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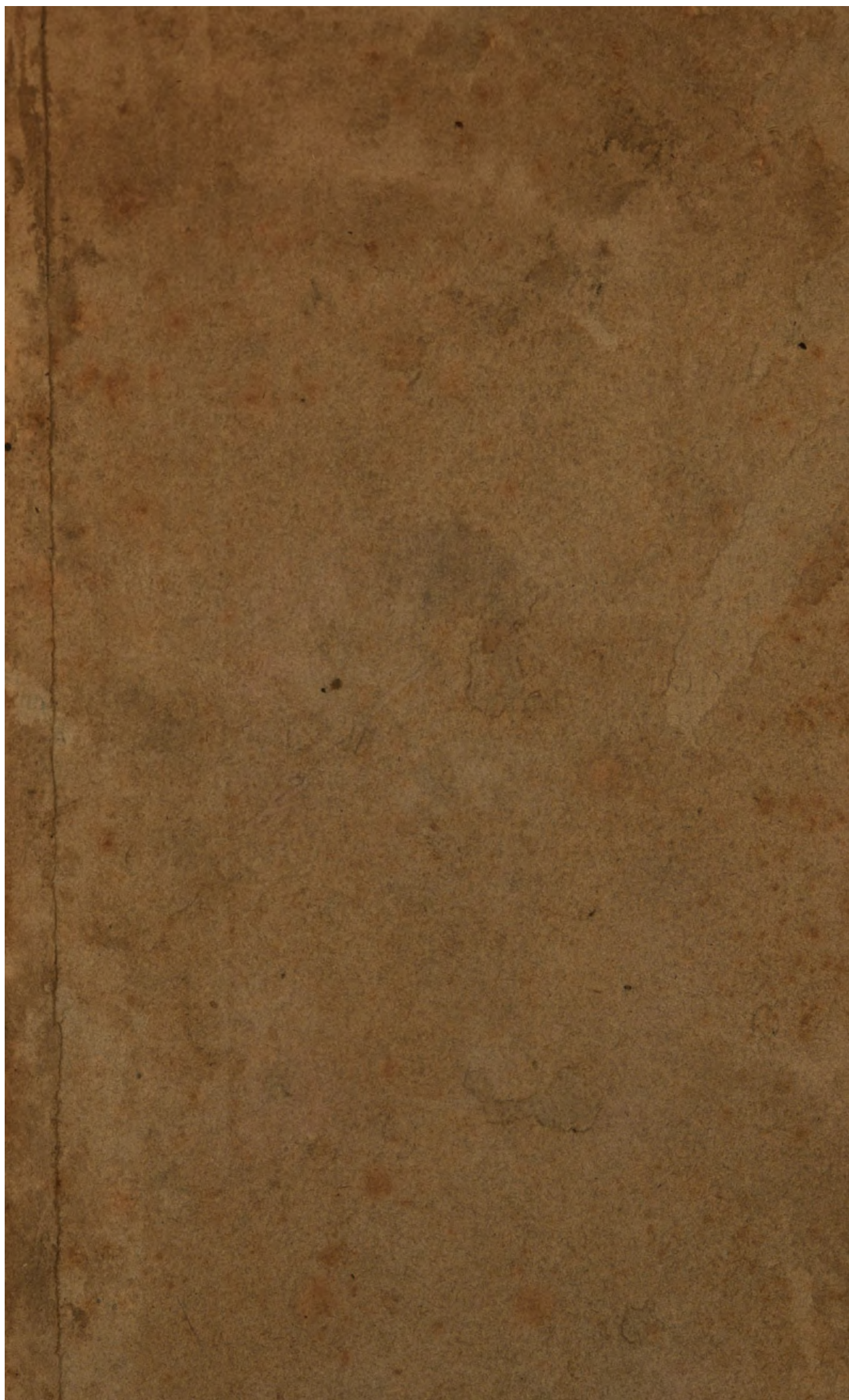
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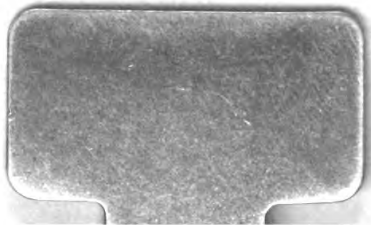
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Progr.





DISSERTATIONS
ON THE
Prophecies,
OF THE
OLD TESTAMENT,

Sheet 2B - wanting

THE RESTORATION OF
AND THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD,
Whether so applied by Jews or Christians.

REVISED AND AMENDED
By J. KING, Esq.
(Of Howland-Street, Fitzroy-Square.)

יִשְׂרָאֵל נוֹשָׁע בַּיְיָ הַשְׁׂוֹעַת עוֹלָמִים :
Israel shall be saved by the Lord, with an eternal salvation,
ISAIAH, xlv. 17.

VOL. I.

London :

PRINTED BY L. ALEXANDER, WHITECHAPEL ROAD.
And to be had of all Booksellers, throughout the United Kingdom.

1817.



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ON THE
Prophecies,
OF THE
OLD TESTAMENT,
By *D. LEVI.*

CONTAINING

All such Prophecies as are applicable to the
COMING OF THE MESSIAH;
THE RESTORATION OF THE JEWS,
AND THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD,
Whether so applied by Jews or Christians.

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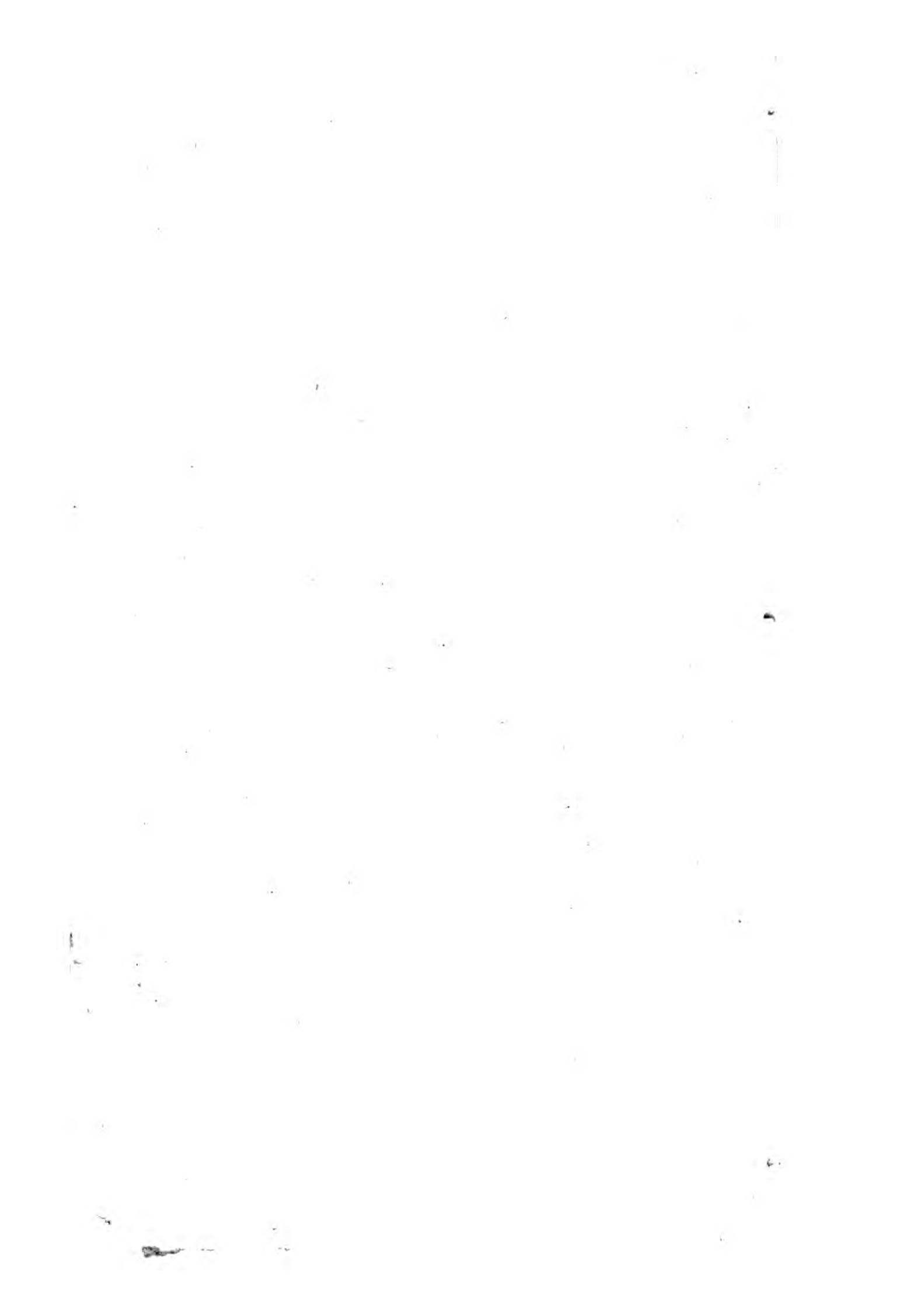
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DEDICATION.

TO THE

REVEREND AND LEARNED

RAPHAEL MELDOLA, D.D.

Chief Rabbi of the Great Synagogue,

OF THE

SPANISH AND PORTUGUESE JEWS IN ENGLAND.

REVEREND SIR,

THE authenticity of the Pentateuch is admitted, but it has been mistakenly expounded; the religion and antiquity of the Jews is incontrovertible, and the coming of the Messiah to restore them, evinces that God's peculiar people were to be punished, but not to be abandoned. The prophecies are so intelligible, that it is astonishing they should be misunderstood; but men's errors will be rectified, and their sins corrected and expiated at the redemption.

DAVID

DAVID LEVI made a judicious selection of the prophecies respecting the Messiah, and I have prefaced it with requisite observations. I have made but little alteration in the body of the work, except to amend the orthography, or correct grammatical inaccuracies.

It would have been fortunate for the world, if you had undertaken to edit this work; you would have deduced reasoning from our ancestors, that would have astonished those who are ignorant of Rabbinical wisdom, and disclosed theological knowledge, that would have convinced the most inveterate Sceptic. Every persecution was attended with the destruction of works, which illustrated the excellence of a religion that excited such umbrage. Those who prefer'd temporal to spiritual benefits, hated precepts that seemed rigorous and painful, and what they were too sensual to adopt, they endeavoured to abolish—yet many books escaped the frantic ravage. The resolute people whom no danger could detach from their faith, contrived to conceal many sacred and invaluable tracts;

tracts ; and you possess some that escaped the vigilance of former fanatics, and comprehended only by proficients in our traditionary law.

THE mercy of our Creator is mistaken for his desertion of us ;—some men delude themselves into notions that God is regardless of their acts, because he is compassionate and long-suffering. From the calamities under which the virtuous suffer, from the prosperity of those who do not merit it, from the impunity of miscreants who dare the arm of vengeance ; because he endures their temerity without asserting his Omnipotence they doubt his providence. Some ancient heathens had more perfect and exalted notions of providence, than many modern pretended religionists ; they painted Divine providence *plumbeis pedibus et ferreis manibus*, with leaden feet and iron hands, symbolical of the slow vengeance that followed the sinner, yet when he is overtaken its severity would compensate for the delay. How arrogant for mortal man to pretend to dive into the incomprehensible mystery of the Divine government ; I may quote Pagan authors

authors when they are learned and virtuous. PINDAR speaking of the eternal Ruler and Lord of all things, gives him the title of the most perfect artificer, as being the great author and distributor of justice, to whom it properly belongs to determine at what time, in what manner, and to what degree to punish every particular offender. Let us, my dear Sir, rejoice that we were initiated in the worship of the true God, and profess his religion.

I KNOW how your luminous mind is occupied in the contemplation of inspired writings, yet you will not disdain the reflections of a learned author, who however erroneous in some notions, was profound and judicious in these: Burnett says, in his theory of the Earth—“ What is this
 “ life, but a circulation of little mean actions?
 “ we lie down, and rise again; dress, and un-
 “ dress; feed, and wax hungry; work or play,
 “ and we are weary; and then we lie down
 “ again, and the circle returns. We spend the
 “ day in trifles! and when the night comes, we
 “ throw ourselves into the bed of folly, amongst
 “ dreams

“ dreams and broken thoughts, and wild im-
 “ aginations ; our reason lies asleep by us, and
 “ we are for the time as arrant brutes, as those
 “ that sleep in the stalls, or in the fields. Are
 “ not the capacities of man higher than these ?
 “ and not his ambition and expectations to be
 “ greater ? let us be adventurers for another
 “ world, ’tis at least a fair and noble chance,
 “ and there is nothing in this worth our thoughts
 “ or passions. If we should be disappointed, we
 “ are still no worse than the rest of our fellow
 “ mortals ; and if we succeed in our expectations
 “ we are extremely happy.”

As there is a God whose providence governs
 the world, and all the creatures in it, is it not
 reasonable to think that he has a special care of
 man, the noblest part of the visible world, and
 that having made them capable of eternal dura-
 tion he has provided for their eternal happiness,
 and sufficiently revealed the way to it, and the
 terms and conditions of it. Now, let any book
 be produced to the world, that pretends to be
 from God, where the doctrines are so useful,
 the

the precepts so reasonable, and the arguments so powerful, and the truth of which is confirmed by so many great and unquestionable miracles ; the relation of which has been transmitted to posterity, in public and authentic records, written by those who were eye and ear witnesses of what they wrote, and free from suspicion of worldly interest and design, with Jerusalem where the Divine oracle chiefly spake, still retaining numerous vestiges, and exhibiting structures and monuments of biblical relation. Let a book like this be produced with such doctrines, (if there is such a one,) and that prevailed so miraculously in the world, in opposition to all the discouragement which no other religion ever encountered ; but if there is no other such book we must embrace and entertain its sacred doctrines, and recognize them as emanative from Divine authority.

Moses as an inspired author, is the only one who could instruct us in the formation and unfoldings of the world ; he is not an Epicurus, who has recourse to atoms ; a Lucretius, who believes matter eternal ; a Spinoza, who admits

a material God ; a Descartes, who prates about the laws of motion ; but a legislator, who announces to all men without hesitation ; without fear of being mistaken how the world was created. Nothing can be more simple, or sublime, than his opening, “ In the beginning God created the heaven, and the earth :” He could not speak more assuredly if he had been a spectator, and by these words mythology systems and absurdities shrink to nought, and are mere chimeras in the eye of reason. All the academies of the universe may fancy systems on the creation of the world ; but after all their researches, all their conjectures, all their combinations, their multitude of volumes, they will tell me much less than Moses has said in one single page, such is the difference between men who speak from themselves, and the man who is inspired, these were opinions of a celebrated Pontiff ; but how many men have been prodigies in science, and yet have erred in their notions of the Deity ? Instead of the sublime belief of the unity, have preplexed and tortured their

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minds

minds to fancy a triune God. How many philosophers whose wisdom has been proverbial have asserted absurd dogmas? because they imagined their sophistications the standard of reason, and forsook the sacred page where it was taught them.

“THE fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.” Learning is ostentatious and illusive if it does not make men religious, and it is erroneous and fallacious when it relies on its own conjectures: the Unity of the Deity and obedience of his commandments are the best proofs of wisdom. How circumscribed and contemptible is a pretended knowledge founded on our own discovery. How wretchedly have philosophers floundered in their hypothetical definitions of moral duties, when they have deviated from orthodox precept; of such sophists the Prophet says, “That frustrateth the tokens of the liars, and maketh sinners mad; that turneth wise men backward, and maketh their knowledge foolish.”

ALL nations of the earth except Jews are
governed

governed by human institutes, by the authority of kings, or the mandate of legislators. The government of the Jews was alone a theocracy, it was a compact between God and his people ; instead of political speculations, they consulted the Urim and Thummim ; instead of precarious human suggestions, they had the dictates of the divine oracle ; while they were obedient to God's injunctions they were prosperous and happy, they were his peculiar people, and they will retain his prepossession while they persist in their faith. Bishop Newton said, woe to the people who persecute them, and so will their persecutors infallibly find it. God who promised their restoration will avenge them : “ I will “ judge those that have judged thee, and thy “ children I will save ; and I will feed thy “ enemies with their own flesh, and they shall “ be made drunk with their own blood as with “ new wine ; and all flesh shall know that I am “ the Lord that save thee, and thy redeemer “ the mighty one of Jacob.” (Isaiah.) Are these denunciations forgeries ? Are they interpolations ?

polations? Have the Prophets proclaimed them, and is the bible a Christian creed, and yet so flagrantly violated? In what stronger and more terrible language can it utter its menaces, and who can outrage these defenceless people, that does not set holy writ at defiance.

It is presumption and supererogation to quote Divine authors to one who is incessantly contemplating them, and comprehends and construes them more accurately than any other man; but perhaps, you are less intimate with the moral tenets and profound learning of Dr. WOLLASTON, the only work of this nature that does not refer to the new fangled doctrine of the Gospel; of which, and its imputed author, it is studiously silent:—read his sublime invocation.

“ALMIGHTY BEING! upon whom depends
 “the existence of the world, and by whose
 “providence I have been preserved to this
 “moment, and enjoyed many undeserved ad-
 “vantages: graciously accept my grateful sense
 “and acknowledgments of all your beneficence
 “toward me: deliver me from the evil con-
 “sequences

“ sequences of all my transgressions and follies ;
 “ endue me with such dispositions and powers,
 “ as may carry me innocently and safely through
 “ all future trials ; and enable me upon all
 “ occasions to behave myself conformably to the
 “ laws of reason, piously, and wisely : suffer no
 “ being to injure me, no misfortune to befall me,
 “ nor me to hurt myself by any error or miscon-
 “ duct of my own ; vouchsafe me clear and
 “ distinct preceptions of things ; with so much
 “ health and prosperity, as may be good for me :
 “ that I may at least pass my time in peace,
 “ with contentment, and tranquillity of mind :
 “ and that, having faithfully discharged my duty
 “ to my family and friends, and endeavoured to
 “ improve myself in virtuous habits and useful
 “ knowledge, I may at last make a decent and
 “ happy exit, and then find myself in some
 “ better state.”

SANCTIFIED and blessed be the gracious and
 Almighty God ! for the Tetragammaton we
 dare not mention, that has made us know him ;
 and that our fortitude and faith has not forsaken
 us,

us, under such singular and enormous wrongs.

WHEN we meditate on the wonders of creation, we are amazed and awed at its author; the immense globes of light, and the incalculable celerity of their movements, are subjects that astonish the mind; the space in which millions of stars are bespangled, where millions of world's move in their vortices, cannot be computed by human understanding. Great and Almighty Creator! to thy Omnipotent power alone all these bodies owe their existence. If the stupendous magnitude of the universe, if its immensity and diversity confounds our reflections, what art thou, O God! and what man can comprehend thee? If the heavens and their hosts are so brilliant and grand, that the eye is dazzled by their splendor, what art thou, O God! whose glory so transcends these feeble images of thy greatness? What is the infinite extent of thy wisdom and power, that can encompass and govern them all? I tremble, at thy tremendous power; I sicken, at my insignificancy and prostrate before thee; humbly
hope

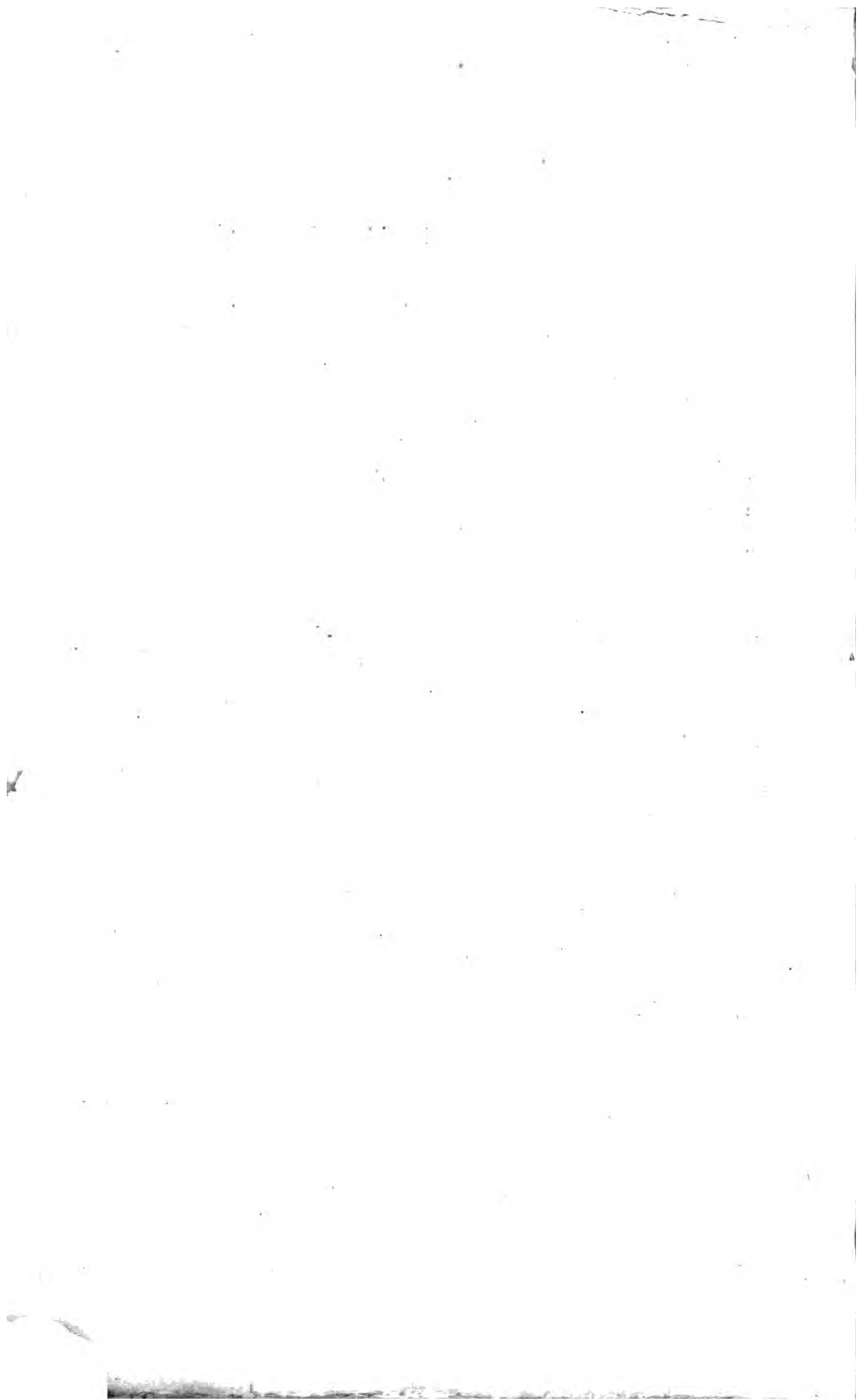
hope for a state, when I may be able to bear the effulgence of thy *Schechinah*.

LEVI's selection of the Prophecies is candid and judicious, they are the identical predictions that have been misconstrued and perverted; he has given them the literal and true interpretation and refuted the false and disengenuous comments on them; he has so successfully combated the cavils on them, as to bereave our antagonists of all further ground of controversy. Faith and constancy must henceforth be substituted for stubbornness, that epithet of reproach so long imputed to us; and perverseness be now ascribed to those who persist in error after conviction.

Your faithful and respectful friend,

J. KING.

January 17, 1817.
Howland-Street,
Fitzroy-Square.



Introduction.

THE verification of the Prophecies has convinced those who have considered them, of the divine origin of the Jewish Religion; and many men of note have become converts to its creed. There are frequent recent instances of such conversions, but in ancient times they were much more numerous: proselites in other religions may have interested motives for their apostacy, but, in a religion so precise and austere, there is little sensual attraction: It must be pure faith, and a conviction of its truth, that induces a conversion to the Jewish religion; it is difficult to observe its tenets; it has many ceremonies, and requires constant devotion; so many worldly sacrifices must be made by its votaries, that would

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rather

rather deter than invite proselytes ; they are oppressed by all nations, but their suffering is the remainder of the punishment of their captivity and a confirmation of the prediction ; what has already happened is a pledge for the further accomplishment of the prophecy.

WITHOUT persuasion, and from a spontaneous disposition, Rittangel, professor of the oriental languages at Koenisburg in the seventeenth century, embraced the Mosaic Law ; Antony, Minister at Geneva, was burnt for abjuring Christianity in favor of Judaism, he is held in high veneration for preferring so terrible a death to recantation.

We have a narrative of a dispute between Rabbi Zechiel and the Dominican Fryar Paul, called Cyriac, a conference in the year 1263, in the presence of Don Jaquez, King of Arragon, and the Queen his wife ; it is a memorable conference ; the two champions were versed in Hebrew and antiquity ; the Talmud, Targum, and the archives of the Sanhedrin were on the table, the contested passages were translated into
Spanish ;

Spanish; Zechiel maintained that Jesus had been condemned under King Alexander Jancœus, and not under Herod the Tetrarch, for it was so written in the Talmud; your Gospels, said he, were not written till towards the beginning of your second century, and are not authentic; we could not crucify him you speak of; for, in the time of Herod the Tetrarch, we had not a power of life and death, nor could we have crucified him, for that was not the manner of punishment in use among us; he who perished in the time of Jancœus was condemned to be stoned to death; the Queen enraged at the defeat of her champion, commanded Zechiel to be silent; she would not endure arguments that evinced such superiority of knowledge, and so effectually subverted the erroneous notions she had imbibed. In the rampart of faith, an excellent book, found in Africa, written by a Jew of the name of Isaac, is demonstrated two contradictory genealogies of Christ: the falsehood of the quotations of the passages of the prophets, which are not to be found in the
Jewish

Jewish books; he denies the divinity of Christ, which is no where expressly asserted in the Gospels, and deems it the highest blasphemy to deny the unity of God, he proves that Christ was not an only child but had brothers and sisters; that the narratives of the Gospel are incongruous, though attempted to be reconciled and harmonized; the fiction of the history of Lazarus, and the falsifications of the ancient canonical writings. It is probable, that the works of this Rabbi convinced Dr. Priestly of the Unity, and laid the foundation of the sect of Unitarians. This sublime notion generalises, and the various sects that profess it promises its universal adoption.

