners*. Had Peter been in better company, he would not have had so foul a fall.

Verse 70. But he denied before them all] So the evil principle *gains ground*. Before, he followed *at a distance*, now he *denies*; this is the *second* gradation in his fall.

Verse 71. Unto them that were there] Instead of λεγει τοις εκει και, more than one hundred MSS., many of which are of the first authority and antiquity, have λεγει αυτοις εκει και, *she saith unto them, this man was THERE also*. I rather think this is the genuine reading. τοις might have been easily mistaken for αυτοις, if the first syllable αυ were but a little faded in a MS. from which others were copied: and then the placing of the point after εκει ινστεαδ οφ αφτερ αυτοις ουυλδ νατυραλλψ πολλωω, ασ πλαχεδ αφτερ τοις, it would make no sense. *Griesbach* approves of this reading.

Verse 72. And again he denied with an oath] This is a *third* gradation of his iniquity. He has told a *lie*, and he *swears* to support it. A liar has always some suspicion that his testimony is not credited, for he is conscious to his own falsity, and is therefore naturally led to support his assertions by oaths.

Verse 73. Thy speech] *Thy manner of speech, η λαλια σου, that dialect of thine-his accent* being different from that of Jerusalem. From various examples given by *Lightfoot* and *Schoettgen*, we find that the Galileans had a very corrupt pronunciation, frequently interchanging a h t and [, and so blending or dividing words as to render them unintelligible, or cause them to convey a contrary sense.

Bewrayeth thee.] δηλου σε ποιει, maketh thee manifest, from the Anglo-saxon [Anglo-Saxon], to accuse, betray; a word long since lost from our language.

Verse 74. Then began he to curse and to swear] Rather, *Then he began positively to affirm-καταθεματιζειν, from κατα intensive, and τιθημι, I lay down, place, affirm*. But the common reading is καταναθεματιζειν, which signifies *to wish curses on himself*. The former reading is supported by almost every MS. of value, and is, beyond dispute, the *true reading*, and

has been received by *Griesbach* into the text. The business is bad enough, but the common reading makes it worse. In ^{<1872>}**Matthew 26:72**, Peter is said to *deny with an oath*; here, he *positively affirms and swears*, probably *by the name of God*, for this is the import of the word **ομνυειν**. This makes the *fourth* and final *gradation* in the climax of Peter's fall. From these awful beginnings it is not unfair to conclude that Peter might have gone almost as far as Judas himself, had not the traitorous business been effected before. Yet all this evil sprung simply from the *fear of man*. How many denials of Christ and his truth have sprung since, from the same cause!

The cock crew] This animal becomes, in the hand of God, the instrument of awaking the fallen apostle, at last, to a sense of his fall, danger, and duty. When abandoned of God, the *smallest* thing may become the occasion of a *fall*; and, when in the hand of God, the smallest matter may become the instrument of our *restoration*. Let us never think lightly of what are termed *little sins*: the smallest one has the seed of eternal ruin in it. Let us never think contemptibly of the *feeblest* means of grace: each may have the seed of eternal salvation in it. Let us ever remember that the great Apostle Peter fell through *fear of a servant maid*, and rose through the *crowing of a cock*.

Verse 75. Peter remembered the word of Jesus] St. Luke says, ^{<2261>}**Luke 22:61**, *The Lord turned and looked upon Peter*. So it appears he was nigh to our Lord, either at the time when the cock crew, or shortly after. The *delicacy* of this reproof was *great*-he must be *reproved* and *alarmed*, otherwise he will proceed *yet farther* in his iniquity; Christ is in bonds, and cannot *go* and *speak* to him; if he *call aloud*, the disciple is *discovered*, and falls a victim to Jewish *malice* and Roman *jealousy*; he therefore does the whole by a *look*. In the hand of Omnipotence every thing is *easy*, and he can save by a *few*, as well as by *many*.

He went out] He left the *place* where he had sinned, and the *company* which had been the *occasion* of his transgression.

And wept bitterly.] Felt bitter anguish of soul, which evidenced itself by the tears of contrition which flowed plentifully from his eyes. Let him that standeth take heed lest he fall! Where the *mighty* have been slain, what shall support the *feeble*? Only the grace of the ALMIGHTY God.

This transaction is recorded by the inspired penmen, 1st. That all may watch unto prayer, and shun the occasions of sin. 2dly. That if a man be unhappily overtaken in a fault, he may not despair, but cast himself immediately with a contrite heart on the infinite tenderness and compassion of God. See the notes on ^{<B18Z>}**John 18:27**.

I have touched on the subject of our Lord's anointing but slightly in the preceding notes, because the controversy upon this point is not yet settled; and, except to harmonists, it is a matter of comparatively little importance. Bishop Newcome has written largely on this fact, and I insert an extract from his notes.

BISHOP NEWCOME'S ACCOUNT OF THE ANOINTING OF OUR LORD.

"The histories of Jesus' unction, in Matthew, Mark, and John, are accounts of the same fact. *Hoc fixum maneat, eandem ab omnibus historiam referri*. Calv. Harm. p. 375.

"The following objections to this position occur in *Lightfoot, Whiston, Whitby, and Macknight*.

1st. "The unction recorded by St. John happens six days before the passover; but the other unction is fixed to the *second* day before that feast.

"*Ans.* The day of the entertainment related ^{<B12D>}**John 12:2**, is not restrained to the *sixth* day before the passover. *Quo die factum illi fuerit convivium, in quo a Maria unctus est, Johannes non exprimit*. Calv. Harm. Johann. p. 144. ^{<B12D>}**John 12:12, 13**, much people are said to meet Jesus on the day after his arrival at Bethany, not on the day after his unction. See ^{<B12D>}**John 12:9**. St. John has recorded events on the sixth and on the fifth day before the passover; and then, ^{<B13D>}**John 13:1**, he proceeds to the evening on which the passover was eaten. On this account he anticipates the history of Jesus's unction; and he naturally anticipates it on mentioning the place where it happened.

2dly. "The scene in St. John is the house of Martha, or of Lazarus; in the other evangelists, that of Simon the leper.

"*Ans.* St. John lays the scene in general at Bethany.

“It seems probable that Lazarus would not have been called εἰς τῶν ἀνακειμένων, if he had been the host.

“Martha, the sister of Lazarus, might show Jesus honour by ministering to him in any house as well as her own. ‘She was Simon’s neighbour, and perhaps his relation,’ *Dr. Priestley, Harm.* p. 102. Our Lord’s affection for Lazarus and his sister, and the recent miracle wrought on Lazarus, were very sufficient reasons for Simon’s invitation of such neighbouring guests.

3dly. “St. John mentions the *feet* of Jesus as anointed by Mary, and wiped with her hair; the other evangelists say that the ointment was poured on Jesus’s head.

“*Ans.* It is no where asserted that the unction was of Jesus’s head *only*, or of his feet *only*: both actions are consistent; and St. John, in his supplemental history, may very well have added the respectful conduct of Mary, that, after having anointed Jesus’s head, she proceeded to anoint his feet, and even to wipe them with her hair.

4thly. “In St. John, Judas alone murmurs: in St. Matthew, the disciples have indignation; or, as St. Mark expresses it, some have indignation among themselves.

“*Ans.* Dr. Lardner says, *Serm.* vol. ii. p. 316: ‘It is well known to be very common with all writers to use the plural number when one person only is intended; nor is it impossible that others might have some uneasiness about it, though they were far from being so disgusted at it as Judas was. And their concern for the poor was sincere: his was self-interested and mere pretence.’

Grotius’s words are: *Reprehensa est hoc nomine mulier ab uno discipulorum; nam ita pluralis accipi solet.*

5thly. “The vindications of the woman by our Lord differ so much as to show that the occasions were different.

“*Ans.* St. John’s words are indeed thus misinterpreted by Baronius: *Let her alone, that she may keep it against the day of my burial, alluding to,* ^{<4160>} **Mark 16:1.** See *Lightfoot, Harm.* p. 27. See also *Lightfoot, ib. l. 251.* ‘*She hath kept it yet, and not spent all; that*

she may bestow it on a charitable use, the anointing of my body to its burial.'

“Whiston also, Harm. 129, gives a wrong sense to the words. She hath spent but little of it now: she hath reserved the main part of it for a fitter time, the day before my delivery to the Jews; making this a prediction of what passed, ^{<4086>}**Matthew 26:6-13;** ^{<4143>}**Mark 14:3-9.** It must be observed that ^{<3127>}**John 12:7**, there is a remarkable various reading: **ἵνα εἰς τὴν ἡμέραν τοῦ ἐνταφιασμοῦ μου τηρήσῃ αὐτό.** See Wetstein, and add Codd. Vercell. and Veron. in Blanchini. Of this reading we have a sound interpretation in Mill, proleg. xlv. *Sine eam ut opportuna hoc unguento, velut ad sepulturam meam, jamjam occidendi, illud servasse ostendatur.* And likewise in Bengelius ad loc. who observes that the common reading is, *Faciioris sensus causta;* and adds, *Verbum τηρήσῃ servaret, pendet ex praeterito, cujus vis latet in ἀφες αὐτήν, i.e. Noli reprehendere hanc, quae unguentum ideo nec vendidit, nec pauperibus dedit, ut, &c.* And the common reading is thus rightly explained by Lightfoot, 2, 588. ‘If Baronius’s exposition do not take, then add this clause:—Let her alone; for this may be an argument and sign that she hath not done this vainly, luxuriously, or upon any delicacy spent so costly an ointment upon me; because she hath reserved it for this time, wherein I am so near my grave and funeral, and poured it not on me before.’ Lardner’s comment, *ubi supra*, p. 312, is applicable to the three evangelists. If this ointment were laid out upon a dead body, you would not think it too much. You may consider this anointing as an embalming of me. The words are a prediction of Christ’s death, which was to happen on the third day after; and they are a prediction beautifully taken from the occasion. She has done this to embalm me, Matthew. She has anticipated the embalming of me, Mark. She has not sold this ointment, and given it to the poor, that she might reserve it to this day, which is, as it were, the day of my embalming, so soon is my burial to follow, John.

“Dr. Scott, on Matthew, quotes the following passage from Theophylact: **ἔθος ἦν τοῖς ἰουδαίοις μετὰ μύρων ἐνταφιαζεῖν τὰ σώματα, ὡς καὶ οἱ αἰγυπτιοὶ ποιοῦν, διὰ τὸ ἀσηπτα τηρεῖσθαι, καὶ ἀνευ δυσωδίας.** It was a custom

among the Jews, as well as among the Egyptians, to embalm the bodies of the dead, as well to keep them from putrefaction, as to prevent offensive smells.

The expressions therefore of the three evangelists agree in sense and substance. I have explained the more difficult in St. John; leaving every one to his own judgment whether it be the true one or not; though I incline to think that the unusual phrase ought generally to be admitted into the text.

“6thly. In St. John, Mary anoints Jesus in Matthew and Mark, a woman not named.

“*Ans.* Lardner says, *ubi supra*, p. 315. ‘St. John having before given the history of the resurrection of Lazarus, it was very natural for him, when he came to relate this anointing of our Lord, to say by whom it was done. But the two former evangelists having never mentioned Lazarus or his sisters in their Gospels, when they came to relate this action forbear to mention any name, and speak only of a certain woman. ~~2108~~ **Luke 10:38-42**, has an account of our Lord’s being entertained at the house of Martha. But he says nothing of this anointing. If he had related it, I make no question that he, like St. John, would have said by whom it was done.’ Upon the whole, there is no solid objection to the hypothesis, that we have *three* accounts of the *same* transaction. But it is incredible that there should be two unctions of Jesus, in Bethany, within four days, not plainly distinguished from each other; that the kind and price of the ointment should be the same; that the two actions should be censured in the same manner; and that words to the same effect should be used in defence of the woman who anointed Jesus, within so short a *time*, in the same *place*, and among the same *persons*. See Doddridge on ~~6121~~ **John 12:1**. As to the precise time of this transaction, it is natural to conclude from the accounts of Matthew and Mark, that it happened two days before the passover. I had much pleasure in observing that Mr. Jebb, in his Harmony, assigns it the same order as I do. I likewise find in Ward’s Dissertations, p. 112, the following remark. ‘John only mentions the day when Jesus came to Bethany, without specifying the time when he was entertained there by Simon the leper; whereas the other two evangelists acquaint us with the day when that was done, and what followed upon it, with relation to Judas.’ And again, *Wall* says,

Critical Notes, v. 3. p. 52: ‘Wednesday he seems to have stayed at Bethany, and supped there. At which supper, Mary, sister of Lazarus, poured that ointment on his body which he interpreted to be for his burial.’ And on ^{<B12D>}**John 12:2**: ‘This seems to be the same supper which Matthew and Mark do say was at the house of Simon the leper; for there it was that Mary anointed him. But then we must not take it to be the same night that he came to Bethany, but two days before the passover.’

“That Judas went to the high priests on the evening or night of our Wednesday, may be collected from ^{<A154>}**Matthew 26:14-17**, and the parallel places in this harmony; and he seems to have acted partly in disgust at what had passed. This is a good argument for fixing the unction for Wednesday. As it will appear that the other apostles did not suspect his treachery, we may suppose that Judas withdrew himself clandestinely, probably after our Lord had retired to privacy and devotion. Our Lord’s words, ^{<A17D>}**Matthew 26:2**, may have led Mary to show this respect to Jesus, lest no future opportunity should offer. See Lardner, *ubi supra*, p. 327. Dr. Priestley thinks that ‘if the verses that contain this story in ^{<A17E>}**Matthew 26:6-13**, be considered, they will be found to stand very awkwardly in their present situation, where they interrupt an account of a consultation among the Jews about putting Jesus to death.’ Harm. p. 100. But it seems to me that the story has a remarkably apt connection with the preceding and subsequent history. The Jewish rulers consult how they may take Jesus by craft, and without raising a tumult among the people. An accident happens which offends one of Jesus’s familiar attendants; who immediately repairs to Jesus’s enemies, and receives from them a bribe to betray him in the absence of the multitude.” *Newcome’s Harmony*, Notes p. 39, &c.

I have added the above, not from a conviction that the point is so elucidated as to settle the controversy, but merely to place before the reader both sides of the question. Still, *sub judice lis est*; and any man may doubt, consistently with the most genuine piety, whether the relations given by the evangelists, concerning the *anointing of our Lord*, should be understood of *two* different unctions, at two different *times*, in two different *places*, by two different *persons*; or whether they are not different accounts, with some varying circumstances, of *one* and the *same* transaction. I incline, at present, to the former opinion, but it would be

rash to decide where so many eminently learned and wise men have disagreed.