OROBIO, a very learned Jew in 1685, says, it is no where in Scripture asserted or intimated that the Judaical law is the adumbration or figure of another law; on the contrary, it is every where said, that the law of Moses is to be eternal, and that every prophet, who should work miracles to change any part of the law, should be punished with death. The prophets

prophets predicted to the Jews, in their calamities, that they should one day be delivered, but that the deliverer would be the supporter, not the destroyer of the Mosaic Law. That a proof of the verity of the Jewish religion is its immutability, that the Jews of Rome, England, Holland, Germany, Poland, Turkey, India, Persia, China, and every other country, have always since the taking of Jerusalem by Titus held the same doctrine; no contradictory sects, no schism distract them, all agree and are uniform; there is no variation in the observance of the commandments delivered from mount Sinai.

It is not malice, or perverseness, or stubbornness, that makes them reject Jesus, but fidelity to the religion they believe right; nor is it from sordid views, for they rescind many worldly advantages, they suffer many privations and mortifications, the unparalleled cruelties of Babylonians, Assyrians, and Romans, have not been enough to abate their zeal; no injury can detach them from the worship of their God.

It is said, that the Messiah comes to cleanse Israel from all sins, that he will not leave a single stain in Israel; if it be allowed that sin is still committed, it cannot be allowed that the Messiah has yet come.

THE Jews cannot intermarry with people of a different religion, they cannot eat of their viands, and therefore they dont incorporate with them; but this separation renders them hated by other nations; they attribute to an unsocial, unfriendly disposition, what is ascribable to the injunctions of their laws; they reject honors that would interfere with their religion, and offices, and occupations incompatible with it; unwilling to emerge from the state to which their religion binds them, regardless of honors, of which other nations are solicitous, their forbearance has been mistaken for exclusion, and encreased their enemies contempt; their commencement was under a theocracy, and they would forfeit their existence rather than relinquish the divine government.

THOUGH

THOUGH they are the primitive lord's of the earth, though they have been dispossessed of their territory, their titles abolished, their property despoiled, and their dignity sullied, and they have no mode of subsistence but commerce, their genius which is the sole resource left them, abundantly evinces how superior would be its operation in a better sphere of action. The contempt and abhorrence borne them is an incitement to the wrongs that are done them, the edicts against them are implications of impunity to their oppressors, and are disgraceful records of the injustice and intolerancy of the country where they were exercised; they have no protection but in their caution, they traffic with timidity and wariness, their fears rouse their acuteness, and their acuteness and suspicions augment the hatred; they are enjoined by their law to love their neighbours, but they have every neighbour's enmity to encounter, which neither mildness can mollify, nor subtilty elude; it must be a faith supported by supernatural firmness that

that can endure the utmost worldly evils that can be inflicted, rather than relinquish tenets that incur such vengeance.

THE Jews were often accused of an intolerant spirit, to justify the cruelty and outrage so frequently committed on a defenceless people; since the specific divine command to punish the abominable sinners of Canaan; since the remote era of their prophetic ancestors, they have never interfered with other mens religions, never attempted to make proselytes: it is inconsistent with their religion to injure any one for a different belief, scripture expressly forbids it: to be good to the stranger, to the infidel, to the gentile, for thou wast a stranger in the land of Egypt; is so far from intolerancy, that if any person is enclined to become a Jew, the law of circumcision, the various ceremonies and precepts, are to be represented to him, to deter him from a precipitate and inconsiderate adoption of what is deemed a painful religion.

A NATION so distinct from any other, a
people

people so separate and isolated always have excited hatred. In the time of Honorious and Theodosius Roman Emperors the Christians massacred the Jews in their Synagogues; and when the prefect of the city came to quiet the tumult, the furious monks called him an idolater, heathen and unbeliever, and stoned him for his humane interposition; they threatened death to all those who favored the Jews or pleaded for toleration.

HYPATIA, daughter of Theon the philosopher, a lady of prodigious talents, great meekness and chastity, being suspected of discountenancing these disgraceful outrages, was assailed by a mob, headed by one Peter, a lecturer, was seized and dragged out of the carriage, was led to a Church, and in that sanctuary the pretty unhappy maiden was stript, her beauteous body barbarously mangled and burnt to ashes. Though no means were used by these fanatic Christians to check such enormities, some vouchsafed to confess that it was an act that reflected disgrace on Cyrill,

Bishop of the place, and his flock, so moderately and lukewarmly were atrocities censured that excite horror; they made the civil authority subservient to their ecclesiastical tyranny, and there was none that would venture to impugn a fury that might be excited against themselves.

Bishop Newton has justly said, that the preservation of the Jews, through so many ages, and the total destruction of their enemies are wonderful events, and are made still more wonderful by being signified before-hand by the spirit of prophecy, as is particularly denoted in the prophet Jeremiah: "Fear not thou, O Jacob, my servant, saith the Lord, for I am with thee; for I will make a full end of all the nations whither I have driven thee, but I will not make an end of thee." The preservation of the Jews, is a signal, and illustrious act of divine providence; they are dispersed among all nations, and not confounded with them; the drops of rain that fall, and the great rivers which flow into the ocean, are mingled and lost in that great and immense body of water, and
such

such would have been the fate of the Jews in the ordinary course of nature; they would have been mingled and lost in the common mass of mankind, but they flow in all parts, blend with all nations, and yet are religiously and civilly separate from all, they still remain in their faith a distinct people; they are unable to live conformable to their laws, they no where elect their own magistrates, no where exercise the whole of their religion, intolerance restrains them; they are checked, bruised, and contemned, yet they are wonderfully saved, they bound from oppression, and like their ancestors Moses in the bull rushes, or Daniel in the lion's den, human power is frustrated, and there is no destroying whom God chuses to preserve.

THEIR solemn feasts and sacrifices are limited to one certain place, and that has been for many ages in the possession of strangers and aliens, who do not permit them to resume their station; though so dispersed they continue separate; the northern nations have come in swarms into the more southern parts of Europe; but

but where are they now to be discerned and distinguished? the Gauls went forth in great bodies to seek their fortunes in foreign parts, but what footsteps or traces of them are remaining any where? In France who can discriminate the race of the ancient Gauls from the divers other people who have settled there. In Spain who can separate Spaniards, Goths, and Moors, who alternately conquered it? In England who can ascertain which are original Britons, or Danes, or Saxons, or Romans, or Normans; the most ancient and honorable pedigrees can only be traced to a certain period, and beyond that there is nothing but conjecture and uncertainty, obscurity and ignorance: but the Jews go beyond all other nations, they can deduce their genealogy from the beginning of the world; after the destruction of their archives and records they cannot discriminate particular families, but they know they sprang from their Patriarch and Prince Abraham; yet the contempt and persecution they every where encounter, one would imagine would make them
them

them incorporate with other nations, and deny their original; but they profess it, glory in it, persist in it, and prefer it to life. After so many massacres how could they be so numerous and continue separate, but by that power which they acknowledge, and of which nothing can deter their adoration, or discourage their confidence?

PROVIDENCE is equally demonstrated in vengeance on their enemies; the Egyptians held them in bondage many years, and were destroyed in an extraordinary manner; the Assyrians carried away captive ten tribes, and afterwards the Babylonians carried away the remaining two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, and the Romans frequently massacred or banished them from their dominions; but where are now these potent monarchs that oppressed God's people? the Egyptians, Assyrians, and Babylonians were overthrown by the Persians, and the Persians restored the Jews; the Syro Macedonians were destroyed by the Romans, and the Roman Empire was dissolved by the northern nations;

nations; yet the Jews are extremely numerous, adhere as firmly as ever to their religion, and are still distinct.

THE Jewish religion is uniform and consistent, there is no variation in its tenets, the Jews observe it in the present day as they observed it in the time of Moses; the Christian doctrine has undergone many mutations, every age has produced schisms and contradictions; controversies have been violent and sanguinary, and Papists and Protestants though both denominated Christians are inveterate enemies; innumerable sects split and thwart each others tenets they differ in fundamental and essential points. In the time of Valentinian Nestorius Bishop of Constantinople taught this doctrine, that it was not lawful to call the Virgin Mary the mother of God, who could not be born, but the mother of Jesus Christ, who after his birth obtained by virtue of his good works, to be united to the word, not by an hypostatick or personal union, but by a residential union of the word in the humanity as in a Temple; let
those

those who comprehend such mystical jargon explain it, for I could never understand what was meant by such theological absurdity; the conception is distracted by the revolting creed, where arithmetic sense is violated, and the distinction of an unit or of three, confounded; a heterogeneous paradox asserted which no mind can comprehend, and sophisms adduced to maintain it, as incomprehensible as the position they defend. Even the primitive Christians of whose rigidness abstinence and martyrdom so much has been said, yet when impartial historians write instead of Monks and Jesuits, we learn that in the age of Valentinian and Valens the Roman Emperors, upon the death of Liberius Bishop of Rome, such seditions arose among Arians, Catholics and others, about the choice of another Bishop; that no less than 137 persons were found dead in a Church, for Churches were generally the stages of their contest; sanctuaries which were pretended to be dedicated to the Deity, who was in a future state to reward piety, were converted into
Arena

Arena for ecclesiastical gladiators, not contending for heavenly remuneration, but wealth and temporal dignities; where was this Christian forbearance and humility of which we have received fabricated narratives, they were ambitious of worldly greatness, they struggled vehemently for honors which afforded them earthly enjoyments; Bishops always affected great pageantry, their equipages were grand, their feasts were sumptuous, they rivaled royal tables, indulged an inordinate appetite, rapacious of wealth, sensual and tyranic; Prate tatus a heathen prefect of the city witnessed so much of their cupidity and affluence, that he sarcastically said, make me a Bishop and I will become a Christian. The religion of the Jews, their abstinence and fasts, seem to forbid repletion, the manna was a simple diet, and the luxury of Jerusalem was deemed milk and honey.

Christ did not write the Gospel, it was the composition of those who came after him, there were so many framers of Gospels, that Pope Gelasius forbid writing any more:

if

if the Jewish religion was not original and of divine institution, it would resemble the religions of contemporary surrounding nations; without the authority that promulgated it recently freed from bondage, without precedent or instruction, how could a simple people suddenly diverge from all example and custom, differ from the whole universe, form a body of moral laws for ever immutable, and the sublime worship of a Supreme Being? Moses conversed with God in the presence of 60,000 persons, not in private, not in a vision, not alone. If Moses had been an impostor, there were many to expose him; but the Scripture was disseminated; Moses was not secluded, but dwelt in the midst of the people, nations witnessed the miraculous protection of the Israelites, the book was unimpeached, the events known and admired, and the legislator revered. Those who dispute the possibility or use of miracles, forget the necessity of them to authenticate the divine mission: a revelation was necessary to the world, and a revelation

was made with miracles; it required a miracle to inculcate doctrines and impress them by extraordinary means. The religion delivered by Moses was supernatural and was established by a supernatural power, amidst awful thunder and lightning; and from a body of transcendent fire on mount Sinai, the Divine voice delivered the ten commandments.

CYRUS paid great homage to the Jews, Alexander almost worshipped them; immunities were at times granted them by Persians, Grecians, and Romans: Augustus was angry with them, for they alone refused to profane their sacred Temple by the divine homage he required. A subjugated world were testifying their subservency to the haughty monarch by their adulation and idolatry. The Jews who admitted no image or semblance in this holy fane, rejected the Emperor's bust, and rendered him an irreconcilable enemy.

MOSES's order for observing the Sabbatical year was a striking proof of the divine mission, for if he had not known by preternatural communication

communication that the sixth year would produce sufficient for three years, the ordinance would have starved his community. It is astonishing that Christians should argue against the Jewish religion, for they assert it to be the basis of their own religion; if they removed the foundation, on what does the superstructure stand? the Jews are allowed to be the eldest born, their religion is their inheritance, and they will eternally retain their title; if their religion and distinction is not providentially preserved, it is wonderful that such attempts to destroy them have not reduced their numbers; for what massacres diminish, the care of providence augments in Geometrical progression. The Scripture seems like a second table of stones given to God's peculiar people, it is their indefeasible property, it is their element, and no nation comprehend it and expound it so literally and unerringly; the Hebrew is their native tongue, its idiom is known only to them; God delivered his law in that dialect, the Septuagint version is a translation from the Hebrew, and who will
contest

contest a language with those who are originally initiated in it by Divine aid? From what perverseness is it, that a contest arises amongst the professors of a religion, which the founders of it never started? he said not a point, not a title of the Mosaic law should be altered; that he came to ratify the law of Moses not to abolish any part of it: he observed the commandments, kept the Sabbath, was circumcised, and solemnized the festivals; he was born a Jew, lived a Jew, and died one; he never intended the promulgation of a new doctrine, yet a new one is adopted. It might shock the bigots of this religion to be told, that it is a theological system of their own invention, he never wrote a syllable of their creed; but as it is not my intention to offend religionists of any persuasion, but merely to shew the divinity and pre-eminency of this: I am silent as to the reasons why Christ was delivered to justice. A religion essentially different from all others has excited the jealousy and hatred of all nations, and all nations are inimical to the Jews; the books which are
extant

extant are inoffensive, they are not strictures on other religions, they are not lures to attract converts, they are chiefly explanations of their tenets and rites, yet the abhorrence of their adversaries is not abated; even in the country where liberty is so much vaunted, laws exist against them which are a stigma to its jurisprudence, and a satyr on its pretended philosophy.

ABEN EZRA was a profound rational logical writer, who even the subtleties of Spinoza could not pervert, or detract; but above all, the Jews may boast the superior learning and wisdom of Maimonides; he seemed possessed of more than human abilities of intuitive knowledge and a prophetic spirit, and so universally erudite as to vie in most arts and sciences with the most reputed proficient in them.

IN the various persecutions by Christians, for unhappily an intolerant spirit has predominated peculiarly with Christians, there were frequent orders to burn the best tracts on religion, but it would have been subject of greater triumph,

triumph, to have preserved and defied them; to burn a book is no refutation of its argument, though it may prevent further promulgation of it; but they require no extraneous aid to defend the principles of their religion, its precepts and morals which stand eternal test, sufficiently bespeak its divine origin; they seek no proselytes nor invite discussion, yet they never shrink from theological investigation when any antagonist is so rash to challenge it.

ABHORRED by all nations, deprived of temporal benefits, perpetually objects of contumely, every where persecuted, how firm and determined must be that faith that bears every human shock, and is never spontaneously abjured. Fear has sometimes made Jews dissemble, and interest has made pretended proselytes, but the converts to Judaism have been sincere and voluntary.

PHILIP of Limborch of the Ammonian party in 1685 commenced a dispute with Orobio; but as dialogue altercation is fleeting and liable to error, they agreed to commit their opinions
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to writing, and argued strenuously but civilly, resolutely but temperately; it is perhaps the only profound theological controversy without rudeness and without invective.

OROBIO denies that the Jewish law was the adumbration or figure of another law, but that it is every where said, that the law of Moses was to be eternal and unalterable, that every prophet who should work a miracle to effect an innovation in the law of Moses should be punished with death; that the prophets had predicted the coming of a deliverer, but he was to confirm not to alter the law; and this could not be Jesus, for he did not effect a deliverance.

It is a wonderful instance of the immutability of the Mosaic law, that the dispersion of the Jews over all the earth has not effected a change of it; the Israelites of Rome, of England, Germany, Turkey, Persia, &c. have incessantly professed the same law, no schism has made question of the ten commandments.

The whole profane history of Balthazar is a
 verification

verification of the prophecy of Isaiah, two hundred years before the drying the Euphrates, or changing its course by Cyrus; what Babylon had deemed its Palladium, led to its destruction; it was predicted by the prophet, and executed by Cyrus, delegated by divine authority; this is not an occurrence confined to sacred writ, but related by Pagan authors, with whom there could be no collusion, ignorant of the Scriptures and enemies to the Israelites.

It seems difficult to ascertain the infallible sign of a miracle, for all the operations of nature are wonderful, and would be deemed miracles if they were uncommon. All creation is miraculous; it is miraculous to create atoms of determinate forms, to make them adhere in various bodies, without separating and crumbling. The rising of the sun is a miracle, but it is common, and excites no surprize; we have no other certainty of its re-appearance but experience of its anterior uniform appearance. A derangement of nature's ordinary operation would seem a miracle, and yet it is no more
 miraculous

miraculous than its regular course ; an object of extraordinary appearance might portend an event or not, our senses often deceive us, even our minds are often delusive. When a phenomenon is announced, and it happens, the prediction is prophetic : extraordinary deviations from nature's course were called in aid of the prophets prediction, and the prediction was verified ; the prophet predicted events 3000 years before their accomplishment, in the wide globe extensive to the remotest part ; in all regions and amidst all nations, dispersed and scattered Jews are every where found ; quiet, humble, and scarcely reputed among nations ; this faithful people are fixed in the unshaken exercise of their religion ; persecution has not exterminated them, nor deterred them from the observance of the laws for which they suffer ; the tyrants who oppress them without a consciousness of it, are fulfilling the prophecy ; replete with crime, they are instruments of divine vengeance, and will perish after its execution ; the fidelity of repentant Jews will be requited, and their

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promised

promised restoration be infallibly effected.

However vain philosophy has boasted the light of nature, experience proves it a very incompetent instructor. The Sogdians had no revelation, and were ignorant of it; Alexander the Great found them killing their parents when they were aged and helpless; the Persians marrying their mothers; the Scythians feeding on their parents carcasses; Alexander knew the law of Moses, taught the barbarians what he had learnt, abolished their inhuman customs, taught them morality and mollified their savage temper. Modern philosophers have fancied that the light of nature is sufficient for the comprehension of metaphysical subjects, and to ascertain a standard of morals; but Plato with an intelligence as superior to other Philosophers, as the light of the sun to a flash of lightning, lamented that we did not possess greater means of knowledge than we were commonly endowed with; he deemed the light of nature insufficient to direct us, he did not comprehend what was virtue, and that we required

required supernatural information to instruct us. Praise to the Almighty Being the Scripture has furnished the knowledge we wanted, we have received it from the Divine author himself, and we should be grateful for indicating the path that leads to salvation. It is presumptuous to ask why God had a chosen people, we might with equal propriety demand why he chose angels, and why he created one being superior to another; why one is a prodigy of wisdom, and the other an idiot; why one beautiful, and another deformed; nature abounds with inequalities, we see what we cannot comprehend, and cannot perceive in what manner God regulates the universe, and governs it. The Jews were not selected, till they acknowledged and worshipped the Supreme Being, as they were the first who knew and invoked God, they were his first and chosen people.

ALL nations pretend to supernatural communications, to an occult intercourse with invisible beings, to some heavenly revelation, though every nation has not been blessed with

a revelation, yet the universal pretension to it proves that every one deemed a revelation necessary.

THE Jew Rabbies were as learned in the science of philosophy, as they were proficient in Sacred Writ, but their knowledge of the Scripture taught them how to appreciate profane literature, they were not bewildered by sophistry, nor infatuated by hypothesis; they were not fascinated by its visionary problems, nor deluded by its fantastic systems; though Aristotle ranks as monarch of ancient erudition, he relates a meeting with a Jew in Asia, so learned in Grecian literature, as vastly surpassed the heathen philosopher. Aristotle respected talents that surprized and informed him; but our modern theologians are unwilling to admit the superior knowledge of a people, whose religion is an impeachment of the doctrine they have invented; there could be no imperfection in the first code to require rectification in a second; it is an arraignment of the Divine mind, to imagine it recollected at one period what it omitted at another.

THE Law was given in Hebrew; this is universally admitted; it is a sublime and dignified language, in which the Divine Being expressed his will to the world; Christians and all other theologians, must have recourse to the Jews for their interpretation of it, the Septuagint is a translation for Ptolemy, by the 72 Jew elders of his era. It is on the prophets prediction that the misconstrued mission of Christ is founded; if no Jews had ever existed, if no such prognostic was made them, if the Scripture is a spurious production, all hopes of Christians vanish; what hallucination is then this inveterate hatred of a people, to whom it is believed prophecies were delivered, on which their salvation depends? who profess the religion which Christ professed, and whom God has stiled his peculiar people.

PAUL was a Hebrew and disciple of Rabbi Gamaliel, insult on Judaism is irreverence to the Apostles; those whom the Christians pretend to follow they dont imitate. When Paul came to offer sacrifice at the Temple, conformable

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able to Jewish ritual, he swore before Festus that he had not in any instance deviated from the laws of Judaism.

THE Divine decree that the law given to the children of Israel should stand for ever, is infallible; not a tittle of the Bible is varied, every sublunary production is subject to change and vicissitude, this supernatural ordinance maintains its pre-eminence. The Jews of Asia, Europe, or India, wherever this wandering nation has been driven the same identical law is professed. The Scripture is eternal and unchangeable, and the people uniform and inflexible; some Missionary Jesuits penetrated into China, and there to their amazement they discovered a vast congregation of Jews, they were ignorant of Europe, or of the existence of European Jews; the Jesuits obtained a copy of their five books of Moses, they brought it to Europe, and found it a correct copy of the five books in use at the Synagogues.

MANY nations meditated their total destruction, they have waded through their own
blood

blood to every region of the globe: oppressed, defenceless, and degraded; no country to shelter them; no potentates to protect them; no encouragement or comfort but an unbroken mind, that is sustained by him in whom they believe, and their firm reliance on a future deliverance from this deplorable state. "And yet for all that, when they be in the land of their enemies, I will not cast them away, nor will I abhor them to destroy them utterly, and to break my covenant with them, for I am the Lord their God": and Jeremiah said, "For I am with thee, saith the Lord to save thee, though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, yet I will not make an end of thee, but will correct thee."

WHAT an astonishing people are the Jews whom alone persuasion cannot entice, or menace terrify! their exemplary faith cannot be shaken, though so many worldly lures are held out to tempt them. Their distinction has been ascribed to their policy and singular religion, both may conduce to separate them
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from the world ; but what rivets them in a religion which others deem so obnoxious? what an inversion of nature is it to find men so attached to troublesome and painful rites, which intimidate and repel all other people ; who but this patient resigned community will submit to such prohibitions and privations : their commerce for which they are branded does not interfere with their devotion ; rather than engage in forbidden occupations, they would die of want. No avocation, no thirst of wealth, no passion or propensity, can detach them from their faith ; though honors profit and every worldly enjoyment await their apostacy, they adhere to their religion, and forfeit all the advantages that are proffered to renounce it ; so immoveable a spirit seems preternatural ; the prophets foresaw it, predicted it, and it is verified. The minutest part of a prediction cannot fail when emanating from divine authority, “And ye shall be plucked from off the land whither thou goest to possess it ;” before they yet possess the land, to predict their possession

possession of it, and their dispossession for their sins, was a strong proof of the prophets inspiration by the Divine prescience; its accomplishment has exactly followed, all the twelve tribes were expatriated, ten were transported to some region of which no information to this moment has been received. Of the other two tribes, some wretched Jews have returned to Jerusalem, but have obtained no possession in it; they were to be oppressed and spoiled, it is the prophecy and was infallible; but the oppressor like Pharaoh is doomed to destruction. God often chuses the instruments of his vengeance, sinners who deserve the punishment they inflict.

I LAMENT that a nation that vaunts of its polity and justice, can be enemies to toleration. No nation can be moral that is bigoted, and none impartial that is not tolerant. The annals of England are registers of exactions, confiscations and oppression; the bloodstained biography of some of its ancient Monarchs

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is a record of furious fanaticism, and of an age of ignorance and barbarism.

“AND thou shalt be an astonishment, a proverb and a by-word, amongst all nations whither the Lord shall lead thee.” Their character is proverbial, all nations have designated them, they are reproached and vilified wherever they inhabit; the bard who has amazed and fascinated his readers, did not disdain to sully his pen in the general calumny; to increase the overwhelming odium, and gratify a popular prejudice, he transposed characters; and to please a fanatic rabble made his inhuman usurer a Jew; the original tale on which he founded his dramatic composition had made him a Christian thirsting for the Hebrews blood; but Shakespeare the flatterer and Parasite of Elizabeth, was again the Parasite to the people, he had idolized the Tudors, the ancestors of his Queen, and he embittered his keen pen in strengthened gall to swell the enmity against a depressed people; the flashes of his lightning mind, his irresistible censure and impetuous eloquence

eloquence corroborated an insuperable prediction ; his exuberant genius knew no restraint, a spirit that had explored all the labyrinthian windings of human nature, had neglected the cultivation of another knowledge, or he would have hesitated at assuming a malignant office that incurred so fatal a penalty.

THE religion of the Israelites was promulgated in an age of barbarism, when Paganism, Heathenism, and Polytheism prevailed ; no worship but preposterous idolatry predominated ; all around them was impervious darkness and profound ignorance, yet in this uncivilized era Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, acknowledged a supreme Being ; their posterity differing from all the universe, persisted in the faith of their Patriarchs, and deserved to be denominated God's peculiar people. Men who could sever themselves from all the world and pay their adoration where it was alone owing, were entitled to the special regard of providence ; a code of Laws was given them that has stood the test of 4000 years : obedient to divine injunction

junction they shun the vices of their neighbours, their sensual indulgences, their sumptuous feasts and splendid Temples ; they submitted to the restrictions and prohibitions of the Mosaic Law. In an age of abominable habits and monstrous crimes they worshipped the Deity and obeyed his tenets, none but the Divine mind could have suggested such a body of laws ; but if any effort of human intellect could have produced them, they must be admired for extraordinary wisdom and exemplary virtue, yet these are the people so slandered and detested ; this the nation so contemned and injured ; while on their religion the new fangled creed is pretended to be grounded, and on the stem of their faith the Christian faith is engrafted ; they are termed a chosen people, and a people to be restored to their original destination ; no one knows how near the moment is of their Redemption, when all nations are to cling to them and struggle to accompany them ; so inconsistent are their adversaries, that they abhor and outrage the
people

people on whom they found their hopes of salvation.

GENESIS contains the history of the world, and commences with an account of its creation and the genealogy of the Patriarchs down to the death of Joseph, it comprehends a period of 2369 years. It was not difficult for Moses to ascertain what he wrote without inspiration, for it came to his time through a few individuals; from Adam to Noah there was one man who lived so long as to know both, as Isaac did with Abraham and Joseph, from whom they could be easily conveyed to Moses by Amram, who lived long enough with Joseph. Moses might have been confuted by learned men of other nations who sprang from the same root, if he had ventured to deviate from the truth. There were many sensible cotemporary men in those times; and it is absurd to imagine, that they had not as well as the Israelites modes of writing, to convey the knowledge of foregoing times.

THE Jews exercise such professions as are
compatible

compatible with their religion, they are denied territorial possessions, they are precluded from worldly honor, yet their religion is of all others the least obnoxious, for they do not invite controversy or inveigle proselytes, they entertain no principles inimical to the government that protects them, they do not excite sedition or enter into political cabal; they obey the Divine precept that directs their conduct. "Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts, the God of Israel, seek the peace of the city whither I have caused you to be carried away captives; and pray unto Jehovah for it, for in the peace thereof shall ye have peace." They neither censure the established religion, or disparage the government; what then instigates such hatred and excites such animosity? there is no motive for their cruelty, it is not founded in reason, or dictated by justice; it is the prediction of the prophet and concomitant with their captivity; and dooms the ministers of heavens wrath to the destruction they meditated.

IN ancient times the religion of the Israelites
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was appreciated as it deserved, but the propagation of Christianity which ought to have estimated it higher, gave birth to its greatest antagonists; the fame of their prophets amazed and awed the heathen philosophers, and they were anxious to know by what tenets their community was regulated. Plato learned the Mosaic Law from the disciples of Jeremiah, and Aristotle acquired his knowledge of it from Rabbi Simeon the just.

THE history of the Jews, or the bible, (for they are identified,) is incontrovertible and unbroken. All other narratives and other religions have been disputed by cotemporary writers, but we have relations of the miracles of these times, and we have seen the verification of them; we have seen the mysterious service of the Temple, and the high-priest officiating as the Scripture ordained. No one doubts the former existence of the children of Israel than the existence of their posterity, nor of the division of the twelve tribes, nor of their sublime worship.

THE

THE Temple was violated by Pompey, Titus, and others, and search was made for some idol of adoration, some symbol that indicated the Deity they worshipped; they could form no conception of the great God of the universe, of whom the Israelites were prohibited to attempt any semblance; in this sacred fane dwelt the Schechinah while the Jews preserved their religion, and when they degenerated his glory withdrew; what doubt of the historic account of the Jews than of the feasts and civil broils of Cæsar and Pompey? but the infidel has no interest in the political or military biography of legislator, or of hero; but to arraign the doctrine that denounces his perdition, he racks all his sophistry and exercises all his slander.

MOSES predicted the defection of the Jews and their consequent punishment, yet that suffering and dispersed they should continue separate, that they might be again selected and again restored; that he did so prophecy we have the evidence of Scripture; that they are

so distinct we have the evidence of sight; this doctrine bespeaks its preternatural spirit, for no human being could imagine, that a people under such extreme affliction would retain their faith, if heaven did not interpose; they would have averted the evils that beset them by rescinding tenets for which they endured them; but those who trust in God are fortified by him, and those who invoke providence to be preserved in the right path, will be sustained in it.

POLITICIANS may anticipate without prophetic prescience, what political errors will lead to a dissolution of government; but Moses could prognosticate that religious delinquency though it did not interfere with the moral government of the Jews, should destroy their government and expatriate them. Every occurrence in these people's history is miraculous, they possessed Jerusalem by miracle; by miracles they were initiated in their religion, and by miracle they were deprived of their country. Their government was a Theocracy, and they
 were

were under the peculiar care of the Deity, as there was a special compact between them and their God, a dereliction of their religion, was high treason against their Maker; a people so select and favorite are not to be disheartened; no insult can degrade them, no suffering can discourage them; in the midst of contumely and outrage they are conscious of being descendants of illustrious ancestors, and of superlative and unalinedated dignity.

THE antiquity of the Jews is the remotest we know of, it is almost coeval with the beginning of the world.

AFTER the general deluge, Japhet continued famous among the western nations under the celebrated name of Japhetus; the Jews paid equal veneration to Shem, who was the founder of their race; and among the Egyptians, Ham was long revered as a divinity under the name of Jupiter Hammon. Javan son of Japhet and grandson of Noah is the stock from whom the Greeks are descended. Javan established himself in the islands of the western coast of Asia Minor, and
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some wanderers past over to Europe: to these first inhabitants succeeded a people from Egypt, who about the time of Abraham penetrated into Greece, and under the name of Titans endeavoured to establish monarchy: we can almost trace the history of those people to the beginning of time, the Chinese have formed a fabulous astronomical calculation to make the world seem more ancient, and their mythology is a chain of myth-puchs and chimerical events that have no existence but in the pages that recite them; the only authentic history of the Jews and of the world's commencement, is to be found in the writings of Moses.

RELIGION exalts us from a state without which it would be contemptible and wretched. On what quality corporally or mentally could we presume to more importance than other created beings, if providence had not indicated the path to virtue and the means of salvation; without religion what claim have we to preference above the tree that vegetates, or the ox that browses; how little is man in the midst

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of his pride, how miserable and impotent is his utmost knowledge; he cannot unravel the arcana of nature, his utmost genius cannot animate an insect, he cannot ascend the stars or comprehend the wonder of their nature, he can neither prolong his friends existence or continue his own; he cannot resist his departure from life; but in spite of reluctance, sickens, languishes, and dies; his vaunted philosophy is a study of doubt and perplexity, hypothesis is erected on hypothesis, and ingenious theories that amuse the mind without satisfying it. Religion restrains the wild roivings of fancy and furnishes a solid base for hope and comfort, elevates us above frail mortality, to immortality and happiness.

If a supernatural communication is made to any individual it must be accompanied with miracles to prove it so, for our senses beguile us, and we fancy things that have no existence but in the imagination; or if the communication carries a conviction with it by divine inspiring which satisfies the person who receives
it,

it, that feeling cannot operate on a third person, without inspiration is equally communicated to him; but when a prophet declares his divine mission and proves it authentically by converting rivers of water into blood, by obscuring the land with locusts, by involving it in impervious darkness, and by the universal destruction of the first-born of a nation, and all these miracles are effected at the appointed moment, the revelation can only be from the God who could effect such wonders; it was by such a manifestation of power that the Deity chose to identify himself to the Israelites, and by other miracles demonstrated his Schechinah in the Temple, and they of all the universe were the only people who acknowledged and worshipped the one Almighty God: their confidence in him entitled them to his peculiar providence, and they possessed it till their deviation and idolatry forfeited it; adversity has reclaimed them, in their captivity they resought their God, and he has declared that those who seek him shall find him.

THE

THE severe treatment they have undergone respects their preservation miraculous, and answers to their allegations that it is baving heaven to attempt the destruction of those whom it protects. "This is a people that is robbed and wasted, they are made a prey and there is none to deliver them, a spoil and there is none that saith restore;" though their crimes had incurred such heavy castigation. God denounces vengeance against their adversaries, and promises recompence to those who befriend them. "He that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of mine eye; oh! blessed are they which love thee for they shall rejoice in thy peace, and blessed are they which have been sorrowful, for all thy scourges, for they shall rejoice for thee when they have seen all thy glory, and shall be glad for ever."

A FAITHFUL interpretation of the prophecies has terminated an important controversy. After the perusal of this work the mind can no longer vacillate; the Jewish religion be no more questioned; nor the coming of the true **Messiah**

siah again doubted; David Levi was impatient and irascible, conscious of his unerring knowledge of the Scripture, he could not endure contradiction; instead of a calm and grave refutation, he often replies sarcastically and indignantly; he forgets that the Jews being the only proficient in Hebrew, other exponents of it might be mistaken: and he forgets how tenacious men are of opinions which it is their interest to defend. But the contest is ended, his Dissertations on the Prophecies have demonstrated the object of them, the delusion is dispelled, and the most prejudiced bigot can no longer be deceived.

Moses's history of the Israelites after their departure from Egypt to their arrival at the promised land, is the foundation of all revealed religion; it is the sole narrative by divine authority transmitted to mankind: that the Pentateuch is derived from heaven is proved by its own singular authority, and by various subsequent records. The law was not trusted to the precarious memory of man: "write this
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for a memorial in a book," was the Lord's injunction; it was read in the ears of the people, a copy of it was given to the Priests the sons of Levi, and to all the elders of Israel, at a solemn festival when the community was assembled it was to be read to all Israel, and to the strangers within their gates; there was no concealment from Gentiles, every one might witness God's miracles for his chosen people. Moses might learn preceeding events from his ancestors, for the creation was not remote from his era, the narrative was transmitted from generation to generation. Moses was a meek and benevolent man, he preferred the desolate desert with his sinful people, to a residence in the kingly court of Pharaoh, he is faithful in his narrative; he does not palliate his imperfections, or apologize for his brothers misconduct; he neither conceals the crimes of his ancestors, or the sins of his backsliding congregation; he never exaggerates or extenuates, but relates every event as it occurred; as a common historian he is entitled to credit, but he spoke
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from Almighty authority, and appeals to heaven for his divine legation. His miracles in Egypt, bespoke the sole power that could have worked them; those wonders that terrified and desolated Egypt, convinced the Israelites of the guardianship of their God. Never was a nation blessed with such peculiar protection, they saw the sea wonderfully afford them a safe path, and the idolatrous Egyptians overwhelmed by it; and in a wild uninhabited desert, they saw themselves sustained by the raining of Manna. Moses appeals to the evidence of their senses for the astonishing miracles that were performed; he speaks not of wonders of yore, of miracles performed for their ancestors, but in favor of the very people he addresses; they were all testimonies of the astonishing occurrences he was relating.

I HAVE said, that the Jews know more of Scripture than other nations, their indisputable commentaries on the Bible are sufficient corroborations of this assertion, but there are
other

other proofs of it; an oral law accompanying the written law was committed alone to them. The command to forbear eating of the fruit of good and evil was verbal, for there was no written law till the time of Moses. Cain might be ignorant of the heinous crime of homicide, if God had not forbidden murder. How were Cain, Abel, and Noah, informed, that sacrifices so seemingly repugnant to nature, were grateful to the Deity, if there had been no oral injunction for it; and why should Abel's offering be respected and not Cain's, if they had not been previously instructed in the difference? It was a verbal prohibition to cut the reeking member from a live animal, or eating blood. Frontlets are ordered, but not in what manner to be formed, or of what materials composed. Circumcision is ordained, but not of what member; the month is mentioned without specifying whether solar or lunar. "Thou shalt not seethe a kid in its mother's milk," but the injunction extends to any other mother's milk. It was forbidden to murder man, but it was murder to

to kill a woman. If an oral law had not accompanied the written law, its ambiguities could never have been solved. It has been alledged against Scripture, that it proffers only temporal benefits; an ignorant and gross people just emerged from severe slavery, might be more influenced by the hope of temporal reward than future requital; but the learned Jews discern the passages that indicate a future state, and the oral law is a more explicit developement of it.

THE oral law was delivered to Moses on the mount, he communicated it to Aaron, Eleazar, and Joshua; they delivered it to the seventy elders, from them it went to the prophets; from the prophets to the Sanhedrin; from them it was transmitted to the wisemen of Jerusalem and Babylon, and was at length committed to writing by Judah the saint. Who will contend with a nation on the exposition of their Scripture, and on the tenets of their religion who were blessed with supernatural communication?

IT might seem superstitious for the Jews to believe they were favored with peculiar inspiration,

spiration, if the divine influence did not still predominate, and endow them with preternatural fortitude to preserve their faith amidst so many efforts to shake it.

Moses's appeal to our ancestors for the verity of miracles is bold and confident; "I speak not to your children which have not known, and which have not seen the chastisement of the Lord your God; his greatness, his mighty hand, and his stretched-out arm, and his miracles; but your eyes have seen all the great acts of the Lord which he did." A festival was immediately ordered to celebrate their emancipation from Egypt, not to commemorate events that formerly occurred, which no one might remember, but events which were recent, which were existing, and which every one witnessed. The holiday from the period of its institution has been annually kept, and the people who celebrate so indubitable and miraculous an interposition of providence, never can withdraw their worship from him who ordained it.

IF human evidence could strengthen our belief of the sacred narrative, we might derive it from various writers; profane authors have corroborated the divine history, their mythological fictions have deformed it, but in the principal facts they are agreed.

MOSES was the first who instituted the office of magistracy among the Jews, and the qualifications for the office were characteristic of the virtue of the man who instituted it. A magistrate was to possess wisdom, humility, and the fear of God; he was to contemn riches, to revere truth, and to be of good fame, and be popular and beloved. The supreme court of magistracy consisted of seventy besides Moses, who was president of the counsel; the oral law had been consigned to him; he was the repository of the traditional code, and it was by him to be transmitted to the elders.

THE service of the Temple was a solemn and awful rite, the auspices of the Deity over it, were manifested by fire descending from heaven and consuming the victim. As miracles and prophecies

prophecies have ceased, and we are no longer enlightened by inspiration, we do not comprehend all the wonders and mysteries of the Temple, and the extraordinary intervention of the Deity where the Schechinah peculiarly resided; a pillar of cloud surmounted the Temple, God was solemnly invoked, and the oracle was audibly uttered from the Divine presence; the ministry of the Temple was a tremendous office; the High Priests caution in entering the holy of holies on the great day of Atonement was terrific; the Philistines approached the Temple without timidity, till Dagon fell and they were smitten with emerods: the consecrated fane of the God of the Hebrews was not to be profaned; an unhallowed obtrusion to inspect the ark offended the presiding presence, and fifty thousand Philistines were smitten, no one was forgiven who transgressed the laws of the Temple, and Nadab and Abihu perished for daring to offer strange fire before the Lord; even the zealous Uzzah's inconsiderateness in extending his hand to support the shaking ark was fatal to him;

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king David trembled and stood aloof, the astonished gazers retreated, the offended Deity was only to be approached by purified ministers of its appointment.

SACRIFICES were founded on a positive institution, remission of sin was matter of grace and favor; God appointed the manner of signifying it and revealed it to Adam, and by Adam it was communicated to his children; the Deity propitiated by atonements testified his acceptance by an external and visible sign. Cain perceived that Abel's offering was respected but his was not; we can only conjecture by what signal this was evinced, perhaps a fire from heaven on the oblation, might have manifested divine approbation of Abel's offering, as the lamp of fire passed between the parts of Abraham's sacrifice.

WE hear nothing of the Urim and Thummim during the first Temple, but during the Tabernacle the holy spirit was imparted to the Israelites by Urim and Thummim, under the first Temple by the prophets, and under the second by the Both Kol.

GOD communicated by inspiration various ways, sometimes though rarely directly to the object of his selection, as from the burning bush ; but frequently by visions and dreams. God exercised such an influence on the mind as carried conviction of the mighty operation, the prophet was in a trance while he received the inspiration, and often in awful consternation ; but Moses the pre-eminent of prophets could freely invoke the Deity, and the divine word was imparted to him without terror or perturbation.

IN approaching the court of the Temple, the Israelite was to consider himself in the divine presence, he was to offer his prayers standing ; he was to be in decent habiliments, to order his voice ; to bow and worship ; his heart upwards, his eyes downwards ; his hands on his breast with fear and earnest devotion ; in retiring, he was to go backwards. Since the loss of the Temple the Jews pray in this manner in the Synagogues.

ARE a nation whose history is nearly coeval
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with the creation, chosen and denominated by the Deity his peculiar people, whose worship was so sacred and sublime, and even in their calamity adore their Creator so purely and solemnly, objects of scorn and enmity. Can the God they worship permit their adversaries outraging them with impunity? Will he never remit his anger, and hearken to a repentant people? Will their invocation be for ever fruitless, and the offended Deity for ever forsake them? the natural and political convulsions that alarm the world, may indicate the approaching period of God's judging the earth, and redeeming his faithful people.

THE object of this publication is obvious, a fanatic spirit has actuated some persons to endeavour the conversion of the Jews; and the pretended apostacy of interested impostors, has given them cause for indecent triumph. Bigotry is nearly allied to intolerancy, and the enthusiasts who are strenuous to make proselites, would exercise rigor to compel them; religious combination

binations generate a temper that is not restrained by reason or governed by policy. Confederacies to make converts were the foundation of the inquisition, and the history of that horrid tribunal excites alarm wherever a semblance of it is menaced; some counterpoise to a mistaken zeal is the rapid progress of Unitarianism, which is more successful as it employs no power but argument, and no influence but reason. With unparalleled perseverance, and unabated ardour, the Jews continue their adoration of ONE GOD.

THE law delivered on mount Sinai near 3,000 years ago is undeviatingly, the standard of their present faith; though no human power can shake their belief, they interfere with no other creed, or disturb dissentients with attempts to convert them.

THEIR numbers excite no courage, their riches no enterprise, whatever is their encrease of population, whatever their political influence, or physical strength, it incites no movement. If Jerusalem was depopulated, and all the potentates

potentates of the earth inviting them to repossess the territories of their ancestors, they would reject the solicitation; the object of their ardent prayers, the summit of their fondest hopes will be ungratified, till a signal from heaven convinces them, that the period of their redemption is arrived; no human suggestion can stimulate them, a divine impulse must rouse them; they were possessed of Jerusalem by miracle, and they wait another miracle for their restoration.

A PEOPLE whose polity differs from all sublunary institutions, who have no motive for conquest or ambition, can afford no reasonable cause for jealousy or hate, they are defenceless and passive; till a power is interposed that cannot be doubted or resisted; the scoffers and scorners in terror will witness the ratification of the prophecies, and lament their perverse incredulity.

So many misinterpretations of the prophecies have distracted the world, so many delusions on the purport of them have been imposed on
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the ignorant, that it was necessary to give a just exposition of them.

DAVID LEVI extended the subject much further, he quotes every prophet who predicted the Messiah. but these two volumes sufficiently indicate him; the Unitarians have admitted the verity of the prophecies, their creed of the Unity seems to reproach the absurd notion of Christ being the Messiah; it is astonishing, that infatuation and error should have sustained its influence so many centuries; but the delusion has ceased, the incantation of priestly sorcery is dissolved; sophistry no longer bewilders, and misrepresentation no longer deceives; the Unity of God will be asserted; and no preposterous doctrine longer blaspheme him.

J. KING.

January 17, 1817.
Howland-Street,
Fitzroy-Square.

DISSERTATIONS

ON THE

Prophecies.

DISSERTATION I.

The Prophecy of Balaam.

THE first who prophesied concerning the future restoration and salvation of the Jews, was Balaam the son of Beor : for although he was originally a diviner, or soothsayer *, yet, was God pleased to endow him with the spirit of prophecy, that he might prophesy good concerning Israel, declare God's superintendence and government of the world, and promulgate

* Joshua, xiii. 22.

gate among the Heathen his wonderful works with his chosen people*. The prophecies of Balaam afford a manifest proof of the particular providence

* Bishop Newton observes, (*Dissertations on the Prophecies*, article Balaam) that "the gift of Prophecy was not always confined to the chosen seed." But this is far from the truth: for, except in the instance now before us, and for which, I think, I have assigned a sufficient reason, more especially, as the prophecy, thus delivered, so highly concerned the Jewish nation, and after the delivery of which, he prophesied no more, I confidently assert, that the gift of prophecy was entirely confined to the chosen seed, as may be clearly perceived from the whole tenour of the Old Testament. As to what he has observed, concerning God's revealing himself to Abimelech and Pharaoh, it is not conclusive; because, there is a great difference, between God's revealing himself in a dream to Abimelech or Pharaoh, merely to inform them of their crime, and the injury they were attempting to do to his servant Abraham, who was a true prophet, endowed with the gift of prophecy. As to Nebuchadnezzar, Scripture is clear in calling it a dream; and which was so far from the gift of prophecy, that he neither knew the interpretation of the dream, nor the dream itself, till informed of both, by the prophet Daniel, who was of the chosen seed. His further observations, (*Dissertations*, Vol. I. page 66,) "Neither was there any necessity that the prophets should always be good men," &c. scarcely deserve notice, for the examples cited are palpably contradictory to truth, and sacred writ; for in no part of Scripture, do we find an instance of unworthy persons being endowed with the gift of prophecy; neither did Aaron and Miriam mutiny against Moses, nor rebel against God. The disobedience of Jonah, was not the consequence of his unworthiness, but a sudden impulse, the consequence of a tender affection, and solicitude for his brethren, he being apprehensive that the Heathen might pay more attention to his admonitions than the Jews did, and which might be the cause of bringing a heavy punishment upon them, as shall be shewn at large in my Comment on Scripture, in which I shall likewise take notice of the case of the two prophets of Samaria, which the Bishop has stated, but of which he does not seem to have had a just conception.

providence of God over his people, and his peculiar love towards them: for what could be a greater honour to them, than that a prophet called from another country, an immoral man, and one who came with a full intent to curse them for the sake of lucre, should be obliged to bless them, prophecy of their future happiness, and bear testimony to their holiness. It is in fact, as the learned Abarbanel observes, the commendation of an enemy among enemies, which is a commendation indeed.

The prophecy I propose treating of, as applicable to the coming of the Messiah, &c. is the last of those he delivered, beginning, "Balaam, the son of Beor, hath said," chap. xxiv. verse 15, till the end of verse 24.

It must be observed, that Balaam delivered four prophecies concerning Israel, each one referring to a period of time more remote than the former, and more approximate to the latter days. For in the first, he shews the noble descent of the nation from the ancient patriarchs, that they were God's portion, his chosen people, and his inheritance from the days of their ancestors; that they therefore multiplied in a most extraordinary

extraordinary and wonderful manner, without the junction of any other people; and were ordained to the participation of immortality. All which, he expressed in verse 9, and 10, of chapter xxiii.

For in verse 8, he says, "How shall I curse those whom God hath not cursed; or how shall I raise indignation against whom the LORD hath no indignation?" Having thus shewn that it was not in his power to curse those whom God so highly favored, he in verse 9, explains the reason of that favor: "Because I see him sprung from the ancient rocks, and from the hills I behold him." That is, I see him derive his descent from the ancient patriarchs and matrons, whose faith was as firm as the rocks. In this manner, he shews the descent of Israel; and it is really worthy of observation, that the prophet Isaiah makes use of the very same image of a rock, to shew the descent of the nation *. "Look unto the rock, from whence ye were hewn; and to the hollow of the cave, whence ye were digged. Look unto Abraham your father; and unto Sarah who bare you."

Having thus shewn the descent of the nation,
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* Isaiah, li. 1.

he farther observes, that that descent was pure, without any mixture of other nations *, “Lo, the people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations.” But, as it might be inferred, that by their being thus separated from all other nations, their number would be extremely small, he observes, that they were very numerous †. “Who can count the dust of Jacob, and number the fourth *part* of Israel?” He then proceeds to shew that they would inherit immortality, in the following sentence ‡: “Let my soul die the death of the righteous *amongst them*, and let my latter end be like his.”

In the second, he foretels the victories which the Israelites should gain over the Canaanites, &c. their possession and quiet enjoyment of the land afterwards: their virtue and righteousness, and their enjoyment of the gift of prophecy. This he declares in verse 21, 23, and 24. For in regard of their piety he says, “He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath he seen perverseness in Israel.” In verse 23, he speaks of the gift of prophecy, observing, “Surely *there is* no enchantment in Jacob, neither is there any divination against Israel, for as at
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* Numb. xxiii. 9.

† Ibid.

‡ Ibid 10.

this time, *so* shall it be said to Jacob and Israel what God hath wrought." That is, they surely have no occasion to use enchantments, and divinations, as other nations do, in order to be informed of future events, or the will of God, for as they are at present informed thereof by means of the gift of prophecy to Moses *, so shall they continue to be thus informed either by the spirit of prophecy, or by means of the Urim and Thummim, as was actually the case during all the time that they continued in the land, prior to the Babylonish captivity.

In verse 24, he speaks of their victories, "Behold, the people shall rise up as a great lion, and lift up himself as a young lion: he shall not lie down until he eat of the prey, and drink the blood of the slain."