The question considered, whether our Lord ate the passover with his disciples before he suffered?

Every candid person must allow that there are great difficulties relative to the *time* in which our Lord ate the last passover with his disciples. In the *Introduction* to my Discourse on the nature and design of the Holy Eucharist, I have examined this subject at large, and considered the four following opinions, viz. I. Our Lord did *not* eat the passover on the last year of his ministry. II. Our Lord *did* eat it *that year*; and *at the same time* with the Jews. III. He did eat it that year, but *not* at the same time with the Jews. IV. He did eat *a* passover of his own instituting, but widely differing from that eaten by the Jews. The two first opinions do not appear to be solidly supported. The two last are of the most importance, are the most likely, and may be harmonized. I shall introduce a few observations on each in this place. And I. On the opinion that “our Lord did eat the passover this year, but *not at the same time* with the Jews.”

Dr. Cudworth, who of all others has handled this subject best, has proved from the Talmud, Mishna, and some of the most reputable of the Jewish rabbins, that the ancient Jews, about our Saviour’s time, often solemnized as well the passovers as the other feasts, upon the *ferias* next *before* and *after* the Sabbaths. And, that as the Jews in ancient times reckoned the *new moons*, not according to astronomical exactness, but according to the $\phi\alpha\sigma\iota\varsigma$, or moon’s *appearance*: and, as this *appearance* might happen a day *later* than the *real* time, consequently there might be a whole day of difference in the time of celebrating one of these feasts, which depended on a particular day of the month; the days of the month being counted from the $\phi\alpha\sigma\iota\varsigma$, or *appearance* of the *new moon*. As he describes the whole manner of doing this, both from the Babylonish Talmud, and from Maimonides, I shall give an extract from this part of his work, that my readers may have the whole argument before them.

“In the great or outer court there was a house called *Beth Yazek*, where the senate sat all the 30th day of every month, to receive the witnesses of the moon’s appearance, and to examine them. If there came approved witnesses on the 30th day, who could state they had seen the new moon, the chief man of the senate stood up, and cried

vdqm *mekuddash*, it is sanctified; and the people standing by caught the word from him, and cried, *Mekuddash! mekuddash!* But if, when the consistory had sat all the day, and there came no approved witnesses of the *phasis*, or *appearance of the new moon*, then they made an intercalation of one day in the former month, and decreed the following *one* and *thirtieth* day to be the calends. But if, after the *fourth* or *fifth* day, or even *before the end of the month*, respectable witnesses came from far, and testified they had seen the new moon in its due time, the senate were bound to alter the beginning of the month, and reckon it a day sooner, viz. from the thirtieth day.

“As the senate were very unwilling to be at the trouble of a second consecration, when they had even fixed on a wrong day, and therefore received very reluctantly the testimony of such witnesses as those last mentioned, they afterwards made a statute to this effect—*That whatsoever time the senate should conclude on for the calends of the month, though it were certain they were in the wrong, yet all were bound to order their feasts according to it.*” This, Dr. Cudworth supposes, actually took place in the time of our Lord; and “as it is not likely that our Lord would submit to this perversion of the original custom, and that following the true **φασις**, or appearance of the new moon, confirmed by sufficient witnesses, he and his disciples ate the passover on that day; but the Jews, following the pertinacious decree of the Sanhedrin, did not eat it till the day following.”

Dr. C. farther shows from Epiphanius, that there was a *contention*, **θορυβος**, a *tumult*, among the Jews about the passover, that very year. Hence it is likely that what was the real paschal day to our Lord, his disciples, and many other pious Jews who adopted the true **φασις** phasis, was only the *preparation* or *antecedent* evening to others, who acted on the decree of the senate. Besides, it is worthy of note, that not only the *Karaites*, who do not acknowledge the authority of the Sanhedrin, but also the *rabbins* themselves grant that, where the case is *doubtful*, the passover should be celebrated *with the same ceremonies*, two days together; and it was always doubtful, when the appearance of the new moon could not be fully ascertained.

Bishop Pearce supposes that it was lawful for the Jews to eat the paschal lamb at any time between the evening of Thursday, and that of Friday; and that this permission was necessary, because of the immense number of lambs which were to be killed for that purpose: as, in one year there were not fewer than 256,500 lambs offered. See Josephus, War, b. vii. c. 9. sect. 3. In ^{<40517>}**Matthew 26:17**, it is said, Now the first *day* of the *feast* of unleavened bread, (τη δε πρωτη των αζυμων,) the disciples came to Jesus, saying unto him, Where wilt thou that we prepare for thee to eat the passover? As the *feast* of unleavened bread did not begin till the day after the passover, the fifteenth day of the month, ^{<40235>}**Leviticus 23:5, 6**; ^{<40216>}**Numbers 28:16, 17**, *this* could not have been properly the *first day* of that *feast*; but, as the Jews began to eat unleavened bread on the fourteenth day, ^{<40218>}**Exodus 12:18**, this day was often termed the *first of unleavened bread*. Now it appears that the evangelists use it in this sense, and call even the paschal day by this name, see ^{<41412>}**Mark 14:12**, ^{<40227>}**Luke 22:7**.

At first view, this third opinion, which states that Christ did eat the passover with his disciples that year, but not in the same hour with the Jews; and that he expired on the cross the same hour in which the paschal lamb was killed, seems the most probable. For it appears, from what has already been remarked, that our Lord and his disciples ate the passover some hours before the Jews ate theirs; for they, according to custom, ate theirs at the end of the *fourteenth* day, but Christ appears to have eaten his the preceding evening, which was the beginning of the same sixth day of the week, or Friday, for the Jews began their day at *sun-setting*; we at *midnight*. Thus Christ ate the passover the *same day* with the Jews, but not on the *same hour*. Christ, therefore, kept this passover the beginning of the fourteenth day, the precise day in which the Jews had eaten their first passover in Egypt: see ^{<40216>}**Exodus 12:6-19**. And in the same part of the same day in which they had sacrificed their first paschal lamb, viz. *between the two evenings*, i, e, between the sun's declining west and his setting, Jesus, our passover was sacrificed for us. For it was the *third* hour, in the course of between 9 and 12, ^{<41525>}**Mark 15:25**, that Christ was nailed to the cross: and in the course of the *ninth* hour, between 12 and 3 in the afternoon, ^{<40274>}**Matthew 27:46**; ^{<41534>}**Mark 15:34**, Jesus, knowing that the antetype had accomplished every thing shadowed forth by the type, said, "It is FINISHED," τετελεσται, *completed, perfected*, and, having thus said, he bowed his head, and dismissed his spirit. See on ^{<43194>}**John 19:14,30**.

Probably there is but one objection of any force that lies against the opinion, that our Lord ate his passover *some hours* before the Jews in general ate theirs; which is that, if our Lord did eat the passover the evening before the Jews in general ate *theirs*, it could not have been sacrificed according to the law; nor is it at all likely that the blood was sprinkled at the foot of the altar. If, therefore, the blood was not thus sprinkled by one of the priests, that which constituted the very essence of the rite, as ordained by God, was lacking in that celebrated by our Lord.

To this it is answered:-First, we have already seen that, in consequence of the immense number of sacrifices to be offered on the paschal solemnity, it is highly probable the Jews were obliged to employ two days for this work. It is not at all likely that the blood of 256,500 lambs could be shed and sprinkled at one altar, in the course of one day, by all the priests in Jerusalem, or indeed in the Holy Land; since they had but that *one* altar where they could legally sprinkle the blood of the victims.

Secondly, we have also seen that, in cases of doubt relative to the time of the appearance of the new moon, the Jews were permitted to hold the passover both days; and that it is probable such a dubious case existed at the time in question. In any of these cases the lamb might have been killed and its blood sprinkled according to the rules and ceremonies of the Jewish Church.

Thirdly, as our Lord was the true paschal lamb, who was, in a few hours after this time, to bear away the sin of the world, he might dispense with this part of the ceremony, and act as Lord of his own *institution* in this, as he had done before in the case of the *Sabbath*. At any rate, as it seems probable that he ate the passover at this time, and that he died about the time the Jews offered theirs, it may be fully presumed that he left nothing undone towards a due performance of the rite which the present necessity required, or the law of God could demand.

The objection that our Lord and his disciples appear to have *sat* or *reclined* at table all the time they ate what is supposed above to have been the passover, contrary to the paschal institution, which required them to eat it standing, with their staves in their hands, their loins girded, and their shoes on, cannot be considered as having any great weight in it; for, though the terms **ἄνεκειτο**, ^{<1831>}**Matthew 26:20**, and **ἄνεπεσε**, ^{<42214>}**Luke 22:14**, are used in reference to their eating that evening, and these words signify *reclining at table*, or on a *couch*, as is the custom of the orientals, it does

not follow that they must necessarily be restrained to that meaning; nor does it appear that this part of the ceremony was much attended to, perhaps not at all, in the latter days of the Jewish Church.

The second opinion which we have to examine is this: Our Lord did eat a passover of his own instituting, but widely different from that eaten by the Jews.

Mr. Toinard, in his Greek Harmony of the Gospels, strongly contends that our Lord did *not* eat what is commonly *called* the passover this year, but another, of a mystical kind. His chief arguments are the following:-

It is indubitably evident, from the text of St. John, that the night on the beginning of which our Lord supped with his disciples, and instituted the holy sacrament, was not that on which the Jews celebrated the passover; but the *preceding* evening, on which the passover could not be legally offered. The conclusion is evident from the following passages: ~~<B130>~~ **John 13:1.** *Now before the feast of the passover, Jesus knowing, &c.* ~~<B130>~~ **John 13:2.** *And supper, (not the paschal, but an ordinary supper,) being ended, &c.* ~~<B137>~~ **John 13:27.** *That thou doest, do quickly.* ~~<B138>~~ **John 13:28.** *Now no one at the table knew for what intent he spake this.* ~~<B139>~~ **John 13:29.** *For some thought, because Judas had the bag, that Jesus had said unto him, Buy what we have need of against the feast, &c.* ~~<B138>~~ **John 18:28.** *Then led they Jesus from Caiaphas to the hall of judgment, and it was early; and they themselves went not into the judgment hall, lest they should be defiled, but that they might eat the passover.* ~~<B1914>~~ **John 19:14.** *And it was the preparation of the passover, and about the sixth hour.* Now as it appears that at this time the disciples thought our Lord had ordered Judas to go and bring what was necessary for the passover, and they were then supping together, it is evident that it was not the paschal lamb on which they were supping; and it is as evident, from the unwillingness of the Jews to go into the hall of judgment, that they had not as yet eaten the passover. These words are plain, and can be taken in no other sense, without offering them the greatest violence.

Mr. Toinard, having found that our Lord was crucified the sixth day of the week, (Friday,) during the paschal solemnity, in the thirty-third year of the vulgar aera, and that the paschal moon of that year was not in conjunction with the sun till the *afternoon* of Thursday the 19th of March, and that the *new moon* could not be seen in Judea until the following day, (Friday,) concluded that the intelligence of the φᾶσις, or appearance of the *new*

moon, could not be made by the witnesses to the *beth din*, or senate, sooner than Saturday morning, the 21st of March. That the first day of the first Jewish month, *Nisan*, could not continence that thirty-third year sooner than the setting of the sun on Friday, March 20th; and, consequently, that Friday, April 3d, on which Christ died, was the 14th of *Nisan*, (not the 15th,) the day appointed by the law for the celebration of the passover. All these points he took care to have ascertained by the nicest astronomical calculations, in which he was assisted by a very eminent astronomer and mathematician, Bullialdus. (Mr. Bouilleau.)

These two last opinions, apparently contradictory, and which alone, of all those offered on the subject, deserve consideration, may be brought to harmonize. That Jesus ate the passover with his disciples the evening before the Jews ate theirs, seems pretty clearly proved from the text of St. Luke, and the arguments founded on that text.

All that is *assumed* there, to make the whole consistent, is, that the Jews that year held the passover both on the 13th and 14th of *Nisan*, because of the reasons already assigned: and that therefore Peter and John, who were employed on this business, might have got the blood legally sprinkled by the hands of a priest, which was all that was necessary to the legality of the rite.

But, secondly, should it appear improbable that such double celebration took place at this time, and that our Lord could not have eaten the passover that year with his disciples, as he died on the very hour on which the paschal lamb was slain, and consequently before he could legally eat the passover, how then can the text of St. Luke be reconciled with this fact? I answer, with the utmost ease; by substituting *a* passover for *the* passover, and simply assuming that our Lord at this time instituted the holy EUCHARIST, in *place* of the PASCHAL LAMB: and thus it will appear he ate *a* passover with his disciples the evening before his death, viz. the *mystical* passover, or sacrament of his body and blood; and that this was the passover which he so ardently longed to eat with his disciples before he suffered. This is the opinion of Mr. Toinard, and, if granted, solves every difficulty. Thus the whole controversy is brought into a very narrow compass: Our Lord did eat *a* passover with his disciples some short time before he died:-the question is, *What* passover did he eat-the regular *legal* passover, or a *mystical* one? That he ate *a* passover is, I think, demonstrated: but whether the *literal* or *mystical* one, is a matter of doubt.

On this point, good and learned men may innocently hesitate and differ: but on either hypothesis, the text of the evangelists is unimpeachable, and all shadow of *contradiction* done away: for the question then rests on the peculiar meaning of *names* and *words*. On this hypothesis, the *preparation of the passover* must be considered as implying no more than-1. Providing a convenient room. 2. Bringing water for the baking on the following day, because on that day the bringing of the water would have been unlawful. 3. Making inquisition for the leaven, that every thing of this kind might be removed from the house where the passover was to be eaten, according to the very strict and awful command of God, ^{<0215>}**Exodus 12:15-20; 23:15; 34:25**. These, it is probable, were the *acts of preparation* which the disciples were commanded to perform, ^{<0257>}**Matthew 26:17**; ^{<1143>}**Mark 14:13, 14**; ^{<2218>}**Luke 22:8-11**, and which, on their arrival at the city, they punctually executed. See ^{<0259>}**Matthew 26:19**; ^{<1146>}**Mark 14:16**; ^{<2213>}**Luke 22:13**. Thus every thing was prepared, and the holy sacrament instituted, which should, in the Christian Church, take place of the Jewish passover, and continue to be a memorial of the sacrifice which Christ was about to make by his death on the cross: for as the paschal lamb had showed forth his death till he came, this death fulfilled the design of the rite, and sealed up the vision and prophecy.