In the third prophecy, he speaks of a remoter period of time: for he there declares that they should have a king who should be exalted above Agag, which clearly points out Saul, who overcame Agag, king of the Amalekites; and that their kingdom should be still more exalted; and

* Vide Numb. ix. 8. xxvii. 5. xxxvi. 5, &c.

and which denotes the prosperous reigns of David and Solomon, and the building of the Temple; as in chap. xxiv. verse 5, 6, 7, 8, 9. "How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob, and thy tabernacles, O Israel!" In this verse, he speaks of the Temple, and the different tabernacles, where the ark rested before it was brought to Jerusalem. In verse 7, he speaks of the exaltation of their kingdom, "And his king shall be higher than * Agag, and his kingdom shall be still exalted," &c. &c.

We now come to the fourth prophecy, in which he foretels the coming of the Messiah, and the restoration of the Jewish nation to their own land. And as this was not to be accomplished, till the latter days, he therewith consoles Balak, by informing him, that he would not at present receive any injury from this people, for that the thorough subjection of Moab by them, would not take place till the latter

* The מ of מֵאֲגַג does not properly form the comparative, but denotes the same as the proposition מֵן, from; and is what the Hebrew Grammarians call מִן הַזְּמַן i. e. denoting time: so that the meaning of the expression is, his king shall begin to be exalted from the time of Agag; that is, from the time of Saul the first king of Israel, who overcame Agag; and that his kingdom should still be more exalted, &c.

latter days. And as this embraced, so great a distance of time, he ushers it in with great solemnity, by a remarkable preface, “ Balaam the son of Beor, &c. who heareth the words of God, and is made acquainted with the purpose of the Most High, who seeth the vision of the Almighty, falling down in a trance, but having his eyes open.” He here shews that his visions were real prophecies; and although he was so far overpowered by the force of the vision, that his corporeal faculties were deprived of their proper functions, yet, his intellectual powers were in full force; which he beautifully describes by the *falling down in a trance, but having his eyes open* *. And as he clearly saw the vision with his intellectual eye, he makes use of that image to shew the nature of his prophecy; and therefore observes, “ I see him, but not now: I view him, but not nigh.” That is, I plainly see the thing I foretel, although it doth not yet exist, and I have a clear view of it, although it is to be at such a distance of time. “ A star shall come forth from Jacob, and a sceptre shall
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* This is the real meaning of the Hebrew, into the true spirit of which, Bishop Newton seems not to have entered; and which is the cause of his giving an erroneous translation of the expression.

rise out of Israel, who shall smite the corners of Moab, and break down the walls of all the children of Sheth."

He here informs Balak of the entire subjection of Moab to the Israelites; and not only Moab, but the whole world, for all mankind are included in the general term, the children of Sheth; for the posterity of Cain, and all Adam's other sons, perished in the deluge, so that the line of Sheth only, was preserved in Noah and his family.

By the breaking down of the wall, he shewed their utter subjection, and the entire subversion of their kingly power, and different forms of government by the Messiah, agreeable to what the prophet Isaiah says *, "The lofty looks of men shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of mortals shall be bowed down, and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day."

He then speaks of the subjection of Edom, "And Edom shall be *his* † possession, Seir also shall be *his* possession, *being* his enemies and Israel shall do valiantly." In this verse he shews the entire subjection of Edom, and for which he assigns a strong reason, viz. אֵיבָיו his enemies;

* Isaiah, ii. 11. 17.

† Israel's.

enemies; that is, because Edom was the enemy of Israel, they therefore are to have the entire possession of his country. And it is really worthy of observation, that the prophet Obadiah describes Israel's taking possession of the territories of Edom, in nearly the same words*.

“And the house of Jacob shall possess their possessions. And the house of Jacob shall be a fire, &c. and there shall not be any remaining of the house of Esau. And *they* of the south shall possess the mount of Esau, &c. And saviours shall go up on mount Zion to judge the mount of Esau.” And thus says Balaam, “Out of Jacob shall come he that shall have dominion, and he shall destroy the remnant out of the city.” In this manner, we may plainly perceive, how one prophecy supports the other, and both strengthen the truth of revelation.

From Edom, he turned to Amalek, “And when he looked on Amalek, he took up his parable, and said, Amalek *was* the first of the nations *that warred against Israel*, but his latter end *shall be* that he perish for ever.”

He then took notice of the Kenites, “And he looked on the Kenites; and took up his parable,

* Obadiah, i. 17, &c.

parable, and said, "Strong is thy dwelling place, and thou hast put thy nest in a rock. Nevertheless the Kenite shall be wasted, *for* how long will it take Ashur to carry thee away captive?" That is, notwithstanding the strength of thy situation, when God hath appointed thy captivity, it will not cost Ashur much time to carry thee away captive.

Before I proceed, it will be proper to enquire, who it is, that is meant by the Kenites, as commentators are greatly divided on the subject. Several of the Jewish commentators are of opinion, that these Kenites were the descendants of Jethro, Moses's father-in-law. See Judg. i. 16. and 1 Sam. xv. 6. And I find, that Bishop Newton was also of this opinion: for though he observes, (Vol. I. page 83.) "There are Kenites mentioned (Genesis xv. 19.) among the Canaanitish nations, whose land was promised unto Abraham; and le Clerc imagines that *those* Kenites were the people here intended." Yet, he farther observes, "But the Canaanitish nations are not the subject of Balaam's prophecies; and the Canaanitish nations were to be rooted out, but *these Kenites* were to continue as long as the Israelites themselves, &c." And therefore, he is
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of opinion, that *these Kenites* were the descendants of Jethro, Moses's father-in law. But the learned Abarbanel is of opinion, that the *Kenite* here mentioned, is one of the ten nations promised by God to Abraham, as mentioned in Gen. xv. 19. "The Kenites, and the Kenizzites, and the Kadmonites." These three nations, the children of Israel did not subdue, (as will be shewn hereafter) when they entered the land of Promise, and which has led Bochart to observe *, that, "Those *Kenites*, as well as the Kenizzites, became extinct in the interval of time which passed between Abraham and Moses, being not mentioned by Joshua in the division of the land, nor reckoned among the nations conquered by him." But the truth of the matter is, that the *Kenite*, *Kenizzite*, and *Kadmonite*, denote *Ammon Moab and Edom*, as held by our Rabbins. The proofs that may be adduced in favor of this, are many. I shall notice a few. In the first place, we find, that Balaam mentions Edom and Moab, but is silent as to what regards Ammon; and as he mentions all those who were to be finally subjected by Israel, at the time of the Messiah,

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* Phaleg. lib. iv. cap. 36, col. 397.

it is more than probable, that by the Kenite, he meant Ammon; although, for reasons unknown to us, he called them by the name mentioned in Genesis *. Secondly, we find that God tells Moses, that he will not give the children of Israel any part of the land of Edom, Ammon and Moab, || which it is probable they expected, as included in the promise made to Abraham; because, as Moses says †, it was also accounted the land of the רפאים Rephaim, the giants: it was therefore necessary for God to tell Moses, that he would not give them any part thereof at that time. Thirdly, these three nations are expressly mentioned by the prophet Isaiah, as the future conquest of the Israelites in the days of the Messiah, as mentioned chap. xi. 14. On Edom and Moab they shall lay their hand; and the children of Ammon shall obey them." From all which, I presume, it is manifest, that the Kenite here mentioned, is the same as promised to Abraham, as one of the nations who

* And in this sense, the Chaldee paraphrast Onkelos seems to understand it: for he hath both in Genesis, and here in Numbers, translated קיני "the Kenite," שלמאה "Shalmaah:" which is a manifest proof, that he considered them as one and the same nation; and, of course, confirms the explanation here given.

|| Deut. ii. 5, &c.

† Ibid. xi. 20, &c.

who were to be finally subdued or destroyed in the days of the Messiah.

In verse 24, he proceeds, "And ships shall come from the coast of Chittim, and shall afflict Ashur, and shall afflict Eber, and he also shall perish for ever." By the ships of Chittim, he pointed out the Romans, who were to afflict Ashur, or properly the Assyrians, and Eber, i. e. the children of Eber, the Jews; and this was fully accomplished: for as Dion informs us, Assyria, properly so called, was conquered by the Emperor Trajan: and it is well known, that the Romans under Vespasian and Titus, destroyed the second temple, and carried the nation into this long and dreadful captivity: he therefore adds, "And he also shall perish:" that is Chittim, i. e. the Romans shall be utterly destroyed, because they were the enemies of the Jews, and afflicted them sorely. And this is only a duplicate of what is mentioned above when speaking of Edom, "And he shall destroy the remnant out of the city." And which is the fourth beast mentioned in the prophecies of Daniel, as denoting the last of the four great monarchies, as will be fully explained in the course of these *Dissertations*.

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These prophecies, clearly point out the future redemption of Israel, and the destruction of their enemies; for the entire destruction of all their enemies is to take place at the coming of the Messiah. For although they were employed in some measure as God's instruments, to punish the nation; yet were they more intent on gratifying their own insatiable revenge on God's chosen people, than on executing the divine will, as the prophet Isaiah says, in speaking of the King of Assyria *, "Howbeit he meaneth not so, neither doth his heart think so, but it is in his heart to destroy, and cut off nations not a few." And as the prophet, denounced a severe punishment to be inflicted upon Assyria, after they should have served the purposes of Divine providence, saying †, "Wherefore it shall come to pass, that when the LORD hath performed his whole work upon mount Zion, and on Jerusalem, I will punish the fruit of the stout heart of the King of Assyria, and the glory of his high looks." So will God, at the future restoration of the Jews, severely punish all those who have afflicted them in this long and dreadful captivity,

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* Isaiah, x. 7.

† Ibid. xii.

as will be clearly evinced by the numerous prophecies cited in the course of the work. And as a proof of this, I shall mention the prophecy of Jeremiah, which clearly points out two remarkable and wonderful events, viz. the preservation of the Jewish nation, and the total destruction of their enemies. "Fear not thou, O Jacob, my servant, saith the LORD; for I am with thee; for I will make a full end of all the nations, whither I have driven thee; but I will not make a full end of thee; but I will correct thee in justice, and will not utterly cut thee off." (Jerem. xlvi. 28.) Thus is the preservation of the Jews founded on God's gracious promise; and if we seriously reflect on it, we shall find it really to be one of the most signal and illustrious acts of Divine providence. And a learned prelate observes*, the drops of rain which fall, nay, the great rivers which flow into the ocean, are soon mingled and lost in that immense body of waters: and the same in all human probability, would have been the fate of the Jews; they would have been mingled, and lost in the common mass of mankind; but on the contrary,

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* Newton on the Prophecies, Vol. 1, p. 124.

we find, that they flow into all parts of the world, mix with all nations and yet keep separate from all.

But this, is no more than what Moses foretold them upwards of three thousand years ago, "And yet for all that, when they be in the land of their enemies, I will not cast them away, neither will I abhor them, to destroy them utterly and to break my covenant with them; for I *am* the Lord their God, &c." (Levit. xxvi. 44.)

In this Prophetic poem, he hath also clearly pointed out the mercy of God in the preservation of Israel, and the means taken by Providence to effect it; for in Deut. xxxii. 26, he says, "I said, I would drive them into one corner, (and consequently) I would make the remembrance of them to cease from among men." This, hath really been the case of the ten tribes, whom the king of Assyria carried captive to Halah, and Habor, by the river Gozan: and of whom, we have not to this hour, any certain or authentic account, as to their real place of abode. And this would have been the fate of the rest of the nation, had they been carried to one spot.

spot. The Prophet therefore, proceeds thus, “Were it not that the wrath of the enemy would be collected;” The sense of which is, that if they were all in one place, under one prince, and the wrath of the enemy should arise against them, it would be more collected, and consequently, operate with a greater force to effect their destruction. But, God in his infinite mercy, scattered them among all nations; and thereby prevented their annihilation: for if one prince persecutes them, they retire to some of their brethren, who live under the dominion of another who favors them; as history clearly evinces. And, although they are but few, in comparison to what they were *, owing to the numberless persecutions and massacres which they have suffered in the different kingdoms of Spain, Portugal, France, Germany, Poland, England, &c. at various periods; yet, had they all been in one kingdom, they most likely would have been annihilated: but their dispersion among different nations, was the very means of their preservation: for the interest of the
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* This fully verifies the words of Moses, in Deut. iv. 27, and xxviii. 62. “And the LORD shall scatter you among the nations, and ye shall be left few in number among the heathen, whither the LORD shall lead you —And ye shall be left few in number, &c.”

the various princes were so opposite to each other, that when one persecuted them, another favored, and granted them an asylum. Hence, it is manifest, that their dispersion among so many nations, throughout the world, is not a sign that God hath cast them off entirely ; but, on the contrary, is the strongest apparent proof, that they are under the immediate providence of God, who carefully watches over, and preserves them, amidst the numerous enemies that surround them, till the coming of the true Messiah, when they will be all gathered together, and return to their own land : where they will serve God in truth and sincerity, as written in the law which God commanded his servant Moses.

Of this, a Christian writer * of great note, seems to bear testimony : for he observes, Neither the severe edicts of kings, nor the hands of the executioner, have been able to destroy them. No, nor the seditious multitude, who have perpetrated massacres and executions, infinitely more tragical than the princes. Both kings and people, Heathens, Christians, and Mahometans : so opposite in such a number of things, have nevertheless all
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* Basnage, history of the Jews.

united in the design of ruining this nation; and still have not been able to effect it. No! The *bush* of Moses, surrounded with flames, hath always burnt without consuming. Notwithstanding that they have suffered misery and persecution from age to age, and have waded through torrents of their own blood: yet, they still subsist a distinct nation; whilst nothing remains of the greatest monarchies but the name.

I have already observed, that the last prophecy of Balaam, clearly points out the restoration of the Jews, and the destruction of their enemies, at the coming of the Messiah; but nothing of this kind took place at the coming of Jesus. For at that time, no star came forth from Jacob, nor did a sceptre rise out of Israel, which smote the corners of Moab, and broke down the walls of all the children of Sheth; i. e. that brought the whole world into subjection, as above shewn. Neither did Edom at that time become the possession of Israel: for although the Edomites or Idumeans were reduced by Hyrcanus to the necessity of becoming proselytes to the Jewish religion *, yet,

* Joseph. lib. xiii chap. 17. And lib. xv. chap. 11.
Strabo lib. xvi. page 760.

yet, did they not possess the land of Edom: for the Idumea or land of Edom in which those people then dwelt, was not the Idumea or land of Edom mentioned in the Old Testament; for that lay between the lake of Sodom and the Red Sea: but the Edomites being driven thence by the Nabatheans, while the Jews were in the Babylonish captivity, and their land lay desolate, they took possession of as much of the southern part of it, as contained what had formerly been the whole inheritance of the tribe of Simeon, and also half of that which had been the inheritance of the tribe of Judah: and there they dwelt at the time that the Hyrcanus reduced them to the necessity, of either embracing the Jewish religion, or forsaking the country, and seeking new dwellings elsewhere; when they embraced the former. So that it is clear, that their country did not become a possession for Israel. Neither did any come out of Jacob who had dominion, and destroyed the remnant out of the city: nor are the Romans, whom he speaks of by the name of Chittim, entirely destroyed, as mentioned by the prophet, "and he shall perish for ever." For although the *Roman Empire* was broken by the invasions of the
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the Northern nations, yet is the nation not finally destroyed; as the prophet foretold: but which will undoubtedly take place at the coming of the Messiah, when all the enemies of the Jews will receive their due reward: for as the former parts of these prophecies were completely fulfilled, the remainder will be completed in due time.

DISSERTATION II.

The Prophecies of Moses.

THE second that prophecied concerning the future restoration and happiness of the Jewish nation, was our legislator Moses; from whose writings I shall select two prophecies, which plainly foretel the future restoration of the Jews, and the destruction of their enemies.

The first, is Deut. xxx. 1, &c. "And it shall come to pass when all these things are come upon thee, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before thee, and thou shalt bring *them* to thy heart, among all the nations whither

whither the LORD thy God hath driven thee. And shalt return unto the LORD thy God, and shalt obey his voice according to all that I command thee this day, thou and thy children, with all thy heart and with all thy soul: That *then* the LORD thy God will turn thy captivity, and compassionate thee, and will return and gather thee from all the nations whither the LORD thy God hath scattered thee. If *any* of thine be driven out unto the uttermost *parts* of heaven, from thence will the LORD thy God gather thee, and from thence will he fetch thee."

In the twenty-eighth chapter of Deut. we find, that Moses set before them, the blessings and the curses. In chap. xxix. he caused them to enter into the covenant, and fully informed them of the dreadful consequence of their breach of it. Having thus clearly shewn them the consequence of their obedience or disobedience, and drawn a lively picture of their miserable state in case of the latter, he proceeds to inform them of their future Redemption, which is to take place after all their sufferings; for the prophet having a prescience of their disobedience, and of course, the evil which would befall them; he, in order to prevent their
despair

despair in the greatness of their affliction, assures them of the certainty of their future Redemption, and the destruction of their enemies, in this chapter.

For he assures them, as of a certainty, that when all these afflictions shall come upon them, and they should return unto their God, and obey his voice, that then, their redemption will follow of course.

That the reader may be able fully to comprehend the force and meaning of the prophecy, according to the idiom of the Hebrew language; it will be necessary to take notice of the terms used by the prophet, both in regard to the nation's repentance, and the return of God's favor. For on the people's part, he mentions their return to God, by observing, first, **והשבות אל לבבך** And thou shalt bring *them* to thy heart: i. e. shalt fully consider in thy heart the state of thy case secretly, and repent. And in the next verse he says, **ושבת ערה' אלהיך** And thou shalt return unto the LORD thy God. On the part of the Supreme Being, he says, **ושב ה' אלהיך את שבוחך ורחמך ושב וקבצך** And the LORD thy God will turn thy captivity, and compassionate thee, and will return and
gather

gather thee, &c. So that he makes use of a duplicate expression, as well on God's part as on the people's. We also find that in verse 8th, and 10th, he again mentions the return of the people to God, so that the people's return to God is mentioned four times, and God's return to the people twice. But the reason of this is, that Moses, by divine inspiration, had a prescience of all that was to happen to us, in this long and dreadful captivity; and foresaw that there would be two different parties in the Jewish nation.

The one, consisting of such who through the length of the captivity, numberless massacres, persecutions, and banishments, would not have sufficient fortitude to support them, and would therefore seem to apostatize, and pretend to embrace Christianity, * but in their hearts secretly adhere to the true faith, and law of Moses; and such are at this day called among us אנוסים *The compelled ones*: because, they act by compulsion: for as soon as they can by any means escape from the Popish countries, they instantly return to Judaism.

The

* Vide Basnage, history of the Jews, book vii. chap 21, sect. xx. &c.

The other, consists of those, who notwithstanding all their sufferings, have constantly adhered to the truth; made open profession of their faith; and being at all times known by the surname of Israel: of whom there are but few left, in comparison of the numbers which formerly existed.

Now, Moses by turns, addressed himself to each of these parties: for when he said, *והשבוח אל לבבך* and thou shalt bring *them* to thy *heart*: (or according to the idiom of the English language, and thou shalt reflect inwardly) he addressed those who acted by compulsion; for although they had sinned, yet were they still a part of Israel. And, because their faith was secret, and their good works done in private, for fear of those among whom they dissembled: the prophet makes use of the expression, "And thou shalt bring *them* to thy heart AMONG all the nations whether the LORD thy God hath driven thee." That is, because thou art thus intermixed among the nations, and art called by their name; and therefore canst not call on God publicly: that thou shalt invoke him secretly in thy heart.

As

As to the other party, who publicly and constantly adhere to the true faith, he observed, "And thou *shalt* return unto the LORD thy God, and shalt obey his voice according to all that I command thee this day, thou and thy children," &c. For these, make open profession of their faith, and publicly read the word of God in their known places of worship; they and their *children*: for their children are not forced from them, as are those of the other party *. They therefore, may return unto God by a sincere repentance in a public manner. And the prophet assures them, that when both parties have sincerely repented; the one publicly, and the other privately; that then, God would return unto both of them: for which reason, he made use of different expressions. For to those who always continued in the covenant, he observed, "That then the LORD thy God will turn thy captivity, and compassionate thee." Because they are actually in captivity, and bear all the miseries thereof: he therefore justly observes, that God will have
compassion

* Vide Basnage, chap. xxxiv page 749, &c.

compassion on them to preserve them, in the midst of all the cruel persecutions which they suffer for the sake of their faith. But to the other party, he only says, "And he will return and gather thee from all the nations whither the LORD thy God hath scattered thee." But makes not the least mention of their captivity, &c. For they cannot properly be said to be in captivity; because they are considered as Christians, and consequently enjoy the same privileges; are possessed of great estates and rank, and make alliances with the noble families of the countries where they live; for which reason, he only said, that God would return and gather them from among the nations where they had intermarried, &c.

In the following verse, he addresses himself to both parties at once, saying, "If any of thine be driven unto the uttermost parts of heaven, from thence will the LORD thy God gather thee, and from thence will he fetch thee."

In verse 5th, he informs them of the full possession of the land, "And the LORD thy God will bring thee unto the land which thy fathers possessed, and thou shalt possess it:
and

and he will do thee good, and multiply thee above thy fathers." And to encourage and assure them, that they need not be afraid of being deprived of all those blessings, by relapsing into their former sins, as the imagination of man's heart *is inclined to evil* from his youth, and they might then be again carried away captive, he informs them, verse 6th. "And the LORD thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed to love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live." That is, that the LORD will incline their hearts constantly to love the LORD their God with all their heart and with all their soul, that they may live upon the land continually; and not go into captivity any more.

But this great change, which Moses calls the circumcision of the heart, and which denotes their refraining from sin, is not to be brought about by God's depriving man of his free will; for free agency, is one of the constituent properties of an intellectual being: but this great change in their temper, will be wrought by the great and numberless signs and wonders, which God will perform in those days, as the prophet

prophet Joel says, chap. iii. 3. "And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth; blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke, &c." As also, their great deliverance from captivity, after so many hundred years; the resurrection of the dead, and the day of judgment, when the punishment of their enemies will take place, as foretold by this prophet; as will be shewn at large, when we come to treat of this prophecy. By these great and suprising miracles, they will be so struck with amazement at the wonderful works of providence, that their uncircumcised heart will be humbled; and they will no more crave for the gratification of their sensual appetites; but all their desire, will be the enjoyment of spiritual blessings; so that they will be in the same state of innocency, as Adam before his fall. Agreeable to what the prophet Jerem. says, ch. xxxi. 31, &c. "Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah, &c. But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel, after those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and I will be their God, and they

they shall be my people. And they shall no more teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD." For the effect of the stupendous miracles above-mentioned, will make such a strong, forcible, and lasting impression on their minds, that it may be said to be engraven in indelible characters in their hearts; and by its powerful influence direct them to good, and prevent their inclination to sin: this, is properly the *circumcision of the heart*, as it will entirely annihilate the evil imagination of man. And this is what the prophet Ezekiel meant when he said, chap. xxxvi. 26. "I will also give you a new heart," &c. as will be explained, when we come to treat of that prophecy.

And, because the different nations amongst whom they were scattered, persecuted them most cruelly: Moses therefore after mentioning their redemption, observes, verse 7th. "And the LORD thy God will put all these curses upon thine enemies, and them that hate thee, and have persecuted thee." Which clearly points out God's vengeance on those who have persecuted them.

In verse 8th, he again addresses himself to those who dissemble, and act by compulsion, who repent secretly in their hearts, but are not able to keep the commandments for fear of persecution; observing, “And thou shalt return and obey the voice of the Lord, and do all his commandments which I command thee this day.” That is, these dissemblers must not only return to God, but must be particularly careful *to perform* all the commandments of God after their restoration, and not to act as they have hitherto done through necessity, as that cause will then be finally removed.

First, God himself will turn our captivity, (as was the case in Egypt) as mentioned in verse 3d. “That *then* the Lord thy God will turn thy captivity.” But this, was not the case on the return from Babylon, when the Jews returned by the licence and order of Cyrus; in consequence of which, we know what trouble and vexation they encountered, and how the building was hindered, &c.” But as our future restoration will be by God himself, in the person of the Messiah, as in Egypt, by Moses, when God himself slew all the first born; we shall in consequence, on our return to our own
land

land, enjoy one entire, continual, and uninterrupted state of prosperity:

Secondly. The future restoration will be general to all the tribes of Israel, scattered in the four corners of the earth; as mentioned in verse 4th. "If any of thine be driven out unto the utmost *parts* of heaven, from thence will the LORD thy God gather thee, and from thence will he fetch thee." This, did not take place at their return from the Babylonish captivity; for the ten tribes which the king of Assyria carried away, did not return; neither did the children of Israel and Judah, who were in Egypt, and the land of Ammon and Moab, in Gaul and Spain, and divers other parts return: but only some from Babylon; and those but a small part, and of the lower orders of the people.

Thirdly. The future restoration will include ALL THE POSTERITY of Jacob: even those who have apostatized, and dissembled, as above shewn, from the different expressions made use of by Moses, on addressing himself to the two different parties. This is also clearly pointed out by the expression of the prophet Isaiah, lix. 20. "And the Redeemer shall come unto
Zion

Zion, and to those in Jacob who turn from transgression, saith the LORD." By "those who turn from transgression," the prophet means those who have transgressed the law by dissembling and apostatizing; who will then repent, and be ashamed of such conduct. But nothing of this, took place at their return from the Babylonish captivity; and much less at the coming of Jesus.

Fourthly. At the future restoration, the Jewish nation will enjoy a more splendid and exalted state, than they did during the continuance of the first temple, even under David and Solomon; as mentioned in verse 5th. "And he will do thee good, and multiply thee above thy fathers." But the very reverse of this, took place at their return from Babylon, as they remained in almost continual subjection, either to the Persians and Medes, the Grecians or the Romans, by whom they were at last entirely driven out of their country, which they have never been able to recover to this day.

Fifthly. That God will restore his *Shechinah*, or Divine presence to the Temple, the gift of prophecy and the other holy things which were in the first Temple, as mentioned verse 9th.

"For

“For the Lord will again rejoice over thee for good, as he rejoiced over thy fathers.” This, it is manifest, denotes spiritual joy, by the residence of his Divine presence among them; agreeable to what the prophet Zechariah says, ii. 14. “Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion; for, behold, I *will* come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee.” But this and much more, was wanting in the second Temple: for those extraordinary marks of the Divine favor, with which the first Temple was honored, and which were its chief glory were wholly wanting in the second; for there was no Ark of the covenant, and mercy seat, upon it; no Shechinah, or Divine presence; no Urim and Thummim; no holy fire upon the altar; and no spirit of prophecy: all which are to be restored at the coming of the Messiah.

Sixthly. After the future redemption they will never go into captivity again, because they will continue steadfast in their duty to God, as mentioned verse 6th. “And the Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, &c.” as above explained: neither of which, was accomplished during the continuance of the second Temple, or at the coming of Jesus: but on the contrary, they were
split

split into factions, committing robberies and murders on each other with impunity; to which we may had, the heresies of the Sadducees, and other heretics: so that their wickedness being thus enormous, God removed them entirely from off their own land.

Seventhly. At the time of the future redemption all our enemies, and those who persecuted us, will be punished in a most exemplary manner, as mentioned verse 7th. "And the LORD thy God will put all these curses upon thine enemies, and on them that hate thee, which persecuted thee." But this, was not effected at their return from Babylon, nor during the time of the second temple, as they were generally in subjection to their enemies; and were sorely afflicted at times, with the sword, famine, and pestilence, till they were entirely rooted out from the land; whilst their enemies grew powerful; especially, at the coming of Jesus, when they were under the power of a Roman governor; from all which, it is manifest, that this prophecy was not fulfilled at their return from the Babylonish captivity, nor at the coming of Jesus, but remains to be fulfilled at the coming of the
true

true Messiah, whose mission will be, to restore the lost sheep of Israel, punish their enemies, and bring universal love and peace to mankind, as will be demonstrated in the sequel.

The second Prophecy, is contained in the latter part of his prophetic Poem, Deut. xxxii. 34. I have elsewhere * already observed, that this Poem contains six parts. The first part consists of the first five verses, and is a prefatory introduction to the Poem: The second part contains nine verses: the subject of which is, the kindness and beneficence of the Supreme Being towards Israel: The third part consists of the next four verses, in which he describes the sin and wickedness of the nation: The fourth part consists of the next seven verses, in which he recounts the afflictions with which GOD would punish them for their disobedience: The fifth part contains the next eight verses, wherein he describes the final destruction, which the Supreme Being might have been induced to have brought upon them for their enormous crimes, had it not been for one particular reason, and which he inimitably describes: the sixth and last part (which is what we mean to treat

* Vide preface to *Lingua Sacra*, page 2.

treat of) contains the last ten verses of the Poem, in which he rehearses the consolation of Israel, and the vengeance which GOD will take on their enemies.

In the immediately preceding part, he speaks of the wickedness and abominations of the different nations of the earth, who have persecuted God's chosen people: he therefore cautions his readers, not to imagine, that because these nations were in a state of the greatest prosperity, they had not been guilty of any crime in persecuting God's chosen people; had not committed any abominations: or that their crimes were forgotten by the Supreme Being: on the contrary, he says, verse 34th, "Is not *this* laid up in store with me, *and* sealed up among my treasures?" By the pronoun *this*, he alludes to the preceding verse, "Their wine is as the poison of dragons, and the cruel venom of asps." By this figurative expression, he clearly points out those dreadful and cruel persecutions of the nations against the Jews; and therefore declares, that that very poisoned wine, and that bitter cup, which they caused the children of Israel to drink during the captivity, was laid up in store with the Supreme Being, and sealed up in his treasures

asures, in order to cause them to drink it, as a just retaliation for their crimes: agreeable to what the prophet Obadiah says, i. 15, "As thou hast done, it shall be done unto thee; thy dealing shall return upon thine own head." Again, "They shall drink and shall swallow down; and they shall be as though they had not been." And thus also says the prophet Jeremiah, Lament. iv. 21. "The cup also shall pass through unto thee: thou shalt be drunken, and shalt make thyself naked."

He therefore proceeds, "to me *belongeth* vengeance, and recompence, at the time that their foot shall slip." That is, at the time when the measure of their iniquity shall be full, and the period of their power is arrived: agreeable to what the prophet Daniel says, vii. 12. "Their lives were prolonged for a season and a time." He then observes, "For the day of their calamity is at hand, and the things that shall come upon them make haste: When the LORD shall have judged his people, and repent himself concerning his servants." Here, Moses clearly points out the time of the commencement of their calamity, and also the reason why it is to be inflicted upon them; i. e. when the

LORD

LORD shall have judged his people, and repented concerning the suffering of his servants: when they shall have received the full measure of punishment for their crimes. For although the Gentiles have according to their evil doings, and their corrupt religious tenets, long deserved exemplary punishment, yet, is God pleased to defer his wrath, so long as the Jews remain unworthy of being redeemed, and have not repented; or received the full measure of their punishment. And thus says the Psalmist, psalm cxxxv. 14. "For the **LORD** will judge his people, and repent himself concerning his servants. *Then will it be seen that* the idols of the nations, *are but* silver and gold, the work of men's hands, &c. &c. They who make them shall be like them," &c.

Moses then proceeds to inform us, when God will repent himself concerning his servants. First. "When he shall see that their power is gone, and there is none *that hath a* ruling power, or *strength* to uphold: i. e. after they have continued so *long* in captivity, as almost to despair of being restored; because their power is sunk to so low an ebb, as scarce to afford any hopes of their being reinstated.

Secondly,

Secondly. On account of the profanation of God's name among the nations, as expressed in verses 37th and 38th. "And he (the enemy) shall say, Where *is* their God, *their* Rock, in whom they trusted, who did eat the fat of their sacrifices, *and* drank the wine of their drink offerings? let them rise up and help you, *and* be your protection *." Here we may perceive, the pencil of a masterly hand, delineating the exact expressions which Christians make use of towards us, at this present time: for in the first place, they observe, that because we rejected and persecuted the lord of life, therefore hath God rejected and cast us off, and made choice of the Gentiles, who they say, are now the chosen Israel: and which Moses has so forcibly expressed, by the enemy's saying, where *is* their God, the rock in whom they trusted? for they actually declare that we are without a God, because we deny the doctrine of the Trinity †, and the merits of the blood and sufferings of Christ, as the Messiah and Saviour of the world. That this is no chimera, I need only refer the reader

* Heb. an hiding for you.

† And which, I suppose, they found on 2 John 9.

reader to page 100, of a work called, "Romain's Practical Commentary," where he will find the following charge exhibited against the Jews *. "They (the Jews) are now without a God, because they have rejected the true God, the blessed Trinity of their fathers, and worship they know not what. They have set up some strange kind of an infinitely extended metaphysical Being §, whom they call the one supreme God, and who never had any existence,

* Vide Levi's Letters to Dr. Priestley, Part I. page 74, of the First Edit. and page 78, of the Second Edit.

§ We cannot comprehend the nature of the Deity, no man can see God and live; nor in this state of existence comprehend his nature. Romaine like another idolater would form a visible God, but compounded so complexedly and heterogeneously as to confound conception; he reconciles his notion to a triune Deity, for his grovelling mind could not elevate itself to the contemplation of what he terms a pure metaphysical being, and substitutes an entity for it, where a component part is material. If it had pleased the Deity that in our present condition we should understand his essence, he would have endued us with faculties capable of it, but when he said "I am that I am," it was intimation enough that we were to know no further: next to the impiety of denying his existence, is the temerity of defining his being according to our gross conceptions. Romaine was not satisfied in the belief of an uncaused independent eternal immutable and incorporeal being, possessed of power knowledge and goodness in infinitum.

J. KING.

“ence, but what the enemies of Christianity
“have been pleased to give him.”

Secondly. That all the sacrifices which we had offered in the temple, &c. were of none effect, not being able to make atonement for sin; but were only typical of the great sacrifice of Jesus the lord of life. This, he has emphatically described, by their saying, in a contemptuous manner, “Which did eat the fat of their sacrifices, *and* drank the wine of their drink offerings:” for it was the fat of the sacrifice only which was offered, and the wine poured out for a libation: he therefore, makes use of this expression, as if they were to say to us, tauntingly, of what efficacy could all your offerings of bulls and rams be? do you imagine that God wants to eat the fat of your sacrifices, or drink the wine of your libations? no: it was nothing more than typical of the great sacrifice of the lord of life, who was to suffer for the universal redemption of mankind. And, is not this the language with which we are really upbraided by the Christians at this day?

I cannot proceed without observing, that we have here a most remarkable, and wonderful instance

instance of the truth and verity of prophecy, and Divine Revelation, for can any thing be more clear and perspicuously described, than those two facts are in this prophecy by Moses? Indeed, they are so plain, that it would be no wonder, if Deists and Infidels were to have recourse to the stale and hackneyed argument, that the facts were prior to the predictions, and the prophecies written after the histories. But the great number of years that have elapsed since the delivery of this prophecy, and its accomplishment at this present time, entirely destroys the force of this sophistry; confirms the matter beyond all doubt, and fully establishes the truth of prophecy; for need there be a greater demonstration of the truth of Revelation, than that a prediction delivered upwards of three thousand years ago, should be thus clearly fulfilling at this very day.

I have dwelt the longer on this subject, because it appears to me to be an argument of the greatest importance in proof of Divine Revelation: for it almost surpasses belief, to imagine it possible, that such a thing should ever come to pass: viz. That the Jews should be upbraided at this day with having no God,
because

because, they worship the ONE supreme God; because, they worship the God of their fathers; the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; the God of Moses, to whom he declared himself by the name I AM; the God described in the law and the prophets, AS THE ONLY LIVING AND TRUE GOD; that pure UNITY so strongly inculcated in the Mosaical dispensation, &c. And for which, they have suffered such dreadful persecutions and massacres; for which, such torrents of their blood have flowed; and yet, we see with what exactness it hath been fulfilled. If after such demonstration of the truth of prophecy, the Deist can still persist in denying the truth of Divine Revelation, I really pity him, as past all recovery: for I can impute it to nothing else, but mere obstinacy, and the dread of incurring the shame of acknowledging himself in error, that prevents him from embracing the truth; although, there cannot be a more praiseworthy act, than an open and manly acknowledgment of one's errors.

In verse 39th, He, by a most beautiful figure shews, that, when the nations shall thus have profaned the name of the LORD of Hosts, that God will be jealous for his name's sake

sake; and when he comes to punish them for their blasphemy, will say, "See now that I, *even I am* he, and *there is* no God with me." I am he unto whom the children of Israel offered their sacrifices, and I am the same now; for *I am* the LORD, I change not; neither is there any god with me: no plurality of persons, as ye said: no Elohim *: no Trinity in Unity: but a perfect, pure UNITY.

He then proceeds, "I kill, and I will make alive: I have wounded, and I will heal; neither *is there any* that can deliver out of my hand." I have killed Israel in the captivity; I have doomed them to death, not you by your power; and I will make them alive at the resurrection: I have wounded them with sore afflictions during the captivity, and I will heal them by their redemption: agreeable to what the prophet Isaiah says, chap. xxx. 26. "In the day when the LORD shall bind up the breach of his people; and

* It is really worthy of remark, that Moses does not make use of the noun **אל**, as in verse 12th; but **אלהים**, which the Christians say denotes a plurality of persons in the God-head, or a Trinity in Unity: he therefore, in order to explode that corrupt and pernicious doctrine, makes use of the noun **אלהים**, as if he had said, that plurality which ye attributed to the noun Elohim, hath no existence with me, for I am a pure UNITY.

and shall heal the wound, which his stroke hath afflicted." But, remember, that as I have severely punished them for their sins, so will I punish you for your crimes; for there is none that can deliver you out of my hand.

In this sentence, Moses informs us of three most important, and wonderful events, which are to take place at the coming of the Messiah: viz. the resurrection of the dead, the restoration of the Jews, and the punishment of their enemies: for the first is expressed, by his saying, "I kill, and I will make alive." The second, by the expression, "I have wounded, and I will heal:" for the captivity is called the *wound* of Israel, as already mentioned. The third, by the expression, "Neither is there any that can deliver out of my hand."

And it really is very remarkable, that the prophet Ezekiel, hath also thus arranged them; for in chap. xxxvii. from verse 1st, to verse 14th, he speaks of the resurrection of the dead: and in verse 15th, &c. he speaks of the future restoration of Israel, when they are all to be united into one kingdom, under one prince. After which, in chap. xxxviii, he speaks of the vengeance which God will take of their enemies.

This,

This, I think, is a strong corroboration of the explanation which I have given.

Moses then proceeds, verse 40. "For I lift up my hand to heaven, and say, I live for ever." This is to be considered as the conclusion of the preceding sentence, and the beginning of the succeeding one: and ought to be thus explained. As sure as I lift up my hand to heaven, and swear that I live for ever, so sure is there none that can deliver out of my hand. And as sure as I live for ever, "When I whet my glittering sword, and mine hand take hold of judgment; will I render vengeance to mine enemies, and will requite them that hate me." Thus, is the certainty of the punishment of our enemies predicted to be as indubitable, as the eternal existence of the Supreme Being.

He then proceeds to inform us, that, the punishment of the nations will not be by a long captivity, as was that of the Jews, but by sudden slaughter and destruction: as he says, verse 42d, "I will make mine arrows drunk with blood, and my sword shall devour flesh." He also shews the cause of their deserving this severe punishment, as mentioned in the latter part of the said verse, "*And that* for the
the

the blood of the slain, and the captives, from the beginning of the revenges of the enemy.' From the time that the enemy first began to slay the captives of Israel, and to persecute them with the keenest revenge.

In verse 49d, he concludes the Poem, saying, "Cause his people to rejoice, O ye nations: for he will avenge the blood of his servants, and will render vengeance to his adversaries." For as the nations have hitherto been the sole cause of all their trouble and sorrow, by cruelly persecuting them, he informs us, that at the coming of the Messiah, the case will be reversed; for then the nations will be the cause of joy, and triumph to God's chosen people, when they see how he will revenge the blood of his servants, who have been most cruelly put to death during this long captivity. And thus says the Psalmist, lviii. 10. "The righteous shall rejoice when he seeth the vengeance." He also informs us of another cause of their joy. "And he will be reconciled to his land *and to his people.*" He will pardon his people, and cleanse his land of all the many abominations, with which

it

it hath been polluted, by the nations who possessed it at different times, during their captivity.

The explanation here given, of this part of the Prophetic Poem of Moses, I humbly conceive, to be the real sense of the Prophecy: The sixth, and last part of the Poem, according to the division above mentioned, being the only one that remains to be fulfilled, the others having been all accomplished, as will be shewn presently: whence, the seven following fundamental truths are evidently deducible. First. That at the future restoration, (which I call the true Redemption,) God will avenge us of all those nations, who have destroyed and persecuted us, as mentioned verse 35th, 41st, 42d, and 43d. "To me belongeth vengeance and recompence. I will render vengeance to mine enemies, &c. I will make mine arrows drunk with blood, &c. For he will avenge the blood of his servants, and will render vengeance to his adversaries." But this did not take place at their return from Babylon, nor at the coming of Jesus, nor at any other time since.

Secondly. That the punishment of the nations, and the Redemption of Israel, hath a certain and determinate

determinate period, which God hath never imparted to any prophet whatever, as mentioned verse 34th, and 35th. "Is not this laid up in store with me, *and* sealed up among my treasures? At the time when their foot shall slide, &c." And thus was it said to the prophet Daniel, xii. 9. "For the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end." But, this was not the case, at their return from Babylon, for all the people publicly knew that they were to be visited at the end of seventy years, according to what the prophet Jeremiah said, xxix. 10. neither was there any punishment inflicted upon their enemies, when that visitation took place: on the contrary, their return was by leave of Cyrus king of Persia, by whose decrees, and those of the other kings of Persia, the Temple, &c. was rebuilt; of course, this prophecy could not be said to be fulfilled, at their return from Babylon.

Thirdly. That the true Redemption will take place, after the nation hath received the full measure of its punishment, as mentioned verse 36th. "For the LORD shall judge his people, &c. when he shall see their power is gone, &c." When they in justice will deserve

to

to be redeemed, agreeable to what the prophet Isaiah says, chap. i. verse 27th. "Sion shall be redeemed in judgment." After he had in verse 25th, foretold her severe chastisement, "And I will bring again mine hand over thee: and I will clearly purge away thy dross: and I will remove all thine alloy." But this, was not accomplished at their return from Babylon: on the contrary, their sins were not yet done away: and they greatly added to them, so that they were doomed to a future captivity, as the angel observed to Daniel ix. 24; "To finish (or more properly, to consume) transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make expiation for iniquity," as I have explained at large in my first letters to Dr. Priestley, page 34th, and sequel; and page 79th of my second Letters, in answer to his Letters, Part II. To this we may also add, that at the time of their return from Babylon, they were not reduced to so low a state, but on the contrary, were possessed of riches and honour, inasmuch that it was only the meaner sort that returned, the opulent refusing to return, as was the case with those who were in Spain, and Gaul, &c. as already mentioned, page 33.

Fourthly.

Fourthly. That our deliverance from the present captivity, will not be in consequence of our merit, or that of our ancestors, but merely, for the sake of His holy name, which hath been profaned among the nations, as mentioned, verse 37th. "And he (the enemy) shall say, where is their god, their rock, in whom they trusted, &c." And this agrees with what the prophet Ezekiel says, chap. xx. verse 34th, and 41st. "And I will gather you out of the countries whither ye are scattered, with a mighty hand, and with a stretched out arm, and with fury poured out, &c." "And I will gather you out of the countries wherein ye have been scattered, and I will be sanctified because of you in the sight of the nations." And in chap. xxxvi. verse 22d, he says, "Thus saith the LORD God: Not for your sakes do I this, O house of Israel, but for mine holy name, which ye have profaned * among the nations, whither ye are gone. And I will sanctify my great name, which hath been profaned among the nations, which ye have profaned in the midst of them; and the nations shall

* Not that they themselves profaned the name of the LORD, but were the cause of it, as mentioned verse 20th, and 23d.

shall know that I *am* the LORD, saith the LORD God, when I shall be sanctified in you in their sight." Hence it is manifest, that our Redemption will take place in consequence of God being jealous for his holy name, which hath been profaned among the nations, as our Legislator Moses, and the prophet Ezekiel, have prophesied, and not for any merit of ours, as will be shewn at large in the sequel, when we come to treat of the prophecies of Ezekiel.

Fifthly. That the Redemption and reconciliation which Moses hath assured us of in this prophetic Poem, is not conditional, to take place only in consequence of our Repentance, and hearkening to the voice of the LORD, by obeying his commandments; on the contrary, this song is nothing more than a written evidence, that we should, in process of time, be exceedingly wicked, forsaking the LORD's commandments, and committing all manner of crimes, for which, God would punish us severely, by a long and dreadful captivity, scattering us in all corners, &c. yet, would not suffer us to be annihilated, so that our name should perish from off the earth;

earth; but that, after we had thus been severely punished, the Supreme Being, for the sake of his holy name, which hath been profaned among the nations, as already mentioned, would turn from his fierce anger, and repent him of the evil; punish our enemies with his great, well tempered, strong sword; pardon our sins; have compassion on us, cover our iniquities, and redeem us; for which reason, he called, as it were, heaven and earth to witness the truth of what he predicted; as well in regard of our sins, and exemplary punishment, as our future Redemption. So that, according to the tenour of this prophecy, it is clear that, although we should not repent, yet, is our Redemption to take place at the APPOINTED TIME: for notwithstanding that we might, by a thorough and sincere repentance of the whole nation, be the means of working our reconciliation and Redemption, as mentioned page 29, 32; yet the prophet does not consider, or mention it, in this Poem, as the condition of our future Redemption: but absolutely declares, without any restriction, that, after we have received the due reward of our sins, God would punish our enemies, and be reconciled

conciled to his land, and to his people: so that, properly speaking, this prophetic Poem, must be considered as an historical anticipation, of all that was to happen to the nation from their first Redemption from Egypt, to their latter Redemption by the Messiah.

This also fully confirms the opinion held by our Rabbins, that there are two periods for our Redemption, viz. First, on the condition of our repentance, as mentioned in the first prophecy of Moses. Secondly, after we have received the full measure of affliction for all our iniquities, in this long and every way dreadful captivity.

But, as nothing of what is above-mentioned, took place during, or at their return from the Babylonish captivity, it is manifest, that, it could not be the Redemption spoken of by Moses in this Poem, which still remains to be fulfilled at the coming of the true Messiah.

Sixthly. That the resurrection of the dead will be very near the time of the Redemption, as mentioned verse 39th. "I kill, and I will make alive; I have wounded, and I will heal," as already explained. And thus said the angel

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to Daniel, xii. 1, 2. "And at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one *that shall be* found written in the book. And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, &c." And the prophet Isaiah has also spoken largely of this subject, as will be fully explained when we come to treat of his prophecies. Hence, it is clear, that all the prophets agree, with one accord, in prophesying that the resurrection of the dead, is an event that will take place near the time of the restoration of the nation.

Seventhly. That the first five parts of this prophetic Poem, have been fully accomplished, viz. The kindness and beneficence of the Supreme Being towards Israel, in giving them possession of the holy land, and their prosperity under David and Solomon: their sins of idolatry, &c. their captivity, and the severe punishments that followed, and their preservation as a distinct nation to this very day, notwithstanding all their sufferings, whence I presume to think that the completion of the first five parts, may be considered, as a pledge and earnest of the accomplishment of the sixth,

sixth, which mentions the Redemption of the nation, &c. And it is very remarkable, that the prophet Jeremiah, hath clearly evinced the truth of this position, in the following words, Jerem. xxxii. 42. which he produces as an argument in support of what he had delivered as a prophecy foretelling the future restoration of the nation; "For thus saith the LORD, Like as I have brought all this great evil upon this people, so will I bring upon them all the good that I have promised them." A stronger proof than what is contained in these words of the prophet, in support of the spirit of prophecy, cannot be required; for the accomplishment of the evil predicted, is a sure pledge of the completion of the good promised: and, therefore, as it is allowed on all hands, that the first five parts of this Poem, hath been fulfilled in every particular fact; it consequently is manifest, that not the least doubt ought to be entertained of the full accomplishment of the last part.

DISSERTATION

DISSERTATION III.

The Prophecies of Isaiah.



THE third, who prophesied of the Redemption, and future restoration of the Jews, was Isaiah, the son of Amos, and who unquestionably delivered a greater number of prophecies concerning the future restoration of the nation, than any other prophet, as will be shewn in the sequel. Of these, I mean to take notice of such only, as are clear, forcible, and unequivocal, in pointing out the character and coming of the Messiah; the restoration of the Jews; the punishment of their enemies, and the resurrection of the dead: these three great events are to take place in succession after each other, as already shewn from the words of Moses, and the arrangement of them by Ezekiel.

The first prophecy of Isaiah concerning the
future

future restoration of the Jews, is contained in the second, third and fourth verses of the second chapter of his book. Before I proceed to the explanation of this prophecy, it is necessary to premise, that the prophet Micah, chap. iv. 1. 4. has delivered this same prophecy concerning the kingdom of the Messiah, with scarcely any material variation, save that he has embellished it, by the addition of a sentence, "And they shall sit, every man under his vine," &c. and which fully evinces, that this prophecy foretells the kingdom of the Messiah, as will clearly appear from the explanation.

For as the prophet makes use of the expression, *in the latter days*, it is clear, that he thereby meant the days of the Messiah; and thus says Abarbanal and Kimchi, "Wherever the latter times are mentioned in Scripture, the days of the Messiah are always meant." See also Nachmonides on Genesis, xlix. 1. And Bishop Lowth, in his notes on the second chapter of Isaiah, after having cited Kimchi's opinion on these words, viz. that the latter days denotes the days of the Messiah, adds, "And, in regard to this place, nothing can be more clear and certain." And Dr. Newcombe,

combe, Bishop of Waterford, in his notes on Micah, iv. 1. observes, "These four verses contain a prophecy which was to be fulfilled by the coming of the Messiah." So far he is right; but when he adds, that "Then the Gentiles were to be admitted into a covenant with God, and the Apostles were to preach the Gospel, beginning at Jerusalem: Luke xxiv. 47. Acts ii. 14, &c. When Christ was to be the spiritual Judge, and king of many people, was to convince many nations of their errors and vices, and was to found a religion which had the strongest tendency to promote peace;" it is plain that he errs, and has totally mistaken the true sense of the prophecy, and so hath Bishop Lowth, and all the Christian writers who have espoused that opinion: for no such universal peace, as is here foretold by the prophets, hath ever taken place yet: neither hath the mountain of the Temple of the LORD been established on the top of the mountains, &c. as will be shewn presently. For in this prophecy, the prophet has assured us of five things, or events, that are to take place, and be accomplished in the latter days, i. e. at the coming of the Messiah.