All preparations for the true paschal sacrifice being now made, Jesus was immediately betrayed, shortly after apprehended, and in a few hours expired upon the cross. It is therefore very likely that he did not *literally* eat the passover this year; and may I not add, that it is more than probable that the passover was not eaten in the whole land of Judea on this occasion? The rending of the vail of the temple, ^{<0275>}**Matthew 27:51**; ^{<1158>}**Mark 15:38**; ^{<2245>}**Luke 23:45**, the terrible earthquake, ^{<0275>}**Matthew 27:51-54**; the dismal and unnatural darkness, which was over the whole land of Judea, from the sixth hour, (twelve o'clock,) to the ninth hour (i.e. three o'clock in the afternoon,) with all the other prodigies which took place on this awful occasion, we may naturally conclude, were more than sufficient to terrify and appal this guilty nation, and totally to prevent the celebration of the paschal ceremonies. Indeed, the time in which killing the sacrifices, and sprinkling the blood of the lambs, should have been performed, was wholly occupied with these most dreadful portents; and it would be absurd to suppose that, under such terrible evidences of the Divine indignation, any religious ordinances or festive preparations could possibly have taken place.

My readers will probably be surprised to see the preceding opinions so dissent among themselves, and the plausible reasons by which they are respectively supported, where each seems by turns to prevail. When I took up the question, I had no suspicion that it was encumbered with so many difficulties. These I now feel and acknowledge; nevertheless, I think the plan of reconciling the texts of the evangelists, particularly St. Luke and St. John, which I have adopted above, is natural, and, I am in hopes, will not appear altogether unsatisfactory to my readers. On the subject, circumstanced as it is, *hypothesis* alone can prevail; for indubitable evidence and certainty cannot be obtained. The morning of the resurrection is probably the nearest period in which accurate information on this point can be expected. *Je suis trompe*, says Bouilleau, *si cete question peut etre jamais bien eclaircie*. “If I be not mistaken, this question will never be *thoroughly* understood.” It would be presumptuous to say, Christ *did eat* the passover this last year of his ministry: it would be as hazardous to say *he did not eat* it. The *middle* way is the safest; and it is that which is adopted above. One thing is sufficiently evident, that Christ, our paschal lamb, has been sacrificed for us; and that he has instituted the holy eucharist, to be a perpetual memorial of that his precious death until his coming again: and they who, with a sincere heart, and true faith in his passion and death, partake of it, shall be made partakers of his most blessed body and blood. Reader, praise God for the atonement, and rest not without an application of it to thy own soul.

ST. MATTHEW

CHAPTER 27.

In the morning, Christ is bound and delivered to Pontius Pilate, 1, 2. Judas, seeing his Master condemned, repents, acknowledges his transgression to the chief priests, attests Christ's innocence, throws down the money, and goes and hangs himself, 3-5. They buy the potter's field with the money, 6-10. Christ, questioned by Pilate, refuses to answer, 11-14. Pilate, while inquiring of the Jews whether they would have Jesus or Barabbas released, receives a message from his wife to have nothing to do in this wicked business, 15-19. The multitude, influenced by the chief priests and elders, desire Barabbas to be released, and Jesus to be crucified, 20-23. Pilate attests his innocence, and the people make themselves and their posterity responsible for his blood, 24, 25. Barabbas is released, and Christ is scourged, 26. The soldiers strip him, clothe him with a scarlet robe, crown him with thorns, mock, and variously insult him, 27-31. Simon compelled to bear his cross, 32. They bring him to Golgotha, give him vinegar mingled with gall to drink, crucify him, and cast lots for his raiment, 33-36. His accusation, 37. Two thieves are crucified with him, 38. He is mocked and insulted while hanging on the cross, 39-44. The awful darkness, 45. Jesus calls upon God, is offered vinegar to drink, expires, 46-50. Prodigies that accompanied and followed his death, 51-53. He is acknowledged by the centurion, 54. Several women behold the crucifixion, 55, 56. Joseph of Arimathea begs the body of Pilate, and deposits it in his own new tomb, 57-60. The women watch the sepulchre, 61. The Jews consult with Pilate how they may prevent the resurrection of Christ, 62-64. He grants them a guard for the sepulchre, and they seal the stone that stopped the mouth of the tomb where he was laid, 65, 66.

NOTES ON CHAP. 27.

Verse 1. When the morning was come] As soon as it was light—took counsel against Jesus. They had begun this counsel the preceding evening, see ~~1165~~ **Matthew 26:59**. But as it was contrary to all forms of law to proceed against a person's life by *night*, they seem to have separated for a few hours, and then, at the break of day, came together again, pretending to conduct the business according to the forms of law.

To put him to death] They had already determined his death, and pronounced the sentence of death on him; ~~1166~~ **Matthew 26:66**. And now they assemble under the pretence of reconsidering the evidence, and deliberating on it, to give the greater appearance of justice to their conduct.

They wished to make it appear that “they had taken ample time to consider of it, and, from the fullest conviction, by the most satisfactory and conclusive evidence, they had now delivered him into the hands of the Romans, to meet that death to which they had adjudged him.”

Verse 2. They-delivered him to Pontius Pilate] The Sanhedrin had the power of life and death in their own hands in every thing that concerned *religion*; but as they had not evidence to put Christ to death because of *false doctrine*, they wished to give countenance to their conduct by bringing in the *civil* power, and therefore they delivered him up to Pilate as one who aspired to regal dignities, and whom he must put to death, if he professed to be Cæsar’s friend. *Pontius Pilate* governed Judea ten years under the *Emperor Tiberius*; but, having exercised great cruelties against the Samaritans, they complained of him to the emperor, in consequence of which he was deposed, and sent in exile to *Vienna*, in *Dauphiny*, where he killed himself two years after.

Verse 3. Judas-when he saw that he was condemned, repented] There is much of the wisdom and goodness of God to be seen in this part of Judas’s conduct. Had our Lord been condemned to death on the evidence of one of his own disciples, it would have furnished infidels with a strong argument against Christ and the Christian religion. “One of his own disciples, knowing the whole imposture, declared it to the Jewish rulers, in consequence of which he was put to death as an impostor and deceiver.” But the traitor, being stung with remorse, came and acknowledged his crime, and solemnly declared the innocence of his Master, threw back the money which *they* gave him to induce him to do this villainous act; and, to establish the evidence which he now gave against *them* and *himself*, in behalf of the *innocence* of Christ, hanged himself, or died through excessive grief and contrition. Thus the character of Christ was rescued from all reproach; infidelity deprived of the power to cry “imposture!” and the Jewish rulers overwhelmed with eternal infamy. If it should ever be said, “One who knew him best delivered him up as an impostor,”-to this it may be immediately answered, “The *same person*, struck with remorse, came and declared his own guilt, and Christ’s innocence; *accused* and *convicted* the Jewish rulers, in the *open* council, of having *hired* him to do this iniquitous action, threw them back the bribe they had given him, and then hanged himself through distress and despair, concluding his iniquity in this business was *too great* to be *forgiven*.” Let him who chooses, after this plenary evidence to the innocence of Christ, continue the objection, and cry

out *imposture!* take heed that *he* go not and do LIKEWISE. Caiaphas, Pilate, and Judas have done so already, and I have known several, who have called Christ an impostor, who have *cut their own throats, shot, drowned, or hanged themselves.* God is a jealous God, and highly resents every thing that is done and said against that eternal truth that came to man through Jesus Christ, by the Holy Spirit. Indeed, there is one class of Deists, viz. those who are vicious in their lives, and virulent in their opposition to Christianity, who generally bring themselves to an untimely end.

Verse 4. Innocent blood.] *αἷμα αἰθῶν*, a Hebraism, for an *innocent man.* But instead of *αἰθῶν*, *innocent*, two ancient MSS., *Syriac, Vulgate, Sahidic, Armenian,* and all the *Itala; Origen, Cyprian, Lucifer, Ambrose, Leo,* read *δικαίον*, *righteous, or just.*

What is that to us?] What is it?-A great deal. You should immediately go and reverse the sentence you have pronounced, and liberate the innocent person. But this would have been *justice*, and that would have been a *stranger at their tribunal.*

Verse 5. In the temple] *ναός* signifies, properly, the temple itself, into which none but the priests were permitted to enter; therefore *ἐν τῷ ναῷ* must signify, *near the temple*, by the temple door, where the boxes stood to receive the free-will offerings of the people, for the support and repairs of the sacred edifice. See this amply proved by *Kypke.*

Hanged himself] Or was *strangled-ἀπηγγέξατο.* Some eminent critics believe that he was only *suffocated* by excessive grief, and thus they think the account here given will agree with that in ^{<4018>}**Acts 1:18.** Mr. *Wakefield* supports this meaning of the word with great learning and ingenuity. I have my doubts-the old method of reconciling the two accounts appears to me quite plausible-*he went and strangled himself*, and the rope breaking, *he fell down*, and by the violence of the fall *his body was bursted*, and *his bowels gushed out.* I have thought proper, on a matter of such difficulty, to use the word *strangled*, as possessing a middle meaning between *choking* or *suffocation* by excessive grief, and *hanging*, as an act of suicide. **See Clarke note on** ^{<4018>}**Matthew 10:4**". Dr. *Lightfoot* is of opinion that the devil caught him up into the air, strangled him, and threw him down on the ground with violence, so that his body was burst, and his guts shed out! This was an ancient tradition.

Verse 6. The treasury] κορβαναν-the place whither the people brought their free-will offerings for the service of the temple, so called from the Hebrew $\hat{b}r\hat{q}$ *korban*, AN OFFERING, from *brq karab, he drew nigh*, because the person who brought the gift *came nigh* to that place where God manifested his glory between the cherubim, over the mercy-seat in the most holy place. It is from this idea that the phrase *to draw nigh to God* is taken, which is so frequently used in the sacred writings.

Because it is the price of blood.] “What hypocrites, as one justly exclaims, to adjudge an innocent man to death, and break the eternal laws of *justice* and *mercy* without scruple, and to be, at the same time, so very nice in their attention to a *ceremonial* direction of the law of Moses! Thus it is that the devil often deludes many, even among the *priests*, by a false and superstitious tenderness or conscience in things indifferent, while calumny, envy, oppression of the innocent, and a conformity to the world, give them no manner of trouble or disturbance.” See *Quesnel*.

Verse 7. To bury strangers in.] τοις ξενοις, *the strangers*, probably meaning, as some learned men conjecture, the *Jewish* strangers who might have come to Jerusalem, either to worship, or on some other business, and died there during their stay. See here, the very money for which the blessed Jesus was sold becomes subservient to the purpose of *mercy* and *kindness*! The *bodies* of *strangers* have a place of *rest* in the field purchased by the *price* at which his *life* was valued, and the *souls* of strangers and foreigners have a place of *rest* and *refuge* in his blood which was shed as a ransom price for the salvation of the whole world.

Verse 8. The field of blood] In vain do the wicked attempt to conceal themselves; God makes them instrumental in discovering their own wickedness. Judas, by returning the money, and the priests, by laying it out, raise to themselves an eternal monument-the one of *his* treachery, the others of *their* perfidiousness, and both of the innocence of Jesus Christ. As, long as the Jewish polity continued, it might be said, “This is the field that was bought from the potter with the money which Judas got from the high priests for betraying his Master; which he, in deep compunction of spirit, brought back to them, and they bought this ground for a burial-place for strangers: for as it was the price of the blood of an innocent man, they did not think proper to let it rest in the treasury of the temple where the traitor had thrown it, who afterwards, in despair, went and hanged

himself." What a standing proof must this have been of the innocence of Christ, and of their perfidy!

Verse 9. Jeremy the prophet] The words quoted here are not found in the Prophet *Jeremiah*, but in ^{<8113>}**Zechariah 11:13**. But St. Jerome says that a Hebrew of the sect of the Nazarenes showed him this prophecy in a Hebrew apocryphal copy of *Jeremiah*; but probably they were *inserted* there only to countenance the quotation here.

One of Colbert's, a MS. of the eleventh century, has ζαχαριου, *Zechariah*; so has the later Syriac in the margin, and a copy of the Arabic quoted by *Bengel*. In a very elegant and correct MS. of the Vulgate, in my possession, written in the fourteenth century, *Zachariam* is in the margin, and *Jeremiam* in the text, but the former is written by a later hand. *Jeremiah* is wanting in two MSS., the *Syriac*, later *Persic*, two of the *Itala*, and in some other Latin copies. It is very likely that the original reading was δια τοι προφητου, and the name of no prophet mentioned. This is the more likely, as Matthew often omits the name of the prophet in his quotations. See ^{<4012>}**Matthew 1:22; 2:5, 15; 13:35; 21:4**. *Bengel* approves of the omission.

It was an ancient custom among the Jews, says Dr. Lightfoot, to divide the Old Testament into three parts: the first beginning with the law was called THE LAW; the second beginning with the Psalms was called THE PSALMS; the third beginning with the prophet in question was called JEREMIAH: thus, then, the writings of Zechariah and the other prophets being included in that *division* that began with *Jeremiah*, all quotations from it would go under the name of this prophet. If this be admitted, it solves the difficulty at once. Dr. Lightfoot quotes *Baba Bathra*, and Rabbi David Kimchi's preface to the prophet *Jeremiah*, as his authorities; and insists that the word *Jeremiah* is perfectly correct as standing at the head of that division from which the evangelist quoted, and which gave its denomination to all the rest. But *Jeremiah* is the reading in several MSS. of the Coptic. It is in one of the *Coptic Dictionaries* in the British Museum, and in a Coptic MS. of *Jeremiah*, in the library of *St. Germain*. So I am informed by the Rev. Henry Tattam, Rector of St Cuthbert's, Bedford.

Verse 11. Before the governor] My old MS. English Bible translates ηγημων *Mejr cheef justyse, P̄resident*.

Art thou the Xing of the Jews?] The Jews had undoubtedly delivered him to Pilate as one who was rising up against the imperial authority, and assuming the regal office. See on ~~<1270>~~ **Matthew 27:2.**

Verse 12. He answered nothing.] An answer to such accusations was not necessary: they sufficiently confuted themselves.

Verse 14. Marvelled greatly.] *Silence* under *calumny* manifests the utmost magnanimity. The chief priests did not admire this because it confounded them; but Pilate, who had no interest to serve by it, was deeply affected. This very silence was predicted. ~~<2507>~~ **Isaiah 53:7.**

Verse 15. The governor was wont to release] Whence this custom originated among the Jews is not known, -probably it was introduced by the Romans themselves, or by Pilate, merely to oblige the Jews, by showing them this public token of respect; but if it originated with him, he must have had the authority of Augustus; for the Roman laws never gave such discretionary power to any governor.