First,

First, "That the Temple shall be rebuilt, and continue, so as not to be destroyed any more;" as he says verse 2d. "It shall come to pass in the latter days, that the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be established on the top of the mountains." By the word *established*, it is plain, that he meant, it was to be fixed unalterably. Of course, it was not to be destroyed any more.

Secondly. That it should "be exalted above the hills;" but this exaltation will not be merely an exaltation of place, or consist in the greatness of the building; but in its holiness and sanctity, as mentioned, "And all nations shall flow unto it." For this is not to be effected by individuals only, but by whole nations, as the prophet says, "And many people shall go, and shall say: Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD; to the house of the God of Jacob."

Thirdly. That all nations will then acknowledge the true Unity of God, and freely confess, that the LORD alone is God, and that their fathers had inherited lies, Jerem. xvi. 19. and vanity, and things, wherein there is no profit. They, therefore, will all be desirous
of

of being instructed in the true law of God, as the prophet says, "And he will teach us of his ways; and we will walk in his path." That is, we all will serve him with one accord; agreeable to what the prophet Zephaniah says, iii. 9. "For then will I turn the (hearts of the) people *to* a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the LORD, to serve him with one consent." And thus also says the prophet Zechariah, xiv. 9. "And the LORD shall be King over all the earth: in that day the LORD alone shall be *acknowledged*, and his name *shall also be one*." And therefore they will all come up to the mountain of the LORD, in order to be taught, as mentioned presently after, "For from Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem."

Fourthly. That the Messiah, who is to teach the nations the word of the LORD, which is to go forth from Zion, will judge and plead with the nations, concerning their different sentiments in religion: for as great part of the wars and animosities are owing to the difference of religious opinions, the prophet informs us, that in those days, all those disputes will be finally terminated; because the nations will all unani-
mously

mously embrace the word of God, which will be the cause of universal peace in the world; and that, in such a complete and perfect manner, as to induce them to destroy the very weapons of war, as mentioned verse 4th. "And he shall judge among the nations; and he shall plead with many people: and they shall beat their swords into plough-shares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation; neither shall they learn war any more."

That none of the five events pointed out by this prophecy, have as yet been fulfilled, is evident from history; for the Temple built at their return from the Babylonish captivity, was so far from being established, that it was destroyed by the Romans; neither was it exalted by its holiness and sanctity, so as to cause whole nations to flow to it; nor have all the nations hitherto acknowledged the true Unity of God: neither did Jesus, at his coming, judge and plead with the nations, concerning their different and jarring faiths, so as to terminate their disputes, and entirely annihilate all contention about them; and thus introduce universal peace into the world. On the contrary, it is manifest, that,

that, since the foundation of Christianity, the sword hath scarce been sheathed; and its history evinces, that in practice, it is found to be diametrically opposite to the universal peace here foretold by the prophet, as we meet with little else but intolerance, persecutions, bloodshed, massacres, &c. as will be shewn at large, in the immediately succeeding prophecy.

The second prophecy commences at verse 33d, of chapter x. and is continued to the last verse of chapter xii. Before I proceed, it will be necessary to observe, that the prophet having foretold the destruction of the Assyrians, by comparing it to the slaughter of the Midianites, at the rock of Oreb; and to that of the Egyptians at the Red Sea; proceeds to inform us, that at the coming of the Messiah, (whom he represents as a twig springing up from the stem of an old tree, cut down, lopped to the very root, and decayed; which is highly emblematical of the present low state of the Jews, and the house of David: as if their hope was cut off and decayed, by the uncertainty of the time of their redemption, on account of the long continuance of this dreadful captivity,) God
would

would punish the nations in a yet more exemplary manner, as mentioned verse 33d. "Behold the Sovereign, the LORD of hosts, will lop the flourishing branch with a dreadful crash; and the high of stature shall be cut down, and the lofty shall be brought low: and he shall hew the thickets of the forest with iron, and Lebanon shall fall by a mighty hand." Here the prophet shews, that those who, during the captivity of the Jews, would be in a most flourishing state, and be proud and haughty, shall all be humbled, brought low, and cut down: but that the Jewish nation, whose power should be entirely decayed, would then spring forth and flourish, &c. as mentioned, chap. xi. verse 1st. &c. till the end of the prophecy; and in which, he has pointed out the great events which are to characterise the days of the true Messiah, as also the peculiar characteristics which are to distinguish him from all other men, and are comprized in the ten following conditions: none of which, as I shall prove, have ever yet been fulfilled: neither at the return of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity, nor at the time of Jesus, nor in his person.

The first, is concerning the genealogy of the
Messiah.

Messiah. "But there shall spring forth a rod from the stem of Jesse; and a cion from his roots shall become fruitful." By which we are informed, that the Messiah is to be the lineal descendant of David, the son of Jesse: for as God had made choice of David, and had promised him that his throne should be established for ever, as is said 2 Sam. vii, 16. Jerem. xxxiii. 17. &c. It is necessary, that the Messiah, who is to redeem the nation, should be his lineal descendant, that the regal state may be restored to the house of David, and the promise fully accomplished: for after the coming of the Messiah, the nation will no more go into captivity; so that his throne will then be fully established for ever. But this did not take place at their return from Babylon; neither is it applicable to that captivity: for the house of David was not then reduced to so low a state; and they all knew that they were to be visited at the end of seventy years, as already mentioned. Of course, they could not, in strict propriety, be represented by the stem of an old tree, cut down to the very root, and decayed. Neither did it take place during the continuance of the second Temple: for the kings which reigned

reigned in Judea, during that period, were not the descendants of David, but of the posterity of Aaron the Priest, as the Asmoneans; and other, who were not originally Jews, as Herod, &c. whose father was an Idumean. Neither will any one be so hardy as to say, that it was fulfilled in the person of Jesus: for he did not restore the nation, nor did he fill the throne of David; although it is plain that the Jews expected a temporal prince, see Matt. ii. 2, 6. and the angel Gabriel is represented as promising Mary, that the LORD God would give him the throne of his father David, and that he should reign over the house of Jacob for ever. Luke i. 32, 33. From all which, his disciples were so fully convinced, that it was one of the offices of the Messiah to restore the kingdom of Israel, that they came to the resolution of actually asking him, before his ascension, whether he purposed, at that time, to restore the kingdom to Israel. Acts i. 6. The answer given to them, plainly shews, that he wished to evade giving a direct answer to such a ticklish question. He, however, left the nation groaning under the yoke of the Romans, who not long after, put an end to their kingdom and government. That
this

this kingdom is not spiritual, will be fully proved in the course of the explanation of this prophecy. That he was not the lineal descendant of David, according to the flesh, is manifest from both Matthew and Luke's account of the lineal descent of Jesus, as they bring it down to Joseph, but not to Mary, as I have shewn at large in my answer to Dr. Priestley's Letters to the Jews, Part II. page 72, 73, &c.

Secondly. Of the exalted degree of the prophetic spirit of the Messiah, mentioned verse 2d. "And the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him." And which will be in such an exalted degree, that he will be fully informed of the secret thoughts of mankind: so that he will not judge according to the sight of his eyes, nor approve according to the hearing of his ears, as mentioned verse 3d. And as this prophet has declared elsewhere. "Behold my servant, whom I will uphold; my chosen, in whom my soul hath delight: I have caused my spirit to rest upon him." Isai. xlii. 1. But this exalted degree of prophecy, was so far from being bestowed on any person during the continuance of the second temple, that on the contrary, after the death of Malachi, which happened

happened a few years after it was built, the spirit of prophecy wholly ceased among the nations, and hath not been revived to this day.

As to the prophetic spirit of Jesus, I think I have clearly shewn, in my Answer to Dr. Priestley's First Letters to the Jews, page 90, &c. &c. and in my Answers to his Letters, Part II. page 47, &c. &c. that he never was endowed with the spirit of prophecy; consequently, he cannot be the person spoken of by the prophet, as the promised Messiah.

Thirdly. The extraordinary wisdom of the Messiah as mentioned verse 2d. "And the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him; the spirit of wisdom and understanding; the spirit of counsel, and strength; the spirit of knowledge, and the fear of the LORD." In the preceding part of this verse, the prophet speaks of the prophetic spirit of the Messiah, by the appellation of the spirit of the LORD; and in the latter part, he speaks of his extraordinary wisdom. And, it is really worthy of remark, that he does not use the term spirit, by every quality, as, the spirit of wisdom, and the spirit of understanding, &c. but only uses the term spirit to every two qualities. But, if we
carefully

carefully examine the form of this sentence, so as to be able to enter into the spirit of the language of the prophet, we shall clearly perceive, that, by this mode of expression, he has endeavoured to impress on our minds, a most useful and instructive principle; viz.

First, That those who excel in speculation, or theory, are generally defective in practice: are not knowing or skilful in the arts and ways of mankind: for as the mind is continually occupied with the speculative, it can pay but little attention to the practical.

Secondly, That he who is able to counsel, and plan great designs, in war, &c. is seldom endowed with strength of body, or courage sufficient, to execute the plans he has counselled: for it is a phenomenon in nature, to find the faculties of both body and mind thus qualified, united in one and the same person.

Thirdly, That philosophical minds, are seldom sound in belief, but generally become sceptics in religion: which made Solomon say, Eccle. vii. 16. "Neither make thyself overwise; why shouldest thou destroy thyself?"

The prophet therefore informs us, that as the excellent endowments of the Mēssiah, will all
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be supernatural, he, of course, will not be subject to any of the defects, incident to those qualities in other men; for which reason, he observes, First, that as the Messiah will be endowed with the spirit of wisdom, he will at the same time be possessed of the spirit of understanding; that is, both speculative, and practical. Second, that being endowed with the spirit of counsel, he will also be possessed of that strength, and courage; so as to be able to execute whatever he counsels or plans. Thirdly, that, though endowed with the spirit of knowledge, he will nevertheless exercise that knowledge in the fear of the LORD: and not in the promulgation of sceptical opinions, derogatory to the revealed will of God. Hence, it is manifest, that the wisdom of the Messiah is to be of the most exalted kind, and free from all the defects and blemishes incident to the rest of mankind. And as wisdom in general is included in the three terms, wisdom, counsel, and knowledge, the prophet mentioned the term spirit but three times, as appertaining to the three species only, in order to shew, that he should be perfect in every part of wisdom, and be entirely free from the opposite defects. But the promise of this perfect,
and

and exalted degree of wisdom, united with as extraordinary power of strength, was never accomplished; neither in the endowment of any person at their return from Babylon, or during the continuance of the second Temple; nor yet in Jesus: for history does not inform us that he was thus endowed. Nay, so far was he from being gifted with such extraordinary strength and courage, that the New Testament hath furnished us, with a most remarkable instance of his pusillanimity and want of fortitude, when at the sight of death, he, in agony, sweated drops of blood;—which the virtuous Heathen Philosopher Socrates, who had not the light of revelation to guide him to the doctrine of the immortality of the soul, was not guilty of at the approach of death: on the contrary, he met it with the greatest calmness and resignation, becoming that of the noblest hero, conscious of his suffering in a good cause: so that the unshaken constancy of soul in Socrates, made the by-standers so ashamed, as to put an end to their grief. From this instance recorded of Jesus, in the New Testament, it is manifest, that this promise was not fulfilled in his person.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, That the extraordinary piety of the Messiah will be so eminent, and opposite to that of other princes, that he will abstain from every corporeal pleasure; as will be shewn presently from the language of the prophet. That the reader may have a perfect idea of the phraseology of the prophet, it is necessary to observe, that it is an axiom well known among naturalists, that of the five external senses, the most gross and palpable, is the sense of feeling; insomuch, that it is frequently the cause of our shame: hence, the admonitions against unlawful lusts, whoredom, and adultery. Of the other senses, the next in degree of grossness, is the sense of tasting, and which may also be accounted a species of feeling, as the faculty of tasting is effected by means of the papillae of the tongue: hence also, the admonitions concerning prohibited meats, &c. For which reason, these two senses, on account of their grossness, are never in Scripture attributed to the Supreme Being, as Maimonides justly observes; whence the prophets, and other pious men, endeavoured to abstain from the use of those two gross senses as much as possible. As to the sense of smelling, it is of a more refined

refined and spiritual nature; and therefore effects its purpose, although at some distance: hence, it is in Scripture attributed to the Creator; as mentioned, Gen. viii. 21. "And the LORD smelled the sweet savor." We also find, that princes, and other great personages, are fond of fragrant odours, aromatics, and perfumes; of which we have several instances in Scripture, as the embalming of dead bodies, and laying them in sepulchres filled with spices, &c. Gen. l. 2. and 2 Chron. xvi. 14. But, as to the other two senses, viz. those of hearing and seeing, they are yet of a more spiritual nature, and effect their purpose at a much greater distance: and are particularly fitted to the attainment of wisdom, agreeable to what Solomon says, "The hearing ear, and the seeing eye, the LORD hath even made both of them." Prov. xx. 12. Though, as the sense of hearing is peculiarly necessary thereto, he says, "The ear that heareth the reproof of life, abideth among the wise." Ibid. xv. 31. Hence, it is clear, that of the five external senses, two, viz. the sense of feeling and tasting, are very gross; and two others, viz. hearing and seeing, are of a pure and spiritual nature;

nature; and the sense of smelling is a medium between them, being not so gross as the former, nor yet so pure as the latter. The prophet therefore observes, that the Messiah will be so far from having any propensity towards an immoderate use of the two gross senses, that even the sense of smelling, which is more refined and spiritual, will not be employed by him, as it is by other kings and princes, to minister to their voluptuousness, but in the service of the LORD; for which reason, the prophet makes use of the following expression: "And he shall scent in the fear of the LORD; for that is the real sense of וְהָרַיָּח, and of which, it is scarcely possible to convey an adequate meaning, by a literal translation in the English language: but by which figurative expression, the prophet gave us to understand, that the Messiah, instead of using the sense of smelling, in a voluptuous manner, as other princes do, he would, on the contrary, employ all his sagacity in the fear of the LORD; and he farther informs us, that the two most pure and spiritual senses of hearing and seeing, would not be used by him as by the rest of mankind, for, "That not according to the sight of his eyes shall he judge: neither according to

to the hearing of his ears shall he reprove."

And which leads us to,

The Fifth condition, viz. the exalted degree of the Messiah's justice, which he will administer in such an upright, just, and equitable manner, not only to the rich and great, but likewise to the lowest and meanest of mankind, that his decisions will be acknowledged by all to be truly Godlike. That the Messiah is to be a great temporal Judge, is manifest from the different expressions of this prophet, for in chap. ii. verse 4th he says, "And he shall judge among the nations, &c." In chap. xlii. verse 1st, &c. "I have made my spirit rest upon him : *and* he shall bring forth judgment to the nations." Verse 3d. "He shall pronounce judgment unto truth." Verse 4th. "Until he hath firmly seated judgment in the earth, for the distant nations shall earnestly wait for his law." From all which, it is clear, that the Messiah is to be invested with the office of Judge, and that, not for his own nation only, but for all the nations of the earth. And, in the passage now under consideration, the prophet plainly points out to us, the great distinction between the Messiah in his character of Judge, and that of all other judges :

judges: for, although it is the duty of every judge to pronounce judgment, according to what he sees and hears given in evidence before him, yet, it is possible, that he may be imposed upon by the false representations of advocates and witnesses: and thus be induced to deliver an unjust sentence; but the Messiah, will not judge according to the sight of his eyes, nor reprove according to the hearing of his ears; for he will be perfectly acquainted with the true state of all things, by means of the exalted prophetic spirit he will be gifted with, so that it will be impossible to impose upon him: he therefore, “Will judge the poor with righteousness, and with equity will he reprove the meek of the earth.” The rich and powerful will not then be able, by means of mercenary advocates, and perjured witnesses, to debar the poor from obtaining justice; neither will designing men, and court sycophants, be able to slander and vilify their meek and truly humble neighbours to him, so as to induce him to reprove them in anger, and disgrace them without cause, that they may have an opportunity of begging their estates or property, as is too much the practice in the courts of princes; for he will only reprove
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in equity, that is, not without just and sufficient occasion. But no person whatever, ever maintained such an exalted character as is here described by the prophet, in the fourth and fifth conditions of the character of the Messiah, either as a judge, or in practising such piety and self-denial, by abstaining from all corporeal pleasures even the most refined ones; neither at their return from the Babylonish captivity, nor during the continuance of the second temple. Neither was this character fulfilled in the person of Jesus, as I shall shew presently: for he was so far from abstaining from the use of the sense of smelling, in the manner of princes, that, on the contrary, he seemed desirous of perfectly imitating them, as appears from his so highly approving of the woman's anointing him with a box full of precious ointment, against so great a waste of which, his disciples shewed indignation, (Matt. xxvi. 7, 8.) for, according to Mark, it was so precious, that it might have been sold for more than three hundred pence: Mark xiv. 5. As to Luke, he gives us an account of another anointing, as appears to me, for that mentions the feet of Jesus being anointed, instead of pouring it on his head, as mentioned by Matthew
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and Mark: vide Luke vii. 38. John seems also to relate a different anointing: for he differs both as to time, and circumstances, and, as appears to me, in place also, see John xii. 1, 8, and describes it, as anointing his feet. And as from these accounts it is plain, that Jesus was greatly pleased with, and highly approved of it, it is clear, that the fourth condition which the prophet has in this prophecy mentioned as characteristic of the Messiah, was not fulfilled in the person of Jesus; much less, the fifth; namely, that of Judge in the most exalted degree, and universal jurisdiction; for he was so far from possessing such an extent of judicial power, that it is plain, from his own words, he was not invested with the power of a judge in the least; for when the man applied to him, to speak to his brother, that he should divide the inheritance with him, he answered, "Man, who made me a judge?" Luke xii. 14. And in John viii. 15. he says, "I judge no man." Nay, he tells us plainly, that it was not his province, "For I came not to judge the world." Ibid. xii. 47. And what is yet more remarkable, and fully evinces the truth of my position, his making use of an expression so diametrically opposite to that
used

used by the prophet, "As I hear, I judge." Ibid. v. 30. Whereas the prophet expressly says, "That not, according to the sight of his eyes shall he judge," &c. From all which, it is manifest, that this condition, in the character of the Messiah, was not fulfilled in the person of Jesus; consequently, he could not be the person predicted by the prophet, as the promised Messiah.

The sixth condition is, the miraculous power which the Messiah is to be endowed with, by means of his exalted prophetic spirit, and extraordinary piety, mentioned in the preceding conditions; agreeable to what the prophet says, "And he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall slay the wicked." The meaning of which is, that he will not be under the necessity of raising an army, in order to punish a nation that may be guilty of disobedience to his commands, or the laws of God; for, with the rod of his mouth shall he smite the earth: by means of his miraculous power, he will be able to command the elements, and punish them with fire, pestilence, famine, &c. without being obliged

obliged to use sword or spear; for all the weapons of war will be destroyed, as mentioned, chap. ii. 4. Neither will there be any occasion for executioners to put the guilty individuals to death; for he will slay the wicked with the breath of his lips: so that whether it be individuals, or whole nations that should be guilty, and deserving of punishment, he will be able to punish them by supernatural means: such as commanding the earth to open, and swallow them up, as it did Korah; or by calling down fire from heaven, as did Elijah; or by ordering wild beasts to devour them, as was done by Elisha. So, that strictly speaking, the rod with which he will punish them, will be his mouth; for he will need no other weapon than the breath of his lips. Now, as it is manifest, that this extraordinary miraculous power hath not been possessed by any person whatever, either at their return from Babylon, or during the continuance of the second Temple, nor yet in the person of Jesus, it is clear, that it remains to be fulfilled in the person of the true Messiah.

The seventh condition is, the universal peace that is to take place in the world in the days of the Messiah, as mentioned in verses 6th, 7th,
8th.

8th, and 9th. "And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins; and faithfulness the cincture of his reins. Then shall the wolf take up his abode with the lamb; and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf, and the young lion, and the fatling, *shall come together*; and a little child shall lead them. And the heifer and the she-bear shall feed together; *together* shall their young ones lie down; and the lion shall eat straw like an ox. And the suckling shall play upon the hole of the asp; and upon the den of the basilisk shall the new-weaned child lay his hand. They shall not hurt, nor destroy, in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters *that* cover the *depths* of the sea." In these verses, the prophet, by a variety of the most animated, beautiful, and elegant imagery, hath finely expressed, not only the peace, harmony, and happiness, that is to exist in the days of the Messiah, but has also clearly pointed out to us the immediate causes of this universal peace; for if we duly consider the cause of the wars which have hitherto distracted and desolated so many parts of the known world, we shall find, that the motives thereto
have

have been of two kinds: namely, either a thirst for power and dominion; and which may not improperly be stiled legal robbery: or, on account of the difference of religious tenets and opinions. The prophet, therefore, in order to shew us, that these causes will then cease, says, in regard of the first, "And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins." The meaning of which is, that justice and righteousness will be so conspicuous in the character of the Messiah, as if they adhered to his loins as a girdle: and as it is plain, from the fifth condition, that he will be invested with the office of universal Judge; he of course, will not suffer any depredation, or usurpation, to be committed by any nation, however powerful it may be, over its weaker neighbours: for, by his authority, he will oblige every one to be contented with his own portion, without encroaching on that of his neighbour.

As to the second cause, he observes, "And faithfulness the cincture of his reins." By faithfulness, he properly meant, a strict adherence to the true faith, and the worship of the One true God; for that, and that only, will then take place in the world, as is clear, from the words of the prophet, verse 9th. and
the

the several prophecies cited in the course of this work. And therefore, when these two causes of war and bloodshed will be thus finally removed, the consequence will be, universal love and peace among the human race.

With regard to the state of peace and innocence which, as the prophet so beautifully describes, is to exist among the brute creation, in the days of the Messiah, there are different opinions among the commentators; for some understand it in a figurative sense, and suppose, that the lion, leopard, wolf, &c. denote wicked and violent men, who, by their rapacity, harass and disturb the peaceable part of mankind; but whose brutish and savage dispositions will then be tamed. Others take it in a literal sense, and consider it as a promise of the renewal of what the poets call the golden age, when the wild beasts will grow tame; and serpents, and other poisonous creatures will become harmless; so that all will be peace and harmony. Now, whether we understand it in a literal, or figurative sense, it is plain, that it evidently points out the love and kindness that is then universally to exist; though, I am clearly of opinion, that the prophecy was intended to declare both these purposes,

purposes, by informing us, that not only violence among men would cease, but that the brute creation should also lose their ferocity, and dwell in harmony with the domestic animals*: the venomous creatures likewise, will no more hurt nor destroy; and the reason of this extraordinary and wonderful change immediately follows, "For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD," &c. Whence it is manifest, that universal peace is not only to take place in the days of the Messiah, but that

* That there is nothing impossible, nor even improbable in this, may be clearly perceived from Scripture; for if the Supreme Being, to punish Pharaoh, could command the mixture of ravenous beasts, to come and destroy the land, &c why may he not in the days of the Messiah, when the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, deprive them of their malignity, so that they may no more be hurtful? Indeed, I can see no reason why God should not be able, by his Omnipotence, to effect the one as well as the other. But, what appears to me, decisive in favor of what I have advanced, is, the language of the prophet, "And the lion shall eat straw like an ox." From which it is plain, that this change of nature in the ravenous animals will be real, and in consequence thereof, they are to become harmless. For it is well known, that all such creatures as are of the granivorous kind, are inoffensive; whereas, those of the carnivorous kind, are of voracious, cruel, and sanguinary dispositions; for it is the nature of such food, to engender such dispositions; and this I take to be the reason, that when God gave Noah permission to eat flesh, he said to him, "And surely your blood of your lives will I require, &c" (Gen. ix. 5) This admonition he judged necessary, as a curb to the cruel and sanguinary inclinations, which might probably proceed from their being allowed animal food: and for the same reason, he prohibited the eating of blood, (Gen. ix.) as of a yet more pernicious tendency. The prophet, therefore, in order to convince us, that the change will be real, assures us, that the lion and other carnivorous animals will eat straw like an ox; and thus will become as harmless and inoffensive as those of the granivorous kind.

that the cause of that peace will be, that the whole earth will be filled and illuminated with the knowledge of the LORD: that is, that all will know and acknowledge, and worship the One true God only.

But, let us now pause for a moment, and carefully and attentively examine, whether these great and glorious promises have ever yet been fulfilled: if they have, I, as well as every rational person, must fairly acknowledge, that the person, by means of whose appearance, these wonderful predictions have been accomplished, is truly the Messiah foretold by the prophet. If, on the contrary, we find that, these events have never yet taken place at any time in the world, I presume it must be clear, even to the meanest capacity, that the true Messiah hath never yet appeared.

That these promises were not fulfilled at their return from the Babylonish captivity, nor during the existence of the second Temple, need not be insisted on, as it is so obvious from both sacred and profane history; which is a manifest proof, that that was not the true Redemption, which was to take place in the latter days, i. e. at the time of the Messiah.

That

That the peaceable kingdom of the Messiah, never had existence, either at, or since the promulgation of Christianity, must be evident to every candid and impartial mind, the least acquainted with its history, from about the end of the third century to the present; as it contains little else but divisions, persecutions, bloodshed, massacres, &c. For Christians have not only waded through torrents of the blood of Jews, and other infidels, as they are pleased to call the poor Indians, &c. by persecuting them with fire and sword, and exercising every other cruelty upon them; but have persecuted each other, with such wild fury and rancour, as is scarce credible of human beings, formed in the image of God.

To shew that I have not been guilty of falsehood, or misrepresentation, by too high a colouring of the picture, I shall, in support of what I have advanced, produce the evidence of Christian writers themselves, such, as are said to be orthodox.

The author of the apology of Ben Mordecai, speaking of the divisions among Christians, observes *, “And it was this dispute that gave
rise

* Ben Mordecai, page 6.

“ rise to the prevailing opinions I am now
 “ speaking of, both among us, and the Mahomet-
 “ ans; that Christians in general are Polytheists
 “ and idolaters. This accusation was first begun
 “ by Christians themselves, by way of excuse
 “ for the dreadful persecutions they exercised
 “ against one another; which were followed,
 “ according to the just judgment of God, by the
 “ ruin of the Christian churches in *Asia*; and
 “ the introduction of Mahometism.” He father
 observes *, “ If we look into the ecclesiastical
 “ historians, even from the third century, we
 “ shall find the Christian world to have then had
 “ a very different aspect from what some authors
 “ have represented; and so far from being
 “ endued with active graces, zeal, and devotion,
 “ and established within itself with purity of
 “ doctrine, union, and firm profession of faith;
 “ that, on the contrary, by the ambition of the
 “ clergy, &c. they lost the whole substance of
 “ their religion.”

Dr. Prideaux, speaking of these disturbances
 observes, of the Christians, “ Having drawn the
 “ abstrusest niceties into the controversy, they
 “ did

* Sale's Koran, 33

“ did thereby so destroy PEACE, LOVE, and
 “ CHARITY, among them; that they lost the
 “ whole substance of their religion; and in a
 “ manner drove Christianity quite out of the
 “ world: so that the *Saracens*, taking advantage
 “ of the weakness of power, and the distractions
 “ of councils, which these divisions had caused,
 “ soon over-ran, with a terrible devastation,
 “ all the Eastern provinces of the Roman em-
 “ pire; turned every where their Churches into
 “ Mosques, and their worship into a horrid
 “ superstition; and forced on them that abomin-
 “ able imposture of Mahometism *.” “ The
 “ unhappy contests, which in the fifth century
 “ divided the churches, particularly in the east;
 “ occasioned damages, which Christianity will
 “ never be able to recover. These sects, *viz.*
 “ of the *Nestorians*, and *Eutychians*, partly
 “ from idleness and superstition, and partly
 “ from the particular grudge, envy, and malice,
 “ of the Ecclesiastics, gave the finishing stroke
 “ to mutual forbearance in matters of religion.
 “ From that time, there was nothing to be
 “ seen in the east, but proscriptions, massacres,
 “ and rage †.”

* Prideaux's Life of Mahomet.

† Reland's Four Treatises, page 165 to 169.

He further observes, that “*Etherius* *, a
 “ Bishop of the fifth century, who was per-
 “ secuted for *Nestorianism* says, I pass over
 “ in silence the chains, the prisons, the con-
 “ fiscations, the marks of infamy, the massacres
 “ that call for compassion: the enormity of
 “ which is such, that even those, who had the
 “ misfortune to be witnesses of them, are
 “ scarce able to believe them to be true. All
 “ these tragedies are matters of sport to the
 “ Bishops; among whom, want of bowels passes
 “ for courage: they call their cruelty, zeal;
 “ and they honor their cheats and impostures
 “ with the name of wisdom. In this unhappy
 “ age, monastries endured sieges: they came
 “ to blows in councils; they entered into the
 “ churches with arms; they treated with the
 “ utmost cruelty all those, that were suspected
 “ of favoring opinions, which scarce any body
 “ understood †: not even those who defended
 “ them with the greatest obstinacy and stiffness ‡.
 “ And their contests for preferment were carried
 “ to

* *Etherius Tyanorum Episcopus, inter Opera Theodoretii, Tom. V. page 688.*

§ *Ben Mordecai, Letter K. Note 4. page 82—85.*

‡ *Reland's Four Treatises.*

“ to such a height at *Rome* ; for the Episcopal
 “ seat, by *Damasus* and *Ursicinus*, that there
 “ were no less than one hundred and thirty-
 “ seven killed in one day *. It was on account
 “ of these divisions and cruelties, which tore
 “ the church to pieces, that *Grotius* says, *Qui*
 “ *legit, &c.* He that reads Ecclesiastical history,
 “ what does he meet with but the vices of
 “ the Bishops †. And *Ammianus Marcellinus*
 “ says, no wild beasts are so furious against
 “ men, as the generality of Christians are
 “ against one another. *Nullus infestas homin-*
 “ *ibus bestias, ut sunt sibi ferales expertus ‡.*
 “ An instance or two,” he observes §, of the
 “ fury and barbarity of these times, will give
 “ a better notion of them, than to deal in
 “ generals.”

One of the instances he produces is that
 “ of *Proterius*, Bishop of Alexandria ; who
 “ flying from the people’s rage, got into the Bap-
 “ tistery, a place revered by the Barbarians,
 “ and the fiercest men ; but these furious people,
 “ set on by their Bishop Timothy, (whom they
 “ had

* Sale’s Koran, 33, 44.

§ Ep. xxii. page 1.

† Ben Mordecai, Letter I. page 8.

‡ Lib. 22.

“ had chosen,) neither reverencing the place,
 “ the worship, the time, (which was Easter;)”
 “ nor the office of priesthood, did strike the
 “ blameless man, and kill him cruelly, with
 “ six more; and dragging his wounded carcase
 “ every where, and cruelly drawing it about
 “ through almost all the parts of the city, did
 “ mercilessly beat the senseless corpse, and
 “ divided his parts, and spared not to tear his
 “ entrails with their teeth, like dogs; and,
 “ casting the rest of his body into the fire
 “ they scattered his ashes into the wind, trans-
 “ cending the fierceness of all beasts: and the
 “ architect of this was (their new Bishop)
 “ Timothy *.”

He further observes, “ In this state of con-
 “ fusion and madness among the Christians,
 “ *Arabia* became a secure retreat for those
 “ who were proscribed; and was peopled at
 “ the expence of the *Greek* empire †.”

He then quotes Reland, who says, “ It is
 “ certain, from Christian and Arabian authors;
 “ that, before the preaching of *Mahomet*, the
 “ Christian religion was known in *Arabia*,

“ several

* See Binnius, 147.—Baxter 110.

† Ben Mordecai, Letter I. Page 9.

“ several tribes having embraced it. The Nes-
 “ torians, on one side, whose communion
 “ extended formerly all the way to *China*,
 “ through the Northern provinces of *Asia*;
 “ and the followers of *Euty chius* and *Dioscurus*,
 “ spreading themselves in *Egypt*, *Armenia*,
 “ and *Mesopotamia*, brought over the whole
 “ kingdom of the *Abyssines*; and the whole
 “ kingdom of the *Homorites*, in the South of
 “ *Arabia*, had embraced it. Nevertheless, in
 “ a short time, we saw all these unhappy nations
 “ embrace Mahometism. To what can we
 “ attribute so rapid and general a revolution,
 “ and such success to an imposture; but to
 “ the scandal occasioned by the fatal divisions
 “ of Christians, and the proscriptions and
 “ massacres practised upon one another *.

In another place §, he says, “ The causes,
 “ why *Christianity* has been lost, in several
 “ parts where it was once received; and not
 “ received in others, where it has been preached;
 “ are chiefly these two: first, the corruptions
 “ of its doctrines; and secondly, the wickedness
 “ of its professors.”

1st,

* Reland, page 165 to 169.

§ Ben Mordecai, Letter VII. page 147, &c.

1st, "The corruptions of its doctrines, as
 " *Cyril* relates, was objected to the *Christians*,
 " by the Emperor *Julian*, but a few years
 " after the council of *Nice*, in these words:
 " Your adding to that ancient dead man *Jesus*,
 " many new dead men, who can sufficiently
 " abominate?" And again, "If *Christians* had
 " adhered to the precepts of the *Hebrews*, they
 " would have worshipped one God, instead of
 " many: and not a man, or rather many unhappy
 " men." And he accuses them, that they
 " adored the wood of the cross; making figures
 " of it on their foreheads, and before their
 " houses *. And in the days of *Cyril*, we
 " find, that the Virgin *Mary* was called the
 " Queen of Heaven, and the Mother of God;
 " and so decreed to be in the councils of
 " *Ephesus*, and *Chalcedon*; which are tests of
 " Heresy in *England*: And *Cyril* himself,
 " who is said to have presided at the council
 " of *Ephesus*, made no scruple to call her the
 " complement or supplement of the Holy
 " Trinity: and the *Collyridians* worshipped
 " her as a God; and said there were two God's
 " besides

* Sir Isaac Newton on the Prophecies, page 208.

“ besides the Father; viz. *Christ* and the
“ Virgin Mary *.”

“ And the imposture *Mahomet*, not only
“ objects to the *Christians*, that they associated
“ their Doctors and Monks with Almighty
“ God in their worship: but he also accuses
“ them of corrupting the doctrine of the *Unity*,
“ the fundamental article of all true Religion;
“ by their notions of the *Trinity* §. And it
“ must be confessed; that the *Christians* have
“ at least so far obscured and unsettled this
“ great truth, by the decrees of their councils;
“ that many of the learned, both ancient and
“ modern, have been at a loss to know, whether
“ they worship *one*, or *three*. For, in order to
“ maintain the doctrine of the divine fœcundity,
“ as it was settled at the council of *Nice*; we
“ are told, that God is not *unicus*; (the only
“ God;) but only *unus*, (one God;) that this
“ *Unity* is of so transcendant a nature, as not
“ to come under number †; and that God is
“ not one in *number*, but only in *nature* ||.

“ Other

* Four Treatises, page 174. Epiph. Haer. lxxv. 7. Lib 3. Sale's Koran, page 35.

§ See Letters I. page 6.

† Alix. Jew. Chap. 121. 168.

|| Basil, and Justin Martyr. See Letter I. page 91. These writers meant to oppose the Sabellian notion of *one* numerical substance: by maintaining *three* numerical substances of the same generical nature: as three men are *one* in nature, though *three* in number.

“ Other *Christians*, on the other hand, declare
 “ that God is one, both in *number*, and in
 “ *nature*; one numerical substance, consisting
 “ of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost: which
 “ *Athanasius* and *Epiphanius*, declare to be
 “ *Sabellianism*. Others say; that God is *three*
 “ substances joined together inseparably by an
 “ *Emperichoresis*; and that, if it was not for
 “ this *Emperichoresis*, there would be *three*
 “ God’s; and that no one of them is God, ex-
 “ clusive of the other two: (and, if this be true,
 “ it must follow unavoidably, that, without
 “ this *Emperichoresis*, there would be no God
 “ at all :) and thus the very Being of God,
 “ as well as his *Unity*, is supposed to depend
 “ upon—we know not what—most certainly
 “ upon what does not come under our idea of
 “ necessary existence: and this, we are told by
 “ the learned, was the doctrine of the *Nicene*
 “ council *. But others, in direct opposition
 “ to this, declare; that *every one* of them is
 “ of himself both God and Lord †: which is
 “ condemned by *Athanasius*, *Bull*, *Petavius*,
 “ &c.

* See Letter I. page 82. 124.

Athan. Creed.

“ &c. as being Polytheism. *Athanasius* says,
 “ We do not acknowledge three Hypostasis,
 “ divided, or separate by themselves; that we
 “ may not comply with the Pagan Polytheism *.
 “ And some divines have drawn the line of their
 “ orthodoxy so nicely, as to assert, that the
 “ Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, are *three*, and
 “ every one *distinctly* God; and yet deny that
 “ they are *three*, and every one a *distinct* God †.
 “ These different notions were brought into the
 “ Church, at different times; as the *Sabellian*,
 “ *Athanasian* or *Pseudo-Athanasian* heresies
 “ prevailed; and are all of them established toge-
 “ ther, in some of the *Christian* churches; as if
 “ they were all orthodox, and consistent with
 “ one another. The *first*, by the Council of
 “ *Lateran* ‡; and by the second and fourth
 “ articles agreed upon at *London*, in 1562; and
 “ by the proper preface in the communion ser-
 “ vice for *Trinity* Sunday: the *second* of them,
 “ by making the four first general councils the
 “ tests of heresy §: and the *third*, by the
 “ *Pseudo-*

* See Cudworth, page 614. § Beverage.

† See Letter I. page 119. Note 20.

‡ Blackstone's Comment. Vol. IV. page 49, 50. See also Letter I.
page 32.

“ *Pseudo-Athanasian* Creed: for it seems to be
 “ a kind of infatuation among the *Christians*, if
 “ it does not proceed from mere carelessness;
 “ that there is not one of the *Western Churches*,
 “ but what pretends to follow the faith of
 “ *Athanasius*; and yet they are every one of
 “ them condemned by him, (in their principles)
 “ as *Sabellians*, and *Polytheists*.—The confusion
 “ and uncertainty of the *Christian’s* faith is no
 “ less; when they assert, that there are two per-
 “ sons in the Godhead, co-ëqual and co-ëternal
 “ with the Father; from whom they received
 “ their existence. For, if they mean by this,
 “ that there are three conscious Beings, co-
 “ ëqual and co-ëternal, they must necessarily
 “ mean *three* God’s: and, if they mean One
 “ Supreme God, under three different characters,
 “ they must allow, that the One Supreme God
 “ did suffer pain and death; which is the heresy
 “ of the *Patripassians*:—and, if they mean
 “ unsubstantial characters, or modes of exist-
 “ ence, then they must hold, that it was a
 “ character only, and not a real substantial
 “ Being, that suffered for mankind; and there
 “ can be no medium between a real substance,
 “ and an unsubstantial character, or mode of
 “ existence;

“ existence; and therefore, to speak as some do,
 “ of a character WHO— has no meaning in it;
 “ and is no language. In short, the plain doc-
 “ trine of the *Unity*, viz. that God is One, and
 “ One only *, which ought to be the first article
 “ in every *Christian* Church, has never been
 “ maintained in *any one* of them, without some
 “ reservation or explanation; that has rendered
 “ it as doubtful, as if it had never been as-
 “ serted.”

He further observes §, “ It is a certain fact,
 “ that, while the Christians were employed in
 “ persecuting one another, because they could
 “ not agree in their enquiries into the metaphysical
 “ nature of Almighty God; and the solution
 “ of the above difficulties, and many others of
 “ their own invention, which had filled the
 “ church with unintelligible and contradictory
 “ notions ;

* See Letter I. page 123. Note 28. where he produces the definition of Maimonides. But as that is only for the Latin Reader, I have here subjoined a correct translation from the original Hebrew, in הלכות יסודי התורה i. e. The constitutions of the fundamentals of the law, chap. i. sec. 4. This God is One, and not two, or more than two, but One only; whose Unity is not like that of any other individual that exists in the world: not One in species, which includes several individuals; nor One in body, which is divisible into parts and extremes; but such an Unity, that there is not another unity like it.

§ Letter VII. page 150.

“ notions: the Mahometans, by preaching up
 “ the plain doctrine of the *Unity*, as it was
 “ revealed by Moses; (that God is One, and
 “ One only;) drew over, merely by the force
 “ of this one plain truth, almost all Asia and
 “ Africa to the profession of their Religion.

“ I know, says the Author of “ Reflexions
 “ on Mahometism;” that it is commonly said,
 “ the Religion of *Mahomet* was established by
 “ force of arms; and doing violence to people’s
 “ consciences. But this violence was not such,
 “ as is commonly represented *; and was not
 “ used, for the first twelve years; nor till
 “ after persuasion had gained him a strong party
 “ to support his pretensions. Till that time,
 “ he propagated his Religion by fair means;
 “ so that the whole success of his enterprise,
 “ before his flight to *Medina*, must be attributed,
 “ as Mr. *Sale* observes, to persuasion, and
 “ not to compulsion †; agreeably to what he
 “ declares in the *Koran*, *Let there be no violence*
 “ *in Religion* ‡; though he afterwards practised
 “ it, following the example of the Christians;
 “ who used the same method to propagate, not
 “ only

* Four Treatises, page 170.

† Sale’s *Koran*, 48, 49.

‡ Sale’s *Koran*, chap. ii. page 31.

“ only the *Homoousian* doctrine; but also the
 “ genuine Apostolic Faith, which is generally
 “ misrepresented under the name of *Arianism*;
 “ though held in the Church long before *Arius*
 “ was born.—Besides we find, that some *Tartar-*
 “ *ian* Princes, instructed first by the *Armenians*,
 “ and afterwards by the *Monks*, embraced the
 “ Christian religion; but in a very little time
 “ rejected it, and became *Mahometans*. And,
 “ in 1246, Pope *Innocent IV.* sent an Embassy
 “ to *Bati*, Cham of *Tartary*, inviting him to
 “ the *Christian* Religion; but when the Cham
 “ heard the chief points of the *Christian* Faith,
 “ the Trinity, Incarnation, Transubstantiation,
 “ &c. he thanked the Pope for his kindness, and
 “ promised to make no incursion into the *Christ-*
 “ *ian* countries for five years: but withal de-
 “ clared himself not well satisfied with *Christian-*
 “ *ity*, as it was represented to him: and
 “ immediately after, the *Saracens* sent a like
 “ Embassy to *Bati*; recommending to him
 “ Mahometism, as the more plausible sect;
 “ and these prevailed: *Bati*, and the whole
 “ nation of the *Tartars*, submitting to *Mahomet-*
 “ *ism*; in which they continue to this day *.
 “ And

* Unit. Tracts, Vol. II. page 19.

“ And Mr. *Morgan*, in his history of *Barbary*,
 “ makes the same observation with regard to the
 “ Africans; that they were not reduced from
 “ *Paganism* by mere force of arms, but because
 “ they liked the measures taken by the *Saracens*
 “ to make them relinquish their idolatry, better
 “ than any arguments the Christians could
 “ invent *: and there can be no wonder at this,
 “ when we consider, that the *Christians* were
 “ guilty of idolatry themselves. I will not here
 “ question, says Mr. *Mede*, whether the *Christ-*
 “ *ian* or *Mahometan* be the greater idolator;
 “ though the doubt might soon be resolved:
 “ seeing it is well known that the *Mahometans*
 “ worship no images †.”

“ 2d, Another reason, why Christianity hath
 “ been lost in several parts of the world, where it
 “ was once received; and not received in others
 “ where it was preached, is the wickedness of
 “ the *Christians*, and their continual animosities
 “ and persecutions. And so in *Africa* we are
 “ told, by good authority, that the *Christians*
 “ owed their ruin to themselves: and what made
 “ the *African Moors* so passive, and ready to
 “ fall

* *Morgan's History of Barbary*, page 146, 159, 166.

† *Jes. Mede's Works*, page 725.

“ fall in with the *Mahometans*, was the hope of
 “ ridding themselves of their greatest eye-sore;
 “ the imperious, impiously vicious, insatiably
 “ avaricious, and, consequently, insufferably
 “ tyrannical *Christians* *. And even, with
 “ regard to persecution, for conscience sake,
 “ the same scene of abomination, which began in
 “ *Asia*, was acted over again in *Africa*, with
 “ the same success. The authority of persecut-
 “ ing to blood, was procured from the Emperor
 “ *Honorius*; by four Bishops sent from *Car-*
 “ *thage* to that purpose, A. C. 410. And his
 “ Edicts, comprehended all Dissenters, who
 “ departed ever so little, *vel levi argumento*,
 “ from the established faith †. Thus the Christ-
 “ ians murdered one another, for difference
 “ of opinion; and were severely punished for
 “ all their abominations, by the just judgment
 “ of God.

“ Eusebius considers the persecution under
 “ *Dioclesian* in that light. *Socrates*, speaking
 “ of the first persecution of the *Novatians* at
 “ Rome by Pope *Innocent*, observes, that at
 “ the same instant the *Goths* invaded Italy,
 “ and

• Morgan, as above.

† Sir Isaac Newton on the Prophecies, page 298.

“ and became the lords of all. And, about
 “ seventeen years after the Bishops of *Carthage*
 “ had procured the persecuting edicts from
 “ *Honorius*, the country was invaded by the
 “ *Vandals*, under *Genseric*; where the Christians
 “ had more than seven hundred Bishopricks;
 “ and above five millions of men were des-
 “ troyed: so that *Procopius* observes, it was next
 “ to a miracle to see a man. And afterwards,
 “ when the *Saracens* became masters of *Africa*,
 “ they asserted the same power over the con-
 “ sciences of *Christians*, which the *Christians*,
 “ with no more right or justice, had exercised
 “ before over one another; and those who would
 “ not immediately become *Mahometans*, were
 “ either killed or banished. And indeed, with
 “ what appearance of reason could it be ex-
 “ pected; that the just judgments of God
 “ should fall upon the *Heathens*, for persecuting
 “ the *Christians*; and yet that the *Christians*
 “ should escape them, when they murdered
 “ one another? When any thing happened
 “ unfortunately at *Rome*, in the days of *Nero*,
 “ &c. the immediate cry was, to burn the
 “ *Christians*: and did not the *Christians* act
 “ upon

“ upon the very same principle, when *Nestorius*
 “ declared to the Emperor *Theodosius*; clear
 “ me the Earth of *Heretics*; and I will in
 “ return give you the Kingdom of Heaven:
 “ assist me to destroy the Heretics; and I
 “ will assist you to destroy the Persians? And
 “ what was the consequence of this diabolical
 “ practice afterwards, in the days of *Justinian*;
 “ but the desolation of whole Provinces.”

And a late writer observes *, “ Nothing has
 “ given the world more offence, and cause of
 “ stumbling, than the jars, contradictions,
 “ wrangling, and divisions, among those who
 “ profess to be the disciples of Christ, except
 “ it be their scandalous lives and conversations:
 “ these two things, taken together, have pre-
 “ vented the Heathen, in all ages, from becom-
 “ ing members of the Christian church. And
 “ what has abundantly made the matter worse,
 “ instead of mending it, has been the intolerant
 “ spirit which has prevailed among all sects,
 “ filling them with wrath and hatred against
 “ those who differ from them: and which has
 “ frequently caused them, not only to hate, but
 “ to

* Winchester's Lectures on the Prophecies, Sect. XII. Vol II.
 page 97.

“to persecute and to kill each other. Animosities
“between ministers.--divisions in churches--
“hatred of one sect against another, rising to
“persecution, even to death---and the wicked
“lives of most professors of religion in all
“countries:---all these things conjoined, have
“given such a fatal blow to Christianity in
“the world, that it never can recover 'till
“Jesus comes.”

From the specimens here produced of, the persecutions, divisions, animosities, and the intolerant spirit of Christians, it is clear from all history, that Christianity cannot be the peaceable kingdom of the Messiah, as foretold by the prophet. But, need we the authority of history in proof of this? Have we not the evidence of our own senses? Can any honest impartial person lay his hand on his heart, and declare that, the known world at present enjoys such universal peace; Surely not! On the contrary, do we not find, that war, with all its concomitant horrors, rages at this instant *, in the most dreadful manner between several powerful states, and which, if not soon put an end to, by the interposition of Providence, will probably
involve

* The year 1792.

involve all Europe in the same calamity †? But, can we in reason, expect the effect, when the cause has not yet taken place? Certainly not. And as the prophet has informed us, in language as plain as words can express, that the cause of this universal peace will be, that “the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters *that* cover the *depths* of the sea,” as already mentioned, page 83, 86, it is necessary that we enquire, whether such universal knowledge hath ever yet been poured on ALL the earth: for, unless we can ascertain the existence of the cause, it is in vain to look for the effect. Now, I think, it must appear clear to every person, at least conversant in history, that the cause at no time, ever yet existed: for all the world hath never yet been brought to the *true* knowledge of the LORD. On the contrary, almost the greatest part of mankind, are as yet ignorant of the *true* knowledge of JEHOVAH: for they are either plunged into gross and stupid idolatry, or miserably torn and divided into various factions and opinions concerning the plurality of persons
in

§ Since writing the above, this has actually been the consequence.

in the Godhead, as may be seen in the preceding pages: and it would be the height of madness to look for the effect without the existence of the cause. From all which, it is manifest, that the peaceable kingdom of the Messiah, as foretold by the prophet, hath never existed; but is most certainly to take place, at the coming of the true Messiah, as may be clearly perceived from the conditions above specified.

That Jesus could not be the Messiah, whose peaceable kingdom is here predicted by the prophet, may be fully evinced from the words of Jesus himself. Matth. x. 21. For having given them their mission, and foreseeing the effects of it; namely, that some would believe, and others would not; he says, “And the brother shall deliver up the brother to death: and the father the child: and the children shall rise up against their parents, and cause them to be put to death.” This, is most dreadful, and which may easily account for what he says, in the succeeding verse, “And ye shall be hated of all men for my name’s sake.” No wonder indeed, if they, by their preaching, should occasion such horrid scenes.