Verse 16. A notable prisoner-Barabbas.] This person had, a short time before, raised an insurrection in Jerusalem, in which it appears, from ~~<4150>~~ **Mark 15:7**, some lives were lost. In some MSS., and in the *Armenian* and *Syriac Hieros.*, this man has the surname of *Jesus*. Professor Birch has discovered this reading in a Vatican MS., written in 949, and numbered 354, in which is a marginal note which has been attributed to Anastasius, bishop of Antioch, and to *Chrysostom*, which asserts that in the most ancient MSS. the passage was as follows: -τινα θελετε απο των δυω απολυσω υμιν, (IN) τον βαραββαν, η (IN) τον λεγομενον (ΞΝ): *Which of the two do ye wish me to release unto you, Jesus Barabbas, or Jesus who is called Christ?* As *Jesus*, or *Joshua*, was a very common name among the Jews, and as the name of the *father* was often joined to that of the son, as *Simon Barjonah*, Simon, son of Jonah; so it is probable it was the case here, *Jesus Barabba*, *Jesus*, son of *Abba*, or *Abbiah*. If this name were originally written as above, which I am inclined to believe, the general omission of JESUS in the MSS. may be accounted for from the over zealous scrupulosity of Christian copyists, who were unwilling that a *murderer* should, in the same verse, be honoured with the name of the *Redeemer of the world*. See *Birch* in *New Test*.

Verse 18. For envy] *δία φθονον*, *through malice*. Then it was his business, as an upright judge, to have dispersed this mob, and immediately released Jesus.

Seeing *malice* is capable of putting even Christ himself to death, how careful should we be not to let the least spark of it harbour in our breast. Let it be remembered that *malice* as often originates from *envy* as it does from *anger*.

Verse 19. I have suffered many things-in a dream] There is no doubt that God had appeared unto this woman, testifying the innocence of Christ, and showing the evils which should pursue Pilate if this innocent blood should be shed by his authority. See ~~<K&T>~~ **Matthew 27:2**.

Verse 20. Ask Barabbas] Who had raised an *insurrection* and committed *murder-and to destroy Jesus, whose voice was never heard in their streets*, and who had, during the space of three years and a half, gone about unweariedly, from village to village, *instructing the ignorant, healing the diseased, and raising the dead*.

Verse 21. They said, Barabbas.] What a fickle crowd! A little before they all hailed him as the *Son of David*, and acknowledged him as a gift from God; now they prefer a murderer to him! But this it appears they did at the instigation of the chief priests. We see here how dangerous wicked priests are in the Church of Christ; when pastors are corrupt, they are capable of inducing their flock to prefer *Barabbas* to *Jesus*, the *world* to *God*, and the *pleasures of sense* to the *salvation of their souls*. The invidious epithet which a certain statesman gave to the people at large was, in its utmost latitude, applicable to these Jews,-they were a SWINISH MULTITUDE.

Verse 22. What shall I do then with Jesus?] Showing, hereby, that it was his wish to release him.

Verse 23. What evil hath he done?] Pilate plainly saw that there was nothing laid to his charge for which, consistently with the Roman laws, he could condemn him.

But they cried out the more] What strange fury and injustice! They could not answer Pilate's question, *What evil hath he done?* He had done none, and they knew he had done none; but they are *determined* on his death.

Verse 24. Pilate-took water, and washed his hands] Thus signifying his innocence. It was a custom among the Hebrews, Greeks, and Latins, to wash the hands in token of innocence, and to show that they were pure from any imputed guilt. In case of an undiscovered murder, the elders of that city which was nearest to the place where the dead body was found, were required by the law, ^{<1210>}**Deuteronomy 21:1-10**, *to wash* their hands over the victim which was offered to expiate the crime, and thus make public protestation of their own innocence. David says, *I will wash my hands in innocence, so shall I compass thine altar*, ^{<1216>}**Psalm 26:6**. As Pilate knew Christ was innocent, he should have prevented his death: he had the armed force at his command, and should have dispersed this infamous mob. Had he been charged with countenancing a seditious person, he could have easily cleared himself, had the matter been brought before the emperor. *He*, therefore, was inexcusable.

Verse 25. His blood be on us and on our children.] If this man be *innocent*, and we put him to death as a *guilty* person, may the punishment due to such a crime be visited upon us, and upon our children after us! What a dreadful imprecation! and how literally fulfilled! The notes on chap. 24, will show how they fell victims to their own imprecation, being visited with a series of calamities unexampled in the history of the world. They were visited with the same kind of punishment; for the Romans crucified them in such numbers when Jerusalem was taken, that there was found a deficiency of crosses for the condemned, and of places for the crosses. Their children or descendants have had the same curse entailed upon *them*, and continue to this day a proof of the innocence of Christ, the truth of his religion, and of the justice of God.

Verse 26. Scourged Jesus] This is allowed to have been a very severe punishment of itself among the Romans, the flesh being generally *cut* by the whips used for this purpose: so the poet:-

----*Horribili SECTERE flagello.*

“To be cut by the horrible whip.”-HOR. Sat. I. 3. 119.

And sometimes it seems, they were *whipped to death*. See the same poet, Sat. I. 2. 41.

----*Ille FLAGELLIS
AD MORTEM caesus.*----

See also HORAT. Epod. od. iv. v. 11.

It has been thought that Pilate might have spared this additional cruelty of whipping; but it appears that it was a *common custom* to scourge those criminals which were to be crucified, (see Josephus Deuteronomy Bello, lib. ii. c. 25,) and lenity in Christ's case is not to be allowed; *he* must take all the misery in *full tale*.

Delivered him to be crucified.] Tacitus, the Roman historian, mentions the death of Christ in very remarkable terms:-

Nero-quæsitissimis pœnis is affectit, quos-vulgus CHRISTIANOS appellabat. Auctor nominis ejus CHRISTUS, qui Tiberio imperitante, per Procuratorem Pontium Pilatum supplicio affectus erat.—"Nero put those who commonly went by the name of Christians to the most exquisite tortures. The author of this name was CHRIST, who was capitally punished in the reign of TIBERIUS, by PONTIUS PILATE the PROCURATOR."

Verse 27. The common hall] Or, *prætorium*. Called so from the *prætor*, a principal magistrate among the Romans, whose business it was to administer justice in the absence of the *consul*. This place might be termed in English the *court house*, or *common hall*.

Verse 28. Stripped him] Took off his mantle, or *upper garment*.

A scarlet robe] Or, according to Mark and John, a *purple robe*, such as emperors and kings wore.

Verse 29. A crown of thorns] *στεφανον ἐξ ακανθων*. It does not appear that this crown was intended to be an instrument of *punishment* or *torture* to his head, but rather to render him ridiculous; for which cause also they put a *reed* in his hand, by way of *sceptre*, and bowed their knees, pretending to do him homage. The crown was not probably of *thorns*, in our sense of the word: there are eminently learned men who think that the crown was formed of the herb *acanthus*; and Bishop Pearce and Michaelis are of this opinion. Mark, ^{<4157>}**Mark 15:17**, and John, ^{<6196>}**John 19:5**, term it, *στεφανον ακανθινον*, which may very well be translated an *acanthine crown* or wreath, formed out of the branches of the herb *acanthus*, or *bear's foot*. This, however, is a prickly plant, though nothing like *thorns*, in the common meaning of that word. Many Christians have gone astray in magnifying the sufferings of Christ from this circumstance; and painters, the worst of all commentators, frequently represent Christ with a crown of

long thorns, which one standing by is striking into his head with a stick. These representations engender ideas both false and absurd.

There is a passage produced from *Philo* by Dr. *Lardner*, which casts much light on these indignities offered to our blessed Lord.

“*Caligula*, the successor of *Tiberius*, gave *Agrippa* the tetrarchy of his uncle *Philip*, with the right of wearing a *diadem* or *crown*. When he came to *Alexandria*, on his way to his tetrarchate, the inhabitants of that place, filled with envy at the thoughts of a Jew having the title of *king*, showed their indignation in the following way. They brought one *Carabus* (a sort of an idiot) into the theatre; and, having placed him on a lofty seat, that he might be seen by all, they put a diadem upon his head, made of the herb *byblos*, (the ancient *papyrus*, or *paper flag*;) his body they covered with a mat or carpet, instead of a royal cloak. One seeing a piece of reed, **πᾶπυρου** (the stem, probably, of the aforesaid herb) lying on the ground, picked it up, and put it in his hand in place of a sceptre. Having thus given him a mock royal dress, several young fellows, with poles on their shoulders, came and stood on each side of him as his guards. Then there came people, some to pay their homage to him, some to ask justice, and some to consult him on affairs of state and the crowd that stood round about made a confused noise, crying, *Mario*, that being, as they say, the Syriac word for LORD; thereby showing that they intended to ridicule *Agrippa*, who was a Syrian.” See *PHILO*, *Flace*. p. 970, and Dr. *Lardner*, *Works*, vol. i. p. 159.

There is the most remarkable coincidence between this account and that given by the evangelists; and the conjecture concerning the *acanthus* will probably find no inconsiderable support from the *bylos* and *papyrus* of *Philo*. This plant, *Pliny* says, grows to ten cubits long in the stem and the flowers were used *ad deos coronandos*, for CROWNING THE GODS. See *Hist. Nat. lib. xiii. c. 11*.

The reflections of pious *Quesnel* on these insults offered to our blessed Lord merit serious attention.

Let the crown of thorns make those Christians blush who throw away so much time, pains, and money, in beautifying and adorning a sinful head. Let the world do what it will to render the royalty and mysteries of Christ

contemptible, it is my *glory* to serve a King thus *debased*; my *salvation*, to adore that which the world *despises*; and my *redemption*, to go unto God through the *merits* of him who was crowned *with thorns*.”

Verse 30. And they spit upon him] “Let us pay our adoration,” says the same pious writer, “and humble ourselves in silence at the sight of a spectacle which faith alone renders credible, and which our senses would hardly endure. Jesus Christ, in this condition, preaches to the kings of the earth this truth—that their sceptres are but *reeds*, with which themselves shall be smitten, bruised, and crushed at his tribunal, if they do not use them here to the advancement of his kingdom.”

Verse 32. A man of Cyrene-him they compelled to bear his cross.] In John, ^{<B1916>}**John 19:16, 17**, we are told Christ himself bore the cross, and this, it is likely, he did for a *part* of the way; but, being exhausted with the scourging and other cruel usage which he had received, he was found incapable of bearing it *alone*; therefore they obliged Simon, not, I think, to bear it entirely, but to *assist* Christ, by bearing a part of it. It was a constant practice among the Romans, to oblige criminal to bear their cross to the place of execution: insomuch that Plutarch makes use of it as an illustration of the misery of vice. “Every kind of wickedness produces its own particular torment, just as every malefactor, when he is brought forth to execution, carries his own cross.” See Lardner’s *Credib.* vol. i. p. 160.

Verse 33. A place called Golgotha] From the Hebrew *htgl g* or *tl gl g*, *golgoleth*, a *skull*, probably so called from the many skulls of these who had suffered crucifixion and other capital punishments scattered up and down in the place. It is the same as *Calvary*, *Calvaria*, i.e. *calvi capitis area*, the place of *bare skulls*. Some think the place was thus called, because it was in the *form* of a human skull. It is likely that it was the place of public execution, similar to the *Gemonia Scalæ* at Rome.

Verse 34. They gave him vinegar-mingled with gall] Perhaps *χολη*, commonly translated *gall*, signifies no more than *bitters* of any kind. It was a common custom to administer a stupefying potion compounded of sour wine, which is the same as vinegar, from the French *vinaigre*, frankincense, and myrrh, to condemned persons, to help to alleviate their sufferings, or so disturb their intellect that they might not be sensible of them. The rabbins say that they put a grain of frankincense into a cup of strong wine; and they ground this on ^{<B106>}**Proverbs 31:6**: *Give strong drink unto him*

that is ready to perish, i.e. who is condemned to death. Some person, out of kindness, appears to have administered this to our blessed Lord; but he, as in all other cases, determining to endure the fulness of pain, refused to take what was thus offered to him, choosing to tread the winepress *alone*. Instead of οξος, *vinegar*, several excellent MSS. and versions have οινον, *wine*; but as *sour wine* is said to have been a general drink of the common people and Roman soldiers, it being the same as vinegar, it is of little consequence which reading is here adopted. This custom of giving stupefying potions to condemned malefactors is alluded to in ^{<3106>} **Proverbs 31:6**: *Give strong drink, rqv shekar, inebriating drink, to him who is ready to PERISH, and wine to him who is BITTER of soul*-because he is just going to suffer the punishment of death. And thus the rabbins, as we have seen above, understand it. See *Lightfoot* and *Schoettgen*.

Michaelis offers an ingenious exposition of this place: “Immediately after Christ was fastened to the cross, they gave him, according to ^{<4274>} **Matthew 27:34**, *vinegar mingled with gall*; but, according to Mark, they offered him *wine mingled with myrrh*. That St. Mark’s account is the right one is probable from this circumstance, that Christ refused to drink what was offered him, as appears from both evangelists. *Wine mixed with myrrh* was given to malefactors at the place of execution, to intoxicate them, and make them less sensible to pain. Christ, therefore, with great propriety, refused the aid of such remedies. But if vinegar was offered him, which was taken merely to assuage thirst, there could be no reason for his rejecting it. Besides, he tasted it before he rejected it; and therefore he must have found it different from that which, if offered to him, he was ready to receive. To solve this difficulty, we must suppose that the words used in the Hebrew Gospel of St. Matthew were such as agreed with the account given by St. Mark, and at the same time were capable of the construction which was put on them by St. Matthew’s Greek translator. Suppose St. Matthew wrote **aryrmb ayl j** (*chaleea bemireera*) which signifies, *sweet wine with bitters*, or *sweet wine and myrrh*, as we find it in Mark; and Matthew’s translator overlooked the yod **y** in **ayl j** (*chaleea*) he took it for **al j** (*chala*) which signifies *vinegar*; and *bitter*, he translated by **χολη**, as it is often used in the Septuagint. Nay, St. Matthew may have written **al j**, and have still meant to express *sweet wine*; if so, the difference only consisted in the *points*; for the same word which, when

pronounced *chale*, signifies *sweet*, denotes *vinegar*, as soon as it is pronounced *chala*.”

With this conjecture Dr. Marsh (Michaelis’s translator) is not satisfied; and therefore finds a Chaldee word for **οἶνος** *wine*, which may easily be mistaken for one that denotes **οξος** *vinegar*; and likewise a Chaldee word, which signifies **σμυρνα**, (*myrrh*), which may be easily mistaken for one that denotes **χολη**, (*gall*). “Now,” says he, “**rmj** (*chamar*) or **armj** (*chamera*) really denotes **οἶνος** (*wine*), and **xmj** (*chamets*) or **axmj** (*charnetsa*) really denotes **οξος** (*vinegar*.) Again, **arwm** (*mura*) really signifies **σμυρνα** (*myrrh*), and **arrm** (*murera*) really signifies **χολη** (*gall*). If, then, we suppose that the original Chaldee text was **arwmb cyl h armj** (*chamera heleet bemura*) *wine mingled with myrrh*, which is not at all improbable, as it is the reading of the Syriac version, at ^{<41523>}**Mark 15:23**, it might easily have been mistaken for **arrmb cyl h axmj** (*chametsa haleet bemurera*) *vinegar mingled with gall*.” This is a more ingenious conjecture than that of Michaelis. See Marsh’s notes to Michaelis, vol. iii., part 2d. p. 127-28. But as that kind of *sour wine*, which was used by the Roman soldiers and common people, appears to have been termed **οἶνος**, and *vin aigre* is *sour wine*, it is not difficult to reconcile the two accounts, in what is most material to the facts here recorded.

Verse 35. And they crucified him] Crucifixion properly means the act of nailing or tying to a cross. The cross was made of two beams, either crossing at the top at right angles, like a T, or in the middle of their length, like an X. There was, besides, a piece on the centre of the transverse beam, to which the accusation or statement of the crime of the culprit was attached, and a piece of wood which projected from the middle, on which the person *sat*, as on a sort of *saddle*; and by which the whole body was supported. *Tertullian* mentions this particularly: *Nobis*, says he, *tota crux imputatur, cum antenna scilicet sua, et cum illo* SEDILIS *excessu*. *Advers. Nationes*, lib. ii. *Justin Martyr*, in his dialogue with Trypho the Jew, gives precisely the same description of the cross; and it is worthy of observation that both he and *Tertullian* flourished before the punishment of the cross had been abolished. The cross on which our Lord suffered was of the former kind; being thus represented in all old monuments, coins, and crosses. St. Jerome compares it to a *bird flying*, a *man swimming*, or praying with his arms *extended*. The punishment of the cross was inflicted

among the ancient Hindoos from time immemorial for various species of theft; see Halhead's Code of Gentoo Laws, p. 248, and was common among the Syrians, Egyptians, Persians, Africans, Greeks, and Romans: it is also still in use among the Chinese, who do not *nail*, but tie the criminal to it. It was probably the Romans who introduced it among the Jews. Before they became subject to the Romans, they used *hanging* or *gibbeting*, but not the *cross*. This punishment was the most dreadful of all others, both for the *shame* and *pain* of it: and so scandalous, that it was inflicted as the last mark of detestation upon the vilest of people. It was the punishment of robbers and murderers, provided they were *slaves*; but if they were *free*, it was thought too infamous a punishment for such, let their crimes be what they might.

The body of the criminal was fastened to the upright beam, by nailing or tying the feet to it, and on the transverse piece by nailing, and sometimes tying the hands to it. As the hands and feet are the grand instruments of motion, they are provided with a greater quantity of *nerves*; and the nerves in those places, especially the hands, are peculiarly sensible. Now, as the nerves are the instruments of all sensation or feeling, wounds in the parts where they abound must be peculiarly painful; especially when inflicted with such rude instruments as large nails, forced through the places by the violence of a hammer; thus tearing asunder the nervous fibrillæ, delicate tendons, and small bones of those parts. This punishment will appear dreadful enough, when it is considered that the person was permitted to hang (the whole weight of his body being borne up by his nailed hands and the projecting piece which passed between the thighs) till he perished through agony and lack of food. Some, we are informed, have lived three whole days in this state. It is true that, in some cases, there was a kind of mercy shown to the sufferer, which will appear sufficiently horrid, when it is known that it consisted in breaking the bones of their legs and thighs to pieces with a large hammer, in order to put them the sooner out of pain! Such a *coup de grace* as this could only spring from those *tender mercies of the wicked* which God represents as *cruelty* itself. Some were permitted to hang on the cross till eaten up by birds of prey, which often began to tear them before life was extinct. *Horace* alludes to this punishment, and from what he says, it seems to have been inflicted on slaves, &c., not on *trifling* occasions, but for the most *horrible* crimes.

*Si quis eum servum, patinam qui tollere jussus
Semesos pisces tepidumque ligurrierit jus,
In CRUCE suffigat.
HOR. Satyr. l. i. s. 3. v. 80.*

*If a poor slave who takes away your plate,
Lick the warm sauce, or half cold fragments eat,
Yet should you crucify the wretch!----FRANCIS.*

Non hominem occidi: non pasces in CRUCE corvos.

*“I have not committed murder:
Then thou shalt not be nailed to the cross, to feed the ravens.”
HOR. Epist. l. i. s. 16. v. 48.*

The anguish occasioned by crucifixion was so intense, that *crucio*, (a *cruce*,) among the Romans, was the common word by which they expressed *suffering* and *torment* in general.

And parted his garments, casting lots] These were the Roman soldiers, who had crucified him: and it appears from this circumstance, that in those ancient times the spoils of the criminal were claimed by the executioners, as they are to the present day. It appears that they divided a part, and cast lots for the rest: viz. for his seamless coat, ^{<41923>}**John 19:23, 24.**

That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots.] The whole of this quotation should be omitted, as making no part originally of the genuine text of *this* evangelist. It is omitted by almost every MS. of worth and importance, by almost all the versions, and the most reputable of the primitive fathers, who have written or commented on the place. The words are plainly an interpolation, borrowed from ^{<41924>}**John 19:24**, in which place they will be properly noticed.

Verse 36. They watched him] To prevent his disciples or relatives from taking away the body or affording any relief to the sufferer.

Verse 37. His accusation] It was a common custom to affix a label to the cross, giving a statement of the crime for which the person suffered. This is still the case in China, when a person is crucified. Sometimes a person was employed to carry this before the criminal, while going to the place of punishment.

obliged to take refuge in *lies*, in order to vindicate its infamous proceedings.

If thou be the Son of God] Or rather, υἱος του θεου *A son of God*, i.e. a peculiar favourite of the Most-High; not Ο Υἱος του Θεου, *THE Son of God*. “It is not to be conceived,” says a learned man, “that every passenger who was going to the city had a competent knowledge of Christ’s supernatural conception by the Holy Spirit, or an adequate comprehension of his character as *the* Messiah, and (κατ’ εἶσοχην) *THE SON OF GOD*. There is not a single passage where *Jesus* is designed to be pointed out as the MESSIAH, THE SON OF GOD, where the *article* is omitted: nor, on the other hand, is this designation ever specified *without* the *article*, thus, Ο Υἱος του Θεου. See ^{<41616>}Matthew 16:16; 26:63; 28:19.”

Verse 41. Chief priests-scribes and elders] To these, several ancient MSS. and versions add, και φαρισαίων, *and Pharisees*. But though the authority for this reading is respectable, yet it does not appear that the Pharisees joined in with the others in the condemnation of our Lord. Probably his discourses and parables, related in some of the preceding chapters, which were spoken directly to them, had so far convinced them that they would at least have no hand in putting him to death. All the infamy of this seems to fall upon the PRIESTS, *scribes*, and *elders*.

Verse 42. He saved others; himself he cannot save.] Or, *Cannot he save himself?* Several MSS. read this with the mark of *interrogation* as above; and this makes the sarcasm still more keen.

A high priest who designs to *destroy the temple of God*: a *Saviour* who saves not *himself*; and the *Son of God* crucified: these are the contradictions which give offence to Jews and libertines. But a *high priest* who dispels the *types* and *shadows*, only that he may disclose the substance of religion, and become the *minister of a heavenly sanctuary*; a *Saviour* who dies *only* to be the *victim* of salvation; and *the Son of God* who confines his power within the bounds of the cross to establish the *righteousness of faith*: this is what a Christian adores; this is the foundation of his hope, and the fountain of his present comfort and final blessedness. See *Quesnel*.

We will believe him.] Instead of αυτω, *him*, many excellent MSS. have εἰ αυτω, *IN him*: this is a reading which *Griesbach* and other eminent critics have adopted.

Verse 43. If he will have him] Or, *if he delight in him*-**ει θελει αυτον**. The verbs **θελω** and **εθελω**, are used by the *Septuagint* in more than forty places for the Hebrew **xpj** *chaphets*, which signifies, *earnestly to desire*, or *delight in*. Now as this is a quotation from ^{<19218>}**Psalm 22:8**, *He trusted in the Lord, that he would deliver him; let him deliver him*, (**wb xpj yk ki** *chaphets bo*.) *for he HATH DELIGHTED IN HIM*:-**οτι θελει αυτον**, Sept. This will sufficiently vindicate the above translation; as the evangelist quotes the words from that version, with the simple change of **ει**, *if*, for **οτι**, *because*.

Verse 44. The thieves also-cast the same in his teeth.] That is, *one* of the robbers; for one, we find, was a penitent, ^{<19239>}**Luke 23:39, 40**. See this form of expression accounted for, on ^{<19218>}**Matthew 26:8**.

Verse 45. There was darkness over all the land] I am of opinion that **πασαν την γην** does not mean all the world, but only the land of Judea. So the word is used ^{<19230>}**Matthew 24:30**; ^{<19225>}**Luke 4:25**, and in other places. Several eminent critics are of this opinion: *Beza* defends this meaning of the word, and translates the Greek, *super universam REGIONEM over the whole COUNTRY*. Besides, it is evident that the evangelists speak of things that happened in *Judea*, the place of their residence. It is plain enough there was a darkness in Jerusalem, and over all Judea; and probably over all the people among whom Christ had for more than three years preached the everlasting Gospel; and that this darkness was *supernatural* is evident from this, that it happened during the *passover*, which was celebrated only at the *full moon*, a time in which it was *impossible* for the sun to be *eclipsed*. But many suppose the darkness was over the *whole world*, and think there is sufficient evidence of this in ancient authors. **PHLEGON** and **THALLUS**, who flourished in the beginning of the *second* century, are supposed to speak of this. The former says: "In the fourth year of the 202nd Olympiad, there was an extraordinary eclipse of the sun: at the sixth hour, the day was turned into dark night, so that the stars in heaven were seen; and there was an earthquake in *Bithynia*, which overthrew many houses in the city of *Nice*." This is the substance of what *Phlegon* is reputed to have said on this subject:-but 1. All the authors who quote him *differ*, and often very materially, in what they say was found in him. 2. *Phlegon* says nothing of *Judea*: what he says is, *that in such an Olympiad*, (some say the 102nd, others the 202nd,) *there was an eclipse in Bithynia, and an earthquake at Nice*. 3. *Phlegon* does not say that the

earthquake happened at the *time* of the *eclipse*. 4. *Phlegon* does not intimate that this *darkness* was *extraordinary*, or that the *eclipse* happened at the *full of the moon*, or that it lasted *three hours*. These circumstances could not have been omitted by him, if he had known them. 5. *Phlegon* speaks merely of an *ordinary*, though perhaps total, *eclipse* of the sun, and cannot mean the *darkness* mentioned by the evangelists. 6. *Phlegon* speaks of an *eclipse* that happened in *some* year of the 102nd, or 202nd *Olympiad*; and therefore little stress can be laid on what he says as applying to this event.

The quotation from THALLUS, made by AFRICANUS, found in the Chronicle of SYNCCELLUS, of the *eighth* century, is allowed by eminent critics to be of little importance. This speaks “of a darkness over all the world, and an earthquake which threw down many houses in Judea and in other parts of the earth.” It may be necessary to observe, that THALLUS is quoted by several of the *ancient* ecclesiastical writers for *other* matters, but never for *this*; and that the time in which he lived is so very *uncertain*, that Dr. Lardner supposes there is room to think he lived rather *before* than *after* Christ.

DIONYSIUS the *Areopagite* is supposed to have mentioned this event in the most decided manner: for being at *Heliopolis* in Egypt, with his friend *Apollophanes*, when our Saviour suffered, they there saw a wonderful *eclipse* of the sun, whereupon Dionysius said to his friend, “Either God himself suffers, or sympathizes with the sufferer.” It is enough to say of this *man*, that all the writings attributed to him are known to be *spurious*, and are proved to be *forgeries* of the *fifth* or *sixth* century. Whoever desires to see more on this subject, may consult Dr. Lardner, (vol. vii. p. 371, ed. 1788,) a man whose name should never be mentioned but with respect, notwithstanding the peculiarities of his religious creed; who has done more in the service of Divine revelation than most divines in Christendom; and who has raised a monument to the perpetuity of the Christian religion, which all the infidels in creation shall never be able to pull down or deface.

This miraculous darkness should have caused the enemies of Christ to understand that he was the *light* of the world, and that because they did not *walk in it* it was now *taken away* from them.

Verse 46. My God! My God! why hast thou forsaken me!] These words are quoted by our Lord from ^{<1927>}**Psalm 22:1**; they are of very great importance, and should be carefully considered.

Some suppose “that the *divinity* had now *departed* from Christ, and that his *human nature* was left unsupported to bear the punishment due to men for their sins.” But this is by no means to be admitted, as it would deprive his sacrifice of its *infinite merit*, and consequently leave the sin of the world without an atonement. Take *deity* away from any *redeeming act* of Christ, and *redemption* is ruined. Others imagine that our Lord spoke these words to the *Jews* only, to prove to them that he was the *Messiah*. “The *Jews*,” say they, “believed this psalm to speak of the *Messiah*: they quoted the *eighth* verse of it against Christ—*He trusted in God that he would deliver him; let him deliver him, seeing he delighted in him*. (See ^{<1074>}**Matthew 27:43**.) To which our Lord immediately answers, *My God! my God! &c*, thus showing that he was the person of whom the psalmist prophesied.” I have doubts concerning the propriety of this interpretation.

It has been asked, What language is it that our Lord spoke? *Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani*. Some say it is *Hebrew*—others *Syriac*. I say, as the evangelists quote it, it is *neither*. St. Matthew comes nearest the *Hebrew*, yntbz[hml yl a yl a *Eli, Eli, lamah azabthani*, in the words, ηλι,ηλι,λαμμα σαβαχτανι, *Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani*.

And St. Mark comes nearest the *Syriac*, ^{<4153>}**Mark 15:34**, [*Syriac*] *Alohi, Alohi, l'mono shebachtheni*, in the words ελωι,ελωι,λαμμα σαβαχθανι, *Eloi, Eloi, lamma sabachthani*. It is worthy of note, that a *Hebrew MS.* of the twelfth century, instead of yntbz[*azabthani, forsaken me*, reads yntj kv *shechachthani, FORGOTTEN me*. This word makes a very good sense, and comes nearer to the *sabachthani* of the evangelists. It may be observed also, that the words, *Why hast thou FORGOTTEN me?* are often used by David and others, in times of oppression and distress. See ^{<1949>}**Psalm 42:9**.

Some have taken occasion from these words to depreciate the character of our blessed Lord. “They are unworthy,” say they, “of a man who suffers, *conscious of his innocence*, and argue imbecility, impatience, and despair.” This is by no means fairly deducible from the passage. However, some think that the words, as they stand in the *Hebrew* and *Syriac*, are capable of a translation which destroys all objections, and obviates every difficulty.

The particle **hml** *laham*, may be translated, *to what-to whom-to what kind or sort-to what purpose or profit*: ^{<012532>}**Genesis 25:32**; ^{<01329>}**Genesis 32:29; 33:15**; ^{<18029>}**Job 9:29**; ^{<34031>}**Jeremiah 6:20; 20:18**; ^{<01618>}**Amos 5:18**; and the verb **bz** *azab* signifies *to leave-to deposit-to commit to the care of*. See ^{<01306>}**Genesis 39:6**; ^{<18391>}**Job 39:11**; ^{<01014>}**Psalm 10:14**, and ^{<24911>}**Jeremiah 49:11**. The words, taken in this way, might be thus translated: *My God! my God! to what sort of persons hast thou left me?* The words thus understood are rather to be referred to the wicked Jews than to our Lord, and are an exclamation indicative of the obstinate wickedness of his crucifiers, who *steeled* their hearts against every operation of the Spirit and power of God. See *Ling. Brit. Reform.* by B. Martin, p. 36.

Through the whole of the Sacred Writings, God is represented as *doing* those things which, in the course of his providence, he only *permits to be done*; therefore, the words, *to whom hast thou left or given me up*, are only a *form* of expression for, “How astonishing is the wickedness of those persons into whose hands I am fallen!” If this interpretation be admitted, it will free this celebrated passage from much embarrassment, and make it speak a sense consistent with itself, and with the dignity of the Son of God.

The words of St. Mark, ^{<011534>}**Mark 15:34**, agree pretty nearly with this translation of the Hebrew: **εις τι με εγκατιλεπες**; *To what [sort of persons, understood] hast thou left me?* A literal translation of the passage in the Syriac Testament gives a similar sense: *Ad quid dereliquisti me?* “To what hast thou abandoned me?” And an ancient copy of the old Itala version, a Latin translation before the time of St. Jerome, renders the words thus: *Quare me in opprobrium dedisti?* “Why hast thou abandoned me to reproach?”

It may be objected, that this can never agree with the **ινατι**, *why*, of Matthew. To this it is answered, that **ινατι** must have here the same meaning as **εις τι**-as the translation of **hml** *lama*; and that, if the meaning be at all *different*, we must follow that evangelist who expresses most *literally* the meaning of the original: and let it be observed, that the Septuagint often translate **hml** by **ινατι** instead of **εις τι**, which evidently proves that it often had the same meaning. Of this criticism I say, *Valet quod valet*, Let it pass for no more than it is worth: the subject is difficult. But whatever may be thought of the above mode of interpretation, one thing is certain, viz. That the words could not be used by our Lord in the

sense in which they are generally understood. This is sufficiently evident; for he well knew *why* he was come *unto that hour*; nor could *he* be *forsaken* of God, *in whom dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily*. The Deity, however, might restrain so much of its *consolatory* support as to leave the *human* nature fully *sensible* of all its sufferings, so that the consolations might not take off any part of the keen edge of his passion; and this was necessary to make his sufferings meritorious. And it is probable that this is all that is intended by our Lord's quotation from the twenty-second Psalm. Taken in this view, the words convey an unexceptionable sense, even in the common translation.

Verse 47. This man calleth for Elias.] Probably these were *Hellenistic* Jews, who did not fully understand the meaning of our Lord's words. Elijah was daily expected to appear as the forerunner of the Messiah, whose arrival, under the character of a mighty prince, was generally supposed to be at hand throughout the east. See ^{<3045>}**Malachi 4:5**; ^{<0102>}**Matthew 2:2-4; 17:10-12**.

Verse 48. Took a sponge] This being the most convenient way to reach a liquid to his mouth; *tied it on a reed*, that they might be able to reach his lips with it. This reed, as we learn from St. John, was a stalk of *hyssop*, which, in that country, must have grown to a considerable magnitude. This appears also to have been done in *mercy*, to alleviate his sufferings. See ^{<02734>}**Matthew 27:34**.

Verse 49. After this verse, BCL and five others add, *Another, taking a spear, pierced his side, and there came out blood and water*. Several of the fathers add the same words here: they appear, however, to be an interpolation from ^{<61934>}**John 19:34**.

Verse 50. Yielded up the ghost.] *αφηκε το πνευμα*, *He dismissed the spirit*. He himself willingly gave up that life which it was impossible for man to take away. It is not said that he *hung* on the *cross till he died* through pain and agony; nor is it said that his *bones* were *broken*, the *sooner* to put him out of pain, and to *hasten* his death; but that himself *dismissed the soul*, that he might thus become, not a *forced* sacrifice, but a *free-will offering for sin*.

Now, as our English word *ghost*, from the Anglo-Saxon [Anglo-Saxon] *gast*, an *inmate*, *inhabitant*, *guest*, (a casual visitant,) also a *spirit*, is now restricted among us to the latter meaning, always signifying the *immortal*

spirit or *soul* of man, the *ghost* of the body and as *giving up the spirit*, *ghost*, or *soul*, is an act not proper to man, though *commending it to God*, in our last moments, is both an act of faith and piety; and as *giving up the ghost*, i.e. *dismissing his spirit* from his body, is attributed to Jesus Christ, to whom alone it is proper; I therefore object against its use in *every other case*.

Every man, since the fall, has not only been *liable* to death, but has *deserved* it; as all have forfeited their lives because of sin. Jesus Christ, as born immaculate, and having never sinned, had not *forfeited* his life, and therefore may be considered as naturally and properly immortal. *No man*, says he, *taketh it, my life, from me, but I lay it down of myself: I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again; therefore doth the Father love me, because I lay down my life that I might take it again,* ^{<31017>} **John 10:17, 18**. Hence we rightly translate ^{<42751>} **Matthew 27:50**, **αφηκε το πνευμα**, *he gave up the ghost*; i.e. *he dismissed his spirit*, that he *might die for the sin of the world*. The Evangelist St. John (^{<3190>} **John 19:30**) makes use of an expression to the same import, which we translate in the same way: **παρεδωκε το πνευμα**, *he delivered up his spirit*. We translate ^{<41157>} **Mark 15:37**, and ^{<42346>} **Luke 23:46**, *he gave up the ghost*, but not correctly, because the word in both these places is very different-**εξεπνευσε**, *he breathed his last*, or *expired*; though in the latter place, ^{<42346>} **Luke 23:46**, there is an equivalent expression-*O Father, into thy hands, παρατιθεμαι το πνευμα μου*, *I commit my spirit*; i.e. I place my soul in thy hand: proving that the act was *his own*; that no man could take his life away from him; that he did not die by the *perfidy* of his disciple, or the *malice* of the Jews, but by his *own free act*. Thus HE LAID DOWN *his life for the sheep*. Of Ananias and Sapphira, ^{<44165>} **Acts 5:5,10**, and of Herod, ^{<44223>} **Acts 12:23**, our translation says, they *gave up the ghost*; but the word in both places is **εξεψυξε**, which simply means to *breathe out*, to *expire*, or *die*: but in no case, either by the Septuagint in the Old, or any of the sacred writers in the *New Testament*, is **αφηκε το πνευμα**, or **παρεδωκε το πνευμα**, *he dismissed his spirit*, or *delivered up his spirit*, spoken of any person but Christ. Abraham, Isaac, Ishmael, Jacob, &c., *breathed their last*; Ananias, Sapphira, and Herod, *expired*; but none, Jesus Christ excepted, *gave up the ghost*, *dismissed*, or *delivered up his own spirit*, and was, consequently, *free among the dead*. Of the patriarchs, &c., the Septuagint use the word **εκλειπων**, *failing*; or **κατεπαυσεν**, *he ceased*, or *rested*.

Verse 51. The veil of the temple was rent] That is, the veil which separated the *holy place*, where the priests ministered, from the *holy of holies*, into which the high priest only entered, and that once a year, to make a general expiation for the sins of the people. This *rending* of the *veil* was *emblematical*, and pointed out that the separation between Jews and Gentiles was now abolished, and that the privilege of the high priest was now communicated to all mankind: ALL might henceforth have access to the throne of grace, through the one great atonement and mediator, the Lord Jesus. See this beautifully illustrated in ^{<81019>}**Hebrews 10:19-22.**

Verse 52. And the graves were opened] By the earthquake; and many bodies of saints which slept, i.e. were *dead*, *sleep* being a common expression for *death* in the Scriptures.

Verse 53. And came out of the graves after his resurrection] Not BEFORE, as some have thought, for Christ was himself the FIRST FRUITS of them who slept, ^{<61530>}**1 Corinthians 15:20.** The *graves* were opened at his *death*, by the earthquake, and the *bodies* came out at his *resurrection*.

And appeared unto many.] Thus establishing the truth of our Lord's resurrection in particular, and of the resurrection of the body in general, by many witnesses. *Quesnel's* reflections on these passages may be very useful. "1. *The veil being rent* shows that his death is to put an end to the figurative worship, and to establish the true religion. 2. *The earthquake*, that this dispensation of the Gospel is to make known through the earth the judgments of God against sin and sinners. 3. *The rocks being rent* declare that the sacrifice of Christ is to make way for the grace of repentance. 4. *The graves being opened*, that it is to destroy the death of sin, and confer the life grace on sinners. 5. *The rising of the bodies of the saints* shows that this death of Christ is to *merit*, and his Gospel *publish*, the eternal happiness of body and soul for all that believe in his name."

It is difficult to account for the transaction mentioned ^{<41752>}**Matthew 27:52, 53.** Some have thought that these two verses have been introduced into the text of Matthew from the gospel of the Nazarenes; others think that the simple meaning is this:-by the earthquake several bodies that had been buried were thrown up and exposed to view, and continued above ground till after Christ's resurrection, and were seen by many persons in the city. Why the graves should be opened on *Friday*, and the bodies not be raised to life till the following Sunday, is difficult to be conceived. The place is extremely obscure.

Verse 54. The centurion] The Roman officer who superintended the execution, called *centurio*, from *centum*, a hundred, because he had the command of one hundred men.

Truly this was the Son of God.] An innocent, holy, and Divine person; and God thus shows his disapprobation of this bloody tragedy. It is not likely that this centurion had any knowledge of the expectation of the Jews relative to the Messiah, and did not use the words in this sense. A *son of God*, as the Romans used the term, would signify no more than a very *eminent* or *Divine person*; a *hero*.

Verse 55. Many women] To their everlasting honour, these women evidenced more *courage*, and *affectionate attachment* to their Lord and Master, than the disciples did, who had promised to *die* with him rather than forsake him.

Beholding afar off] *At a distance*-απο μακροθεν. Though this expression may be understood to refer, rather to the distance from which they came, (viz. from Galilee,) than the *distance they stood from the cross*; yet, as all malefactors were crucified *naked*, perhaps this may account for the *distance* at which these modest women stood.

Verse 56. Mary Magdalene] She probably had her name from *Magdala*, a village or district in Lower Galilee. See <40153> **Matthew 15:39**. Some think she was called Magdalene from αλ δγμα *magdala*, which signifies a *plaiter of hair*. See Lightfoot.

Mary the mother of James] She was mother of him called *James the lesser*, or junior, who was son of Alpheus or Cleopas-see <40103> **Matthew 10:3**; <41154> **Mark 15:40**; <41925> **John 19:25**; and she was sister to the holy virgin. Thus it appears that there were four remarkable *Marys* mentioned in the Gospels. 1. MARY the *Virgin*, wife of JOSEPH. 2. MARY SALOME, her sister, wife of *Cleopas*, <41925> **John 19:25**. 3. MARY MAGDALENE, or MARY of *Magdala*; and, 4. MARY, the sister of *Martha* and *Lazarus*, <41101> **John 11:1**. Though Baronius asserts, and Lightfoot is of the same opinion, that Mary Magdalene, and Mary, the sister of Martha and Lazarus, was one and the same person. It is difficult to ascertain and distinguish these women where their names occur in the Gospels, so many being called by the name of *Mary*.

Joses] Several MSS. and versions read *Joseph*.

Verse 57. When the even] This must have been about three o'clock, or a little after; for our Lord having expired about *three o'clock*, ^{<40746>}**Matthew 27:46**, and the Jewish passover beginning about *four*, it was necessary that Joseph, who would not fail to eat the passover at the usual time, should have obtained and buried the body of Christ some time before four o'clock. But such was the general consternation, occasioned by the prodigies that took place on this most awful occasion, that we may safely conjecture that nothing was done in *order*, and perhaps the passover itself was not eaten at the usual hour, if at all, that day. See at the end of the preceding chapter.

A rich man] He was a counsellor of the great Sanhedrin, ^{<42781>}**Luke 23:50**; and, from the accounts given of him by the evangelists we learn that he was a man of the greatest respectability. He now acted a more honourable part than all the disciples of our Lord. He was of *Arimathea*, or *Rama*, in the tribe of Benjamin, ^{<40218>}**Matthew 2:18**, but lived ordinarily in Jerusalem, as being a member of the great council.

Verse 58. Begged the body] That he might bury it honourably otherwise, by the Jewish customs, he would have either been *burned*, or buried in the common place appointed for executed criminals.

Verse 59. Wrapped it in a clean linen cloth] The Jews, as well as the Egyptians, added spices to keep the body from putrefaction, and the linen was wrapped about every part to keep the aromatics in contact with the flesh. From ^{<43199>}**John 19:39, 40**, we learn that a mixture of myrrh and aloes of one hundred pounds' weight had been applied to the body of Jesus when he was buried. And that a second embalmment was intended, we learn from ^{<42356>}**Luke 23:56; 24:1**, as the hurry to get the body interred before the Sabbath did not permit them to complete, the embalming in the first instance. See an account of the mode of embalming among the Egyptians, in the note on ^{<01512>}**Genesis 50:2, 26**.

Verse 60. Laid it in his own new tomb] To all human appearance the body of Christ must have had the same burial-place with those of the two robbers, as he was numbered with the *transgressors*, and suffered with them; for *then* he was a sacrifice, bearing the sin of the world in his own body on the tree; but now the sacrifice is offered, the atonement made and accepted, he is no longer to be *enrolled* with the *transgressors*, and, according to a prophecy delivered nearly seven hundred years before that time, he is to have the burying-place of a rich man. See ^{<25310>}**Isaiah 53:9**,

10. Had our Lord been buried in the common burial-ground of the malefactors, his resurrection could not have been so distinctly remarked, as the chief priests would never have thought of sealing the stone there, or setting a watch; but now that the body is got into the hands of a friend, they judge it necessary to make use of these precautions, in order, as they said, to prevent imposture; and from this very circumstance the resurrection of Christ had its fullest evidence, and was put beyond the power of successful contradiction. What a number of objections would not human *prudence* have made to Joseph's conduct, had he consulted it on this occasion! It would have represented to him that, "this was to expose himself, to bring himself into trouble, to render himself suspected, to put himself out of all capacity of doing good, to ruin himself irrecoverably; and now it could do no good to his teacher—he is now *dead*, and needs no longer any office of kindness from men." There is, sometimes in our whole life, but *one* opportunity in which God designs *signally* to employ us; and, through our general backwardness to every good work, we are for reserving ourselves to other opportunities, in which God neither *requires* nor will *accept* our services.

Rolled a great stone to the door] Some are of opinion that this tomb was cut down into the rock, perpendicularly from the surface; and that the great stone spoken of here covered over the entrance to it. The stone, no doubt, was intended to secure the place as much as possible.

Verse 61. Mary Magdalene, and the other Mary] The mother of James and Joses, ^{<1275>}**Matthew 27:56**. The mother of our Lord had probably, by this time, been taken home to the house of John. See ^{<3192>}**John 19:26, 27**.

Sitting over against the sepulchre.] These holy women, filled with that love to their Lord which death cannot destroy, cleaved to him in life, and in death were not divided. They came to the grave to see the end, and overwhelmed with sorrow and anguish, *sat down* to mourn.

Verse 62. The next day] This was the *seventh*, or *Saturday*, and might be what we should term the evening of the *sixth*, or *Friday*, because the Jews always ended their day when the sun set, and then began the next.

That followed the day of the preparation] That is, of the *Sabbath*. The victuals, &c., which were to be used on the Sabbath by the Jews, were always *prepared* the preceding evening before the sun set. It is of this *preparation* that the evangelist speaks here; and it is the same which is

mentioned by Mark, ^{<415D>}**Mark 15:42**; by Luke, ^{<2254>}**Luke 23:54**; and by John, ^{<619B>}**John 19:31**. But there was another preparation which happened in the same day: viz. The preparation of the passover; this began about twelve o'clock, and continued till four, the time in which they ate the paschal lamb. See ^{<6194>}**John 19:14**.

Verse 63. Sir, we remember, &c.] While these wicked men are fulfilling their own vicious counsels, they are subserving the great cause of Christianity. Every thing depended on the resurrection of Christ; if it did not appear that he rose from the dead, then the whole system was false, and no atonement was made. It was necessary therefore that the chief priests, &c., should make use of every precaution to prevent an imposture, that the resurrection of Christ might have the fullest evidence to support it. **See Clarke on “^{<4178D>}Matthew 27:60”.**

The word **κυριε** is here very properly translated *sir*, which, in many other places, is as improperly translated *Lord*. When a Roman is the speaker, or the person addressed, **κυριε** should always be translated *sir*; when strangers address our Lord, the word is a title of civil respect, and should, in general, be translated in the same way.

After three days I will rise again.] This they probably took from his saying, *Destroy this temple, and in three days I will build it up*. If so, they destroyed, by their own words, the false accusation they brought against him to put him to death; *then they perverted the meaning, now they declare it*. Thus the wise are taken in their own craftiness. Neither the devil nor his servants ever speak truth, but when they expect to accomplish some bad purpose by it.

Verse 64. Lest his disciples come by night] **Νυκτος**, *by night*, is wanting in *ten* of the uncial MSS., and in several others, and in most of the versions. *Erasmus, Aldus, Bengel, and Boghard, with Griesbach, leave it out of the text.*

Verse 65. Ye have a watch] The Jews had a corps of Roman troops, consisting of several companies, as a guard for the temple, ^{<440I>}**Acts 4:1**. These companies mounted guard by turns, see ^{<2224>}**Luke 22:4**. Some of these companies, which were not then on duty, Pilate gave them leave to employ to watch the tomb.

Verse 66. Made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone, and setting a watch.] Or rather, *made the tomb secure by the guard, and by sealing the stone.* I follow *Kypke*, in construing **μετα της κουστωδιας**, with **ησφαλισαντο**. The *guard* was to take care that the disciples should not steal him away; and the *seal*, which was probably the seal of the governor, was to prevent the guards from being corrupted so as to permit the theft. So every thing was done which human policy and prudence could, to prevent a resurrection, which these very precautions had the most direct tendency to authenticate and establish. How wonderful are the wisdom and goodness of God!-and how true is it, *that there is neither might nor counsel against him!*

1. The *death* of Christ was ordered, so as to be witnessed by *thousands*; and if his resurrection take place, it must be *demonstrated*; and it cannot take place without being *incontestable*, such are the *precautions* used here to prevent all *imposture*.
2. The more the circumstances of the death of Christ are examined, the more astonishing the whole will appear. The death is uncommon-the person uncommon-and the object uncommon; and the whole is grand, majestic, and awful. Nature itself is thrown into unusual action, and by means and causes wholly supernatural. In every part, the finger of God most evidently appears.
3. How glorious does Christ appear in his death! Were it not for his thirst, his exclamation on the cross, and the piercing of his side, we should have found it difficult to believe that such a person could ever have entered the empire of death; but the *divinity* and the *manhood* equally appear, and thus the certainty of the atonement is indubitably established.
4. But who can reflect on the state of the poor disciples, during the whole of the time in which our blessed Lord lay under the empire of death, without sharing their sorrows! When he expired on the cross their expectation was cut off; and when his body was laid in the grave their hopes were buried; and nothing but the resurrection of Christ from the dead could have given a resurrection to their hopes. It is true they had heard him say that he would rise again the third day; but in this it is evident their faith was very imperfect; and the uncertainty, perplexity, anxiety, and distress which they in consequence must have suffered, can neither be described nor imagined. Though *we* know the glorious result, yet who can

help sympathizing with the pious father, the virgin mother, and the disconsolate disciples!

ST. MATTHEW

CHAPTER 28.

The resurrection of Christ declared by an angel to the two Marys at the sepulchre, 1-6. They are commissioned to announce this to the disciples, 7. They go, and are met by Christ himself who promises to meet the disciples in Galilee, 8-10. The watch go into the city, and report to the chief priests what had taken place, 11. They give them money, to say that his disciples had stolen the body by night, while they slept, 12-15. Christ meets the eleven disciples in a mountain of Galilee, 16, 17. He gives them a commission to preach the Gospel throughout the earth; to baptize in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; and promises to be with them to the end of the world, 18-20.

NOTES ON CHAP. 28.

Verse 1. In the end of the Sabbath] *Ὁψε δε σαββατων.* *After the end of the week:* this is the translation given by several eminent critics; and in this way the word *οψε* is used by the most eminent Greek writers. Thucydides, lib. iv. chap. 93, *της ημερας οψε ην*-the day was ended. Plutarch, *οψε των βασιλευς χρονων*- after the times of the king. Philostratus *οψε των τροικων*-after the Trojan war. See Rosenmuller. In general the Jews divided their natural day, which consisted of twenty-four hours, into *day* and *night*. Their artificial day began at the *rising* and ended at the *setting* of the sun; all the rest of the time, from the setting to the rising of the sun, they termed *night*: hence the same word, in Hebrew, signifies both *evening* and *night*. ^{<01005>}**Genesis 1:5;** ^{<40647>}**Mark 6:47.** Matthew has employed the word in this extensive sense here, pointing out the *latter part* of the Jewish night, that which immediately preceded the rising of the sun, and not that *first part* which we call the *evening*. The transaction mentioned here evidently took place early on the morning of the *third day* after our Lord's crucifixion; what is called our Sunday morning, or first day of the next week.

Came-to see the sepulchre.] That is, they *set out* at this time in order to visit the tomb of our Lord, and also to weep there, ^{<81131>}**John 11:31**, and to embalm the body of our Lord, ^{<82401>}**Luke 24:1**. St. Matthew omits Mary Salome, mentioned by Mark; and Joanna, the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward, mentioned by Luke. The *other Mary* was the wife of Cleopas, and

mother of James and Joses, mentioned before, ^{<12756>}**Matthew 27:56**. Were not *Mary* and *Salome* two distinct persons?

Verse 2. A great earthquake] Σεισμος, a *shaking* or *commotion* of any kind: probably the word means no more than the *confusion* caused among the guards by the angel's appearance. All this had taken place before the women reached the sepulchre.

The angel of the Lord descended from heaven] Matthew is very particular in this, to show that the word *angel* is not to be taken in the sense of an *ordinary messenger*, who might have come from *Joseph* of Arimathea, or from any other; but in the sense of an *extraordinary messenger*, who descended from GOD, out of *heaven*, for this very purpose. It is likely that the angel had descended, rolled away the stone, and was sitting on it, before the women reached the tomb.

Verse 3. His countenance] *His appearance*, η ιδεα αυτου; or, *his face*, for so the word is used in some of the best Greek writers. It seems, from ^{<41165>}**Mark 16:5**, that this angel had assumed the appearance of a *young man*.

Like lightning] Coruscations of glory continually flaming from his face. This might produce the *confusion* mentioned ^{<4182>}**Matthew 28:2**.

His raiment white as snow] He was clothed in garments emblematical of the *glad tidings* which he came to announce. It would have been inconsistent with the message he brought, had the angel appeared in *black robes*, such as those preposterously wear who call themselves his successors in the ministry of a once *suffering*, but now *risen* and highly exalted, Saviour. But the world is as full of *nonsense* as of *sin*; and who can correct and bring it to *reason* and *piety*?

Verse 4. The keepers-became as dead men.] God can, by one and the same means, *comfort* his *servants*, and *terrify* his *enemies*. The resurrection of Christ is a subject of *terror* to the servants of sin, and a subject of consolation to the sons of God; because it is a proof of the resurrection of both, the one to shame and everlasting contempt-the other to eternal glory and joy.

Verse 5. I know that ye seek Jesus] Speaking after the manner of men, these women deserved to be the first witnesses of the resurrection of Christ: during *life* they ministered to him, and in *death* they were not

divided. They attended him to the CROSS, notwithstanding their attachment to him exposed them to the most imminent danger; and now they come to watch and weep at his TOMB. The common opinion is, that women are more *fickle* and less *courageous* than men. The *reverse* of this I believe to be the truth, in those who are thoroughly converted to God; and who, previously to conversion, whether *man* or *woman*, can be trusted in any case?

Verse 6. Come, see the place] The tomb in which our Lord was laid was no doubt like the rest of the Jewish burying places, a receptacle for the several dead of a whole family, divided into separate *niches*, where each had his *place*. *Come and see the place*-was tantamount to, *Come and see the niche* in which he was laid-it is now empty; nor was there any other body in the place, for the tomb was a *new* one, in which no man had ever been laid, ^{<3194>}**John 19:41**; so there could be no deception in the case.

Verse 7. Go quickly and tell his disciples] Thus these faithful women proclaim the Gospel to those who were afterwards to be the *teachers* of the whole human race! Behold what honour God puts upon those who *persevere* in his truth, and continue to *acknowledge him before men!*

That he is risen from the dead] There is a remarkable saying of *R. Judah Hakkodesh*, which some critics quote on this subject: "After THREE DAYS the SOUL of the Messiah shall RETURN to its body, and he shall GO OUT of that STONE in which he shall be BURIED."

Goeth before you into Galilee] As himself promised, ^{<4162>}**Matthew 26:32**.

Verse 8. They departed quickly from the sepulchre] At the desire of the angel they went *into* the tomb, to have the fullest certainty of the resurrection.

Fear and great joy] *Fear*, produced by the *appearance* of this glorious messenger of God; and *great joy* occasioned by the *glad tidings* of the resurrection of their Lord and Master. At the mention of unexpected good news, fear and joy are generally intermingled.

---*Vix sum apud me, ita animus commotus est metu,
Spe, gaudio, mirando hoc tanto, tam repentino bono.*
TERANT. Andr. v. 945.

*"I am almost beside myself, my mind is so agitated
with fear, hope, and joy, at this unexpected good news."*

Verse 9. And as they went to tell his disciples] This clause is wanting in the *Codex Vatican*, and *Codex Bezae*, and in twenty others, and in most of the *versions*. The omission is approved by *Mill*, *Bengel*, and *Schmid*. *Griesbach* leaves it in the text with a note of doubtfulness. It appears to be superfluous. To connect this with the next clause, the particle **καί**, *and*, is obliged to be suppressed in all the translations. I think the verse should begin with, *And behold he goeth, &c.*, and the former clause be suppressed. *Probabiliter delenda*, says Professor White, in his *Crisews Griesbachianæ*, speaking of the preceding words.

Jesus met them] Christ bestows his graces and consolations by *degrees*, first by his angels, and then by himself. He does not reveal himself to incredulous and disobedient souls; he appears not even to these women till he has tried their faith and obedience by his ministering angels.

All hail.] Anglo-Saxon, [Anglo-Saxon], *Health be to you!* **χαίρετε**, *Be ye safe, rejoice.*

And they held him by the feet, and worshipped him.] This kind of reverence is in daily use among the *Hindoos*: when a disciple meets his religious guide in the public streets, he prostrates himself before him, and, taking the dust from his teacher's feet, rubs it on his *forehead, breast, &c.* See **WARD'S CUSTOMS**.

Verse 10. Be not afraid] They were seized with fear at the sight of the angel; and this was now renewed by this unexpected appearance of Christ. See **Clarke's note on "~~4198~~ Matthew 28:8"**.

Go, tell my brethren] This is the *first* time our Lord called his disciples by this endearing name: they no doubt thought that their Lord would reproach them with their past cowardice and infidelity; but, in speaking thus, he gives them a full assurance, in the most tender terms, that all that was passed was as buried for ever.

Verse 11. Some of the watch] Or *guards*. Probably the rest still remained at the tomb, waiting for orders to depart, and had sent these to intimate to their employers the things that had taken place.

Verse 12. With the elders] That is, the *senators* of the great *Sanhedrin* or Jewish council of state, elsewhere called *the elders of the people*; they could now meet, as the Sabbath was over.

Verse 13. His disciples came by night] This was as *absurd* as it was *false*. On one hand, the terror of the disciples, the smallness of their number (only eleven;) and their almost total want of faith; on the other, the great danger of such a bold enterprise, the number of armed men who guarded the tomb, the authority of Pilate and of the Sanhedrin, must render such an imposture as this utterly devoid of credit.

Stole him away while we slept.] Here is a whole heap of absurdities. 1st. Is it likely that so many men would all fall asleep, in the open air, at once? 2dly. Is it at all probable that a *Roman guard* should be found off their watch, much less asleep, when it was instant *death*, according to the Roman military laws, to be found in this state? 3dly. Could they be so sound asleep as not to awake with all the noise which must be necessarily made by removing the great stone, and taking away the body? 4thly. Is it at all likely that these disciples could have had time sufficient to do all this, and to come and return, without being perceived by any person? And 5thly. If they were asleep, how could they possibly know that it was the *disciples* that stole him, or indeed that any person or persons stole him?-for, being *asleep*, they could see no person. From their own *testimony*, therefore, the *resurrection* may be as *fully proved* as the *theft*.

Verse 14. If this came to the governor's ears] Pilate-*we will persuade him* that it is for his own interest and honour to join in the deception; and we will *render you secure*-we will take care that you shalt not suffer that punishment for this pretended breach of duty which otherwise you might expect.

Verse 15. Until this day.] That is to say, the time in which Matthew wrote his Gospel; which is supposed by some to have been *eight*, by others *eighteen*, and by others *thirty* years after our Lord's resurrection.

Verse 16. Then the eleven disciples went] When the women went and told them that they had seen the Lord, and that he had promised to meet them in Galilee. From the *eleventh* to the *fifteenth* verse inclusive, should be read in a parenthesis, as the *sixteenth* verse is the continuation of the subject mentioned in the *tenth*.

Verse 17. But some doubted.] That is, *Thomas* only at first doubted. The expression simply intimates, that they did not all believe at that time. See the same form noticed on ~~<1718>~~ **Matthew 26:8**, and ~~<1744>~~ **Matthew 27:44**.

Verse 18. And Jesus came and spake unto them] It is supposed by some that the reason why any doubted was, that when they saw Jesus at first, he was at a *distance*; but when he *came up*, drew near to them, they were fully persuaded of the identity of his person.

All power is given unto me] Or, *All authority in heaven and upon earth is given unto me*. One fruit of the sufferings and resurrection of Christ is represented to be, his having *authority* or *right* in *heaven* to send down the Holy Spirit-to raise up his followers thither-and to crown them in the kingdom of an endless glory: *in earth*, to convert sinners; to sanctify, protect, and perfect his Church; to subdue all nations to himself; and, finally, to judge all mankind. If Jesus Christ were not equal with the Father, could he have claimed this equality of power, without being guilty of impiety and blasphemy? Surely not; and does he not, in the fullest manner, assert his Godhead, and his equality with the Father, by claiming and possessing all the authority in heaven and earth?-i.e. all the power and authority by which both empires are governed?

Verse 19. Go ye therefore] Because I have the authority aforesaid, and can send *whomsoever* I will to do *whatsoever* I please:-*teach*, **μαθητευσατε**, *make disciples of all nations*, bring them to an acquaintance with God who bought them, and then *baptize them in the name of the Father*. It is natural to suppose that *adults* were the first subjects of baptism; for as the Gospel was, in a peculiar manner, sent to the Gentiles, they must hear and receive it, before they could be expected to renounce their old prejudices and idolatries, and come into the bonds of the Christian covenant. But, certainly, no argument can be drawn from this concession against the baptism of *children*. When the Gentiles and Jews had received the faith and blessings of the Gospel, it is natural enough to suppose they should wish to get their children incorporated with the visible Church of Christ; especially if, as many pious and learned men have believed, baptism succeeded to circumcision, which I think has never yet been disproved. The apostles knew well that the Jews not only circumcised the children of proselytes, but also baptized them; and as they now received a commission to teach and proselyte all the nations, and baptize them in the name of the holy Trinity, they must necessarily understand that *infants* were included: nor could they, the custom of their country being considered, have understood our Lord differently, unless he had, in the most express terms, said that they were *not* to baptize children, which neither he nor his apostles ever did. And as to the objection, that the

baptized were obliged to profess their faith, and that, therefore, only *adults* should be baptized, there is no weight at all in it; because what is spoken of such refers to those who, only at that period of life, heard the Gospel, and were not born of parents who had been Christians; therefore they could not have been baptized into the Christian faith, forasmuch as no such faith was at their infancy preached in the world. That the children and even infants, of proselytes, were baptized among the Jews, and reputed, in consequence, *clean*, and partakers of the blessings of the covenant, see proved at large by Wetstein, in his note on ^{<41816>} **Matthew 3:16**. See Clarke's note on ^{<41816>} **Matthew 3:6**", and particularly see Clarke ^{<411616>} **Mark 16:16**".

In the name of the Father, &c.] Baptism, properly speaking, whether administered by dipping or sprinkling, signifies a full and eternal consecration of the person to the service and honour of that *Being* in whose name it is administered; but this consecration can never be made to a *creature*; therefore the *Father*, and the *Son*, and the *Holy Spirit*, are not *creatures*. Again, baptism is not made in the name of a *quality* or *attribute* of the Divine nature; therefore the *Father*, and the *Son*, and the *Holy Spirit*, are not *qualities* or *attributes* of the Divine nature. The *orthodox*, as they are termed, have generally considered this text as a decisive proof of the doctrine of the holy *Trinity*: and what else can they draw from it? Is it possible for words to convey a plainer sense than these do? And do they not direct every reader to consider the *Father*, the *Son*, and the *Holy Spirit*, as three distinct persons? "But this I can never believe." I cannot help that-you shall not be persecuted by me for differing from my opinion. I cannot go over to *you*; I must abide by what I believe to be the meaning of the Scriptures. Dr. Lightfoot has some good thoughts on this commission given to the apostles:-

"I. *Christ* commands them to go and baptize the nations: but how much time was past before such a journey was taken! And when the time was now come that this work should be begun, *Peter* doth not enter upon it without a previous admonition given him from heaven. And this was occasioned hereby, that, according to the command of *Christ*, the Gospel was first to be preached to *Judea*, *Samaria*, and *Galilee*.

"II. He commands them to baptize *in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*; but among the *Jews*, they baptized only in the name of *Jesus*. See ^{<4123>} **Acts 2:38; 8:16; 19:5**.

For this reason, that thus the baptizers might assert, and the baptized confess, *Jesus* to be the true *Messias*; which was chiefly controverted by the Jews. Of the same nature is that apostolic blessing, *Grace and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ*. Where then is the *Holy Ghost*? He is not excluded, however he be not named. The Jews did more easily consent to the *Spirit* of the *Messias*, which they very much celebrate, than to the *person* of the *Messias*. Above all others they deny and abjure *Jesus* of *Nazareth*. It belonged to the apostles, therefore, the more earnestly to assert *Jesus* (to be the *Messias*) by how much the more vehemently they opposed him: which being once cleared, the acknowledging of the *Spirit* of *Christ* would be introduced without delay or scruple. *Moses*, (in ^{Exodus} **Exodus 6:14**;) going about to reckon up all the tribes of *Israel*, goes no farther than the tribe of *Levi*; and takes up with that to which his business and story at that present related. In like manner, the apostles, for the present, baptize in the name of *Jesus*, and bless in the name of the Father and of *Jesus*, that thereby they might more firmly establish the doctrine of *Jesus*, which met with such sharp and virulent opposition; which doctrine being established among them, they would soon agree about the *Holy Ghost*.

“III. Among the *Jews*, the controversy was about the true *Messias*; among the *Gentiles*, about the true God. It was therefore proper among the Jews to baptize in the name of *Jesus*, that he might be vindicated to be the true *Messias*. Among the *Gentiles*, *in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*, that they might be hereby instructed in the doctrine of the true God.-Let this be particularly noted.

“IV. The Jews baptized proselytes *into the name of the Father*, that is, into the profession of God, whom they called by the name of *Father*. The apostles baptize the *Jews* *into the name of Jesus the Son*, and the *Gentiles*, *into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*.

“V. The Father hath revealed himself in the old covenant; the Son in the new; in human flesh by his miracles, doctrine, resurrection and ascension; the *Holy Ghost* in his gifts and miracles. Thus the doctrine of the ever blessed Trinity grew by degrees to full

maturity. For the arriving to the acknowledgment of which, it was incumbent upon all who professed the true God to be three in one to be baptized into his name.” LIGHTFOOT’S Works, vol. ii. p. 274.

Verse 20. Teaching them to observe all things] Men are *ignorant* of Divine things, and must be *taught*. Only those can be considered as proper *teachers* of the ignorant who are thoroughly *instructed* in whatsoever Christ *has commanded*. Persons who are entrusted with the public ministry of the word should take care that they teach not human creeds and confessions of faith, in *place* of the Sacred Writings; but those things, and those only, which *Jesus has commanded*.

And, lo, I am with you alway] και ιδου εγω μεθυμων ειμι πασας τας ημερας-literally, *Behold, I am with you every day*. A minister of Christ should consider, that while his soul simply and uniformly follows Jesus, he shall be made a constant instrument of bringing many sons and daughters to glory. The dark, it is true, must be enlightened, the ignorant instructed, the profligate reclaimed, the guilty justified, and the unholy sanctified; and who is sufficient for this work? HE with whom the Son of God *is EVERY DAY*, and none other.

Unto the end of the world.] Some translate, εως της συντελειας του αιωνος, *to the end of this age*; meaning the apostolic age, or Jewish dispensation; and then they refer the promise of Christ’s *presence* to the working of *miracles*, and explain this by ^{<411617>}Mark 16:17-19. *By my name they shall cast out demons, &c., &c.* But though the words are used in this sense in several places, see ^{<411339>}Matthew 13:39, 40, ^{<411349>}Matthew 13:49; 24:3, yet it is certain they were repeatedly used among the primitive ecclesiastical writers to denote the *consummation of all things*; and it is likely that this is the sense in which they are used here, which the Anglo-Saxon has happily expressed: [Anglo-Saxon]-*And I, be with you all days, until world ending*; and this is indispensably necessary, because the presence and influence of Jesus Christ are essentially requisite in *every age* of the world, to enlighten, instruct, and save the lost. The promise takes in not only the *primitive apostles*, but also all their *successors* in the Christian ministry, as long as the earth shall endure.

Amen.] This word is omitted by some of the oldest and most authentic MSS., and by some versions and fathers. When it is considered that the word *amen* simply means *so be it!* we may at once perceive that it could not be added by our Lord. For our Lord could not pray that his own will

might be done, or his own promise fulfilled. The word is, therefore, utterly impertinent as a part of the sacred text, and could neither have been added by our Lord, nor by the evangelist. The *amens* at the end of the sacred books have no other authority than what they derive from the transcribers of copies; and, at best, are only to be considered as the pious wish of the writer, or of the Church, that the promises contained in the sacred volume may be accomplished. Indeed, it seems often to have no other meaning than our *finis* at the end of our books.

In the MSS. and versions there are various *subscriptions*, or *epigraphs*, to this Gospel: the following are the principal:-

“The Gospel according to Matthew-written by him in Jerusalem-in Palestine-in the east-in the Hebrew dialect-in Hebrew-eight years after the ascension of Christ-interpreted by John-by James the brother of the Lord.”

The subscription in some copies of the Arabic version is very full: “The end of the copy of the Gospel of Matthew the Apostle. He wrote it in the land of Palestine, by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, in the Hebrew tongue, eight years after the bodily ascension of Jesus the Messiah into heaven, in the first year of the reign of Claudius Cæsar, king of Rome.”

These are sufficient to show how little credit should be attached to the subscriptions found at the end of the sacred books, either in the MSS., or in the versions.

1. IN concluding my notes on this evangelist, I cannot express myself better than in the words of the late Mr. *Wakefield*, to whom this commentary has been in many instances indebted. “I have now finished my observations on the Gospel of Matthew: a piece of history, it must be acknowledged, the most *singular* in its *composition*, the most *wonderful* in its *contents*, and the most *important* in its *object*, that was ever exhibited to the notice of mankind. For simplicity of narrative, and an artless relation of facts, without any applause or censure, or digressive remarks, on the part of the historian, upon the characters introduced in it; without any intermixture of his own opinion, upon any subject whatsoever; and for a multiplicity of *internal* marks of *credibility*, this Gospel certainly has no parallel among human productions.”

2. One thing the pious and intelligent reader has, no doubt, already noticed: there is not one truth, or doctrine, in the whole oracles of God, which is

not taught in this evangelist. The outlines of the whole spiritual system are here correctly laid down: even Paul himself has *added* nothing; he has amplified and illustrated the truths contained in this Gospel; but, even under the direct inspiration of the Holy Ghost, neither he nor any other of the apostles have brought to light any one truth, the prototype of which has not been found in the words or acts of our blessed Lord, as related by Matthew, in the work which has already passed under review. The Gospel by St. Matthew is the grand text-book of Christianity; the other Gospels are collateral evidences of its truth, and the apostolic epistles are comments on the text. In the commencement of this work, I stated my wish, “to assist my fellow labourers in the vineyard to lead men to HIM who is the fountain of all excellence, goodness, truth, and happiness;-to magnify his LAW, and make it honourable;-to show the wonderful provision made in his GOSPEL for the recovery and salvation of a sinful world;-to prove that God’s great design is to make his creatures HAPPY; and that such a salvation as it becomes God to give, and such as man needs to receive, is *within the grasp of every human soul*.”--*General Preface*, before Genesis. And having thus far done what I could, in reference to these great and important purposes, here I register my thanks to the ever-blessed God, Father, Word, and Holy Spirit, that he has permitted me to cast my mite into this sacred treasury, to add my feeble testimony to his Eternal Truth; and has spared me, in the midst of many infirmities and oppressive labours, to see the conclusion of this Gospel, a consummation which I had long devoutly wished, but which I had scarcely hoped ever to see realized.

May the Divine Author of this sacred book give the reader a heart-felt experience of all the truths it contains; make and keep him wise unto salvation; build him up in this most holy faith; and give him an inheritance among the blessed, through Christ Jesus, the Friend of mankind, and the Saviour of sinners, who is the *object* and *end* of this glorious system of truth! And to Him, with the Father and Eternal Spirit, be glory and dominion, thanksgiving and obedience, for ever and ever, Amen and amen!