In verse 34, he says, “Think not that I am
“ come

“come to send peace on earth: I came not to
 “send peace, but a sword. For I came to set a
 “man at variance against his father, and the
 “daughter against her mother, and the daughter-
 “in-law against her mother-in-law. And a man’s
 “foes shall be they of his own household.” In
 Luke, xii. 49, he says, “I am come to send
 “fire on the earth, and what will I, if it be
 “already kindled?” In verse 51, he says,
 “Suppose ye, that I am come to give peace on
 “earth? I tell you, nay, but rather division.
 “For from henceforth there shall be five in one
 “house divided, three against two, and two
 “against three. The father shall be divided
 “against the son, and the son against the father:
 “the mother against the daughter, and the
 “daughter against the mother: the mother-in-
 “law against her daughter-in-law, and the daugh-
 “ter-in-law against her mother-in-law.” Now,
 what can these words of Jesus mean but this?
 You, says he, speaking to his disciples, &c.
 suppose, according to the prophets, that the
 Messiah’s kingdom is to be a peaceable one, (as
 they actually did, as is clear from several parts
 of the New Testament,) consisting of universal
 peace; consequently, you suppose I am come
 to

to give this peace. But this I tell you plainly, you must not expect of me; for I am so far from giving peace, that on the contrary, I am come to give *a sword, division, &c.* If then the author of Christianity came not to promote “peace on earth, and good will towards men.” An heavenly host of angels, at his birth, proclaimed a lie to deceive a few ignorant shepherds. (Luke ii. 14.) “If, (as a Christian author observes *,) he came to promote dissention, fire, and the sword, of which the world had enough before, he himself had deceived many, by declarations to the contrary. Ambition had, before this, sufficiently corrupted and thinned mankind; but to deluge the world with the blood of fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, wives and children, under pretence of kindness for their souls, was a crime unknown, and reserved, it seems, for the impious followers of a God, whom they proclaimed the God of peace. Had the devil himself schemed a religion to deceive mankind, he could not have inserted a more pernicious tenet. These horrid scenes, painted by a faithful hand, must plant a dagger in the heart
“ of

* Observations on the four Gospels, page 55.

“of humanity.” This plainly shews, that such doctrine could not be inculcated by the Messiah; the characteristic of whose kingdom, was to be universal love and peace.

The eighth condition is, that the nations will all repair to the Messiah, in order to submit to his authority, and be instructed by him; agreeably to what the prophet says, (verse 10th,) “And it shall come to pass in that day, the root of Jesse shall stand * for an ensign to the people; to him shall the nations seek, and his rest shall be glorious.” Here the prophet informs us, that the nations will all seek the Messiah; in order to submit to his government, and instruction: according to what the prophet hath declared elsewhere of the Messiah, Isai. xlii. 4. “Until he hath firmly seated judgment in the earth; and the distant nations shall earnestly wait for his law.” The prophet therefore observes, that “his rest shall be glorious:” that is, according to the idiom of the Hebrew, his rest will be his glory; i. e. his glory will not proceed from his being a warrior, and performing great feats in battle, as is the case of other kings; but in consequence of the rest
and

* Or, Which standeth.

and peace which the world will enjoy in his days; so, that, properly speaking, his quiet, and peaceable disposition, and which will be diffused over all the world, will be the cause of his glory. But, as this condition, hath never yet been accomplished; either at their return from Babylon, or during the continuance of the second Temple; nor yet in the person of Jesus, according to the account we have of him, in the New Testament; it is manifest, that the person here spoken of by the prophet, as the promised Messiah, has not yet made his appearance.

For, I cannot help observing, that the words of the prophet, are very remarkable; and form such a contrast in the character of the Messiah, to that which is recorded in the New Testament of Jesus, as proves, beyond all dispute, that he could not be the person here predicted: for the words of the prophet, are clear, and decisive, to HIM SHALL THE NATIONS SEEK, &c. Thus it is plain, that the nations are to seek him; not he the nations, by his going about teaching, and preaching, and sending out twelve apostles; and commanding them to go, and “preach, saying,
the

the kingdom of heaven is at hand." But which hath never yet been accomplished. No! nothing of this, is mentioned by the prophet: and in truth there will be no necessity for it; as by virtue of the true knowledge of the LORD, which will then be diffused over the whole earth, as above mentioned, they will all be so fully informed of the person and character of the Messiah, that, in consequence thereof, they, of their own accord, will all seek him, his protection, and instruction; without the least necessity on his part, of seeking after them: and which, I am confident, is such an exalted character of the Messiah, as no one that has ever yet appeared, can justly lay claim to; consequently, this prophecy, in all its force, remains to be fulfilled in the person of the true Messiah.

The ninth condition which is to characterize the Messiah is, that he will gather the outcasts of Israel, and collect the dispersed of Judah, from the four extremities of the earth: whom he will form into one kingdom, and reign over, (and which perfectly coincides with what the prophet Ezekiel says, chap. xxxvii. verse 21st to 24th. as will be shewn at large when we come

to treat of that prophecy.) And therefore, the prophet says, verse 11th. "And it shall come to pass in that day, *that* the LORD shall again put forth his hand the second time, to recover the remnant of his people, which shall remain, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinaar, and from Hamath, and from the isles of the sea. And he shall lift up a signal to the nations, and he shall gather the outcasts of Israel; and the dispersed of Judah will he collect, from the four extremities of the earth. And the jealousy of Ephraim shall cease; and the enmity of Judah shall be no more: Ephraim shall not be jealous of Judah; and Judah shall not be at enmity with Ephraim. But they shall invade the borders of the Philistines westward; together shall they spoil the children of the east: on Edom and Moab they shall lay their hand; and the children of Ammon shall obey them.

On this passage, it is necessary to observe, first, that the prophet calls the future redemption, the *second time*, in respect to the redemption from Egypt: for their return from Babylon, was not a perfect redemption, but only

only a slight visitation, as I have already observed in my answer to Dr. Priestley's first Letters to the Jews, page 41, &c. But the future redemption will be entirely conformable to that of Egypt in every respect: more especially, by their perfect conformity with each other in the five following particulars: and which so eminently distinguish the redemption from Egypt, from the return from Babylon.

The first is, that at the redemption from Egypt, the whole nation was redeemed; so that not one remained; but at their return from Babylon, all the twelve tribes did not return; save only a few that went up from Babylon, as mentioned page 33.

Second, at their redemption from Egypt, they were delivered from the most cruel bondage, to the enjoyment of absolute freedom: but this was not the case at their return from Babylon; as they remained in almost continual subjection, either to the Persians, Greeks, or Romans, as mentioned page 34.

Third, when they went forth from Egypt, they attained the highest spiritual felicity, by having the ark of the covenant, the spirit of prophecy, the Urim and Thummim, and the fire from
heaven,

heaven, bestowed upon them : but in the second Temple, all these things were wanting, as mentioned page 35. See also my answer to Dr. Priestley's first Letters to the Jews, page 46, &c.

Fourth, at their redemption from Egypt, a number of great and stupendous miracles were wrought amongst them ; but on their return from Babylon, and during the continuance of the second Temple, there was no such thing ; according to what the prophet says, " We see not our signs," &c. Psalm, lxxiv. 9.

Fifth, When they were brought out of Egypt, and had kings, (except Saul,) they were of the tribe of Judah, as David and Solomon, and their posterity. But during the second Temple, there was no king of the tribe of Judah, or the house of David, as mentioned page 67, 68.

All which is a manifest proof, that the return from Babylon, had not the least semblance to the redemption from Egypt. But the future redemption by the Messiah, will fully resemble it in every instance : for then, all the tribes will be gathered together : and they will be entirely free from subjection ; the spirit of prophecy, and the holy things, will be restored to them ; miracles will again be performed amongst them : and one
from

from the posterity of David, and the root of Jesse, will reign over them. And, as the future redemption, will thus strictly resemble that of Egypt, the prophet very justly calls it, the second time: and which, is also a manifest proof, that the redemption here spoken of is not a spiritual redemption, as several Christian writers pretend; for as the prophet says, that the LORD shall again put forth his hand a *second time* to recover the remnant of his people, &c. it is plain, that those only who had been already once before redeemed by God, could be the subject of the prophecy: and who are they, but the temporal Israel, who have been carried into captivity, and are at this present time, dispersed into the four extremities of the earth; and not the spiritual Israel, as Christians are pleased to call themselves.

And, here, I must once for all, observe that, *all* the prophecies which speak of the coming of the Messiah, the restoration and redemption of the nation, are to be understood, in the most plain, obvious, and literal sense, and not in a spiritual and mystical sense, as the generality of Christians attempt to explain them. For can any thing be more absurd, than to explain

explain the prophecies which foretel the calamity which is to befall them, in a literal sense; and those which speak of their future felicity, in a spiritual and mystical sense; surely not. And it is not a little pleasant, to observe, the great kindness of Christians towards us in this respect: for they are extremely ready and willing to grant us the entire, and undisturbed possession of all the evils foretold us; which indeed, we have fully experienced for upwards of seventeen hundred years; whilst they, with equal generosity, apply to themselves, all the glorious promises, which, with equal certainty, predict our future happiness in the latter days. This, is kind indeed! and for which, I am sorry to say, our nation in general, and myself in particular, are not quite so thankful, as perhaps might be expected of us: for truth, divine truth! steps in, and prevents our acceptance of these applications, by teaching us, that as all the prophecies of our future restoration, are so clear, and so generally accompany, or allude to, our past and present misfortunes; it is morally impossible to apply them to any other persons, but such as have suffered the misfortunes so foretold. This, is also clearly proved from the words of the prophet Jeremiah, as mentioned page 58.

But, as there are several Christian writers, who although they acknowledge that the prophecies concerning the Messiah, are to be understood in their most literal and obvious sense, and that of course, the good they promise is temporal; yet, nevertheless, contend, that these glorious promises are to be fulfilled at the second coming of Jesus, when he is to reign a thousand years on earth with the saints: I must observe, that for this, they have no authority from the prophecies of the Old Testament. Nay, I am confident, they cannot produce one single, clear, unequivocal prophecy from the Old Testament, which foretels a two-fold coming of one and the same person as the Messiah; and that, too, at the distance of such a number of years as have already elapsed from the supposed period of his being on earth: whence it is manifest, that the whole scheme of the millenium, is a mere chimera, an *ignis fatuus*; notwithstanding all the noise and pother that has been made about it.

According to what I learn from a Christian writer of great note *, it was only hatched, in order to bring over the Jews to embrace
Christianity;

* Basnage's History of the Jews, Chap. xxxiv. Sect. 14, page 751.

Christianity : for he observes, “ A great man has
“ fancied, that the best expedient was, to flatter
“ their hopes. To be always telling the Jews *
“ of a Messiah that is come, and was crucified
“ by their fathers, is cruelly to upbraid them,
“ and cast them into despair. People seldom
“ will attend to a harsh and unwelcome truth,
“ and the mind that has nothing to hope is easily
“ discouraged. It is a more sure and acceptable
“ method, to tell them of the second coming of
“ the son of God, than of the first, because
“ that which is past, has afforded them nothing
“ but misery and shame. The second must be
“ glorious, and procure wonderful prosperity
“ to the church. The Jews must have their
“ share in it as well as we; why then should
“ they not be flattered with so pleasing an
“ expectation, and so agreeable to their preju-
“ dices? Under this view it has been attempted
“ to demonstrate, by the explication of the
“ prophecies, that the second coming of the
“ Messiah is at hand. There are only thirty-five
“ years to come of the 1260 mentioned by
“ *Daniel*

* De Messia duplici adventu Diff-duæ contra Judæos, 1701.

“ *Daniel* *; and if we reckon lunar years, after
 “ the manner of the Chaldeans, as *Daniel* did,
 “ who lived in this country, this event must
 “ be accomplished in the year 1716.”

He further observes, “ This method appears
 “ so much the more necessary, as that without
 “ it the prophecies of the Old Testament are
 “ imagined to be false and delusive. Let them
 “ tell us, in short, says a famous author §.
 “ What are the blessings the Jewish nation
 “ have received from the Messiah. For near
 “ two thousand years this miserable nation has
 “ been scattered over the earth. It is the off-
 “ scouring, the curse, the refuse of the world;
 “ and it groans under a long and cruel captivity.
 “ So that this will happen; the day of judg-
 “ ment will come, and the Jews will perish
 “ in their miseries! If this be so, certainly
 “ all the prophecies are delusions. The Holy
 “ Spirit has deceived this nation; all the oracles
 “ are false, and God has fed them with vain
 “ hopes; for it would be mocking God and
 “ ourselves to say, that these promises were
 “ accomplished

* So much for the Christians fallacious calculation of the 1260 days;
 and which is in perfect union with their explication of the seventy weeks.

§ Jurieu's Prophecies, Tom. II. page 205, 206, 207.

“ accomplished in that small number of Jews
 “ that were converted to Christianity; Jewish
 “ Christians, such wretched Christians, that they
 “ have only served to found a miserable heresy
 “ and sect, which they call *Ebionites* and *Naza-*
 “ *renes*. It will be said, doubtless, that the
 “ Jews shall find these great promises ac-
 “ complished, by their return and recall at
 “ the end of the world. And indeed, it is one
 “ of the doctrines of true Christianity, that
 “ the Jews shall be recalled. It is promised
 “ in a thousand prophecies, some of which
 “ we have quoted; the miraculous manner
 “ of God’s preserving this nation, in my
 “ mind is an invincible proof of it. For, in
 “ fine, it is an unprecedented and incomprehen-
 “ sible thing, that God, for two thousand
 “ years, should preserve this people dispersed
 “ among the other nations, without learning
 “ their manners, their religions and customs,
 “ as is usual with all dispersed people. This
 “ clearly demonstrates, that God preserves
 “ them for some great design. But pray,
 “ supposing this, that the Jews shall be con-
 “ verted immediately after the end of the world
 “ comes, and they shall neither possess
 “ in

“ in themselves, nor in their posterity, the
“ glorious advantages that are promised them,
“ how shall they see the effect and accomplish-
“ ment of so many prophecies: Behold in-
“ numerable millions of Jewish souls, that
“ have been lost in the space of seventeen
“ hundred years; a small number only of this
“ people shall be saved in the last years of
“ the world. In the name of God, is this
“ sufficient to fill up the great ideas that are
“ raised in them by the mighty promises to
“ their nation? Moreover, it must be ob-
“ served, that the Messiah belongs to the
“ Jews; that he was promised to the Jews;
“ that this nation, from its infancy, has been
“ fed with the hopes of this Messiah’s coming,
“ as of an happiness, so great as could not
“ be expressed, or described. Behold him
“ come, and this nation, instead of the accom-
“ plishment of these great promises, sees its
“ Temple burnt, its capital city razed, its
“ worship abolished, its children dispersed over
“ all the universe, and made the execration and
“ contempt of mankind. And so this Messiah,
“ the glory of the nation, brings them nothing
“ but shame and confusion, and infinite
“ miseries,

“ miseries, such as have no example in all
“ the rest of the world. For all their re-
“ compence, some thousand Jews shall be
“ found at the end of the world, who shall be
“ converted, and shall not be damned. I
“ must own, that I understand nothing of the
“ conduct of God and his oracles, if this be
“ so. A time then must come, which shall
“ be the reign of the Messiah and the Jews,
“ in which, this nation shall be exalted, as
“ has been promised above all the nations,
“ and it shall reign by its saints, its prophets
“ and apostles. For otherwise, I am bold
“ to say, that all the prophecies made to this
“ people were delusive, and were only given
“ them for a snare.”

Such, then, is the scheme of the millenium,
on which I shall only observe, that it fully
establishes my position, viz. that the pro-
phecies which foretel our good, are all
temporal, as were those which denounced our
punishment; and of course belong to one
and the same people: for they acknowledge,
first, that otherwise the prophecies of the
Old Testament, would be false and delusive.

Second,

Second, That we have received no benefit from the Messiah, said to be already come.

Third, That these prophecies were not accomplished by the Jewish converts to Christianity, in the time of Jesus and the Apostles; for their number was so small and insignificant, that as the author abovementioned justly observes, they only served to found a miserable heresy, and which fully confirms what I have observed in my second Letters to Dr. Priestley, on the little effect which the mission of Jesus wrought on the Jewish nation in general: and, as they freely acknowledge.

Fourth, That the Messiah belongs to the Jews, it must astonish every impartial, candid, and liberal mind, when it considers how inefficacious his appearance was to them. For it is clear from all history, that he was so far from being endued with the power of bestowing on them the good they had just reason to expect from the prophecies of the Old Testament, by accomplishing the great promises made to them; that they on the contrary a few years after, according to the prediction of Daniel, saw their Temple burnt, their chief city destroyed, and their country laid waste, &c. so that

that it is plain, he brought them nothing but misery and shame, and which is a demonstration that he could not be the Messiah. Of this, a number of Christian writers being fully convinced, formed the ridiculous scheme of the millenium, in order to sooth the Jews, and win them to Christianity, by holding out the glorious condition of the second advent of Jesus; but for which, as I have already observed, there is not the least foundation in the prophecies of the Old Testament.

Second, That God will redeem the whole nation, as already mentioned: for by the outcasts of Israel, he meant the ten tribes called the kingdom of Israel, who were all cast out together to one place, and did not return to the second Temple, as did those of Judah and Benjamin, whom he calls the dispersed of Judah; because, they are dispersed in the four extremities of the earth: all these, without exception, the prophet observes, the LORD will collect and gather together. He also informs us of the strict union of the nation, which is then to take place; so that there will be no more jealousy, or enmity amongst them, as there was heretofore, on account of the division
of

of the kingdom: for it was that which was the cause of jealousy on the one part, and enmity on the other: but as they will all be united and formed into one kingdom: under one Prince *, their jealousy and enmity will cease of course; and being thus united, will invade the borders of the Philistines, spoil the children of the east, and finally subdue Edom, Moab, and Ammon: for these are properly the Kenite, Kenizzite, and Kadmonite, which were promised to Abraham, but whose country the children of Israel did not inherit, when they came out of Egypt, as mentioned in the prophecy of Balaam; but which they will possess at the coming of the Messiah: and which is a manifest proof that this condition has never yet been accomplished; for the nation, has never since the division of the kingdom under Rehoboam, been thus united, nor have they possessed the land of Edom, Ammon, and Moab, as shewn at large page 20.

That this condition remains to be fulfilled is acknowledged by some of the most eminent learned Christian divines: and Doctor Lowth, Bishop of London, in particular, in his notes to his
new

* *Ezek.* xxxvii. 22.

prophecy, will appear very plain, if we attend to verse 14th of chapter xvii. "At the season of evening, behold terror! before morning, he is no more! This is the portion of those that spoil us; and the lot of those that plunder us." Now, as the prophet has in this verse forcibly depicted the destruction of Sennacherib and his numerous host, it is very properly connected with that under consideration, because Cush, and all the country beyond the rivers of Cush, were anciently, as the learned Abarbanal observes, part of the empire of Sennacherib: the prophet therefore, by this connection informs us, that the destruction of Sennacherib will be so well known in the world to the remotest period of time, that when the redemption of the Jews shall take place, and those nations hear of their salvation, they will instantly send ambassadors to them in ships, in order to court their favor, and enter into friendship with them, dreading, lest it should happen to them, as it did to Sennacherib. This being premised, we shall proceed to the explanation of the prophecy itself.

"Ho!

“Ho! to the land shadowing *with* * wings, beyond the rivers of Cush: which sendeth ambassadors on the sea; and in vessels of reeds, on the face of the waters. Go, ye swift messengers, to a nation scattered and peeled: to a people terrible from that day forward; a nation strong in faith, though trodden down, whose land the rivers have spoiled.” The prophecy now begins to unfold itself to us: for here, we have an account of those who send the messengers, and the nation to whom the messengers are sent: and indeed, a more perfect description of any thing cannot be given, than is this of the Jewish nation: for what nation hath been so scattered and peeled as the Jews, whose land hath been spoiled by the rivers? a beautiful figure to denote the different

* The reason that the Prophet calls it the land shadowing with wings, appears to me, to be either on account of the great number of trees which grew on the banks of the great rivers there, as Abarbanal observes; and thus also the vessels of reeds or canes which answer to the Indian canoes, &c. Or as Jonathan explains it in his paraphrase **ארעא דאתן לה בספינן מארע רחיקא וקלעיהון פריסן כנשרא דטאם בכנפיהי דמעבר לנהרי הודו**. A country unto which they come in ships from a distant land, and their sails are spread as the eagle that flieth with its wings, which is on the other side of the rivers of India.

different monarchies which at different times have had dominion over them and their country : but who are to become terrible from the coming of the Messiah ; for the proper sense of מן הוֹיָא according to the idiom of the Hebrew, where the ellipsis is so frequently obliged to be supplied, is, as if written מִיּוֹם הַהוּיָא *from that day* : i. e. the time of the Messiah : for by reason of the great and stupendous miracles that will be wrought in their favor ; their restoration after so many hundred years of degradation and persecution ; their glory and exaltation ; they will become terrible to all other nations ; agreeable to what Moses says, “ And all the people of the earth shall see that thou art called by the name of the LORD, and they shall be afraid of thee.” Deut. xxviii. 10. And the prophet still farther describes the praise of the nation, by saying, “ A nation strong in faith, though, trodden down ; whose land the rivers have spoiled.”

Notwithstanding all the persecutions they have suffered, and the different conquerors to whom they and their land have been subject, they yet nevertheless, always stedfastly hoped for the salvation of the LORD : and I am confident,

confident, that a stronger picture of the constancy of the nation, for which they are almost proverbial, and are therefore called by Christians, blind, and obstinate, cannot be drawn; for notwithstanding they have been imposed upon by several impostures, or false Messiah's, and have on that account suffered the most dreadful persecutions and massacres, yet, have they never swerved from the hope of seeing the LORD's salvation, i. e. the coming of the true Messiah: for which reason, they are also very properly called, "Prisoners of hope." (Zech. ix. 12.) Because, in the captivity, they are as prisoners who continually hope to be released. All which, is a manifest proof of the truth of the explanation here given: for I am clearly of opinion that **קו קו** here used by the prophet, is derived from the verb **קוה** *to hope*: and is used in the same sense as, **ויקו לעשות ענבים** And he hoped, that it should bring forth grapes. (Isai. v. 2.) Or, **ויקו למשפט** And he looked for judgment. (Ibid. vii.) This sense, is perfectly consistent with the context; a nation strong in faith, &c. as above shewn.

The prophet then proceeds, verse 3d. "Yea,
all

all ye that inhabit the world, and that dwell on the earth, when the standard is lifted up on the mountains, behold! and when the trumpet is sounded, hear!" The prophet here informs us, that this movement, (the end and purport of which, we are made acquainted with in verse 7th) will not be beyond the rivers of Cush only; but will also take place in all parts of the world, when the LORD shall lift up his standard, and cause his trumpet to be heard; and which perfectly coincides with what the prophet says, chap. ii. verse 2d. and 3d. "And it shall come to pass in the latter days," &c. And with what the prophet Zephaniah says, "For I will then turn the people to a pure language, that they shall all of them call upon the name of the LORD, to serve him with one consent. From beyond the rivers of Cush, Atharee, and the daughter of Putsee shall bring mine offering." Whence also, it is manifest, that what the prophet says here concerning the land shadowing *with wings*, and in verse 7th. "At that time &c." is the self same event as that prophecied of by Zephaniah; and that the offering that is to be brought, is the same in both places: viz. the
nation

nation of the Jews from all the places where they have been scattered.

Before we proceed, it will be necessary for the better illustration of the prophecy under consideration, to enquire, what the prophet meant by the standard and trumpet, which is to be seen and heard all over the world: for it is not to be supposed that this can be understood in a literal sense: because, it is scarcely credible that such an event can ever take place, viz. that a standard should be lifted up, and a trumpet sounded, that should be seen and heard in every part of the globe. And which I suppose, led Bishop Lowth to remark on this passage, "I take God to be the agent in this verse; and that by the standard and the trumpet are meant the meteors, the thunder, the lightning, the storm, the earthquake, and tempest, by which Sennacherib's army shall be destroyed. (Lowth's notes on Isaiah.) But nothing can be farther from the true sense of the prophet's meaning. And as a late writer * observes on this note of the Bishop's, "But it is more probable that the verse hath no relation to those circumstances.

* A new Translation of Isaiah, with supplementary notes to those of Dr. Lowth, by a Layman.

circumstances." This indeed, is the real state of the matter, and that not of this verse only, but of the whole chapter: for great part of his translation, and the whole of the comment on this prophecy, is wild, distorted, unconnected, and disjointed, on account of its supposed obscurity; at the same time that the sense of the pure Hebrew is wrested (to accommodate it to his system) to the Chaldee and Syriac: so that a real Hebraist, perfectly acquainted with the idiom and phraseology of the prophetic language, who is able to enter into the true spirit of the prophecy, can scarcely forbear smiling, to see what pains hath been taken, to render that unintelligible, that in itself is not so; as may be clearly perceived, by a due attention to the explanation here given: and according to which, the real sense of the prophecy, denotes the resurrection of the dead, which is to take place at the coming of the Messiah: for that is the standard that is to be seen, and the trumpet that is to be heard: for by the sight of those who rise, and the report which they will make of the truth of revelation, and the Unity of God, &c. all mankind will be brought to the true knowledge of the LORD.

And,

And, as the resurrection will be universal, in all parts of the globe, the prophet says, "All ye that inhabit the world, and that dwell on the earth," &c. He then speaks of his own resurrection, by observing, "For thus hath the LORD said unto me, I shall be at rest, and look towards my habitation." For by the expression *to me*, the prophet meant himself: as it properly denotes the same, as concerning me. And here the prophet informs us, God had told him that he should die and be at rest from the turbulence and violence of this world; for death is, properly speaking, true rest; and therefore Job, speaking of death, said, "For now I should have lain still, and been quiet." (Job, iii. 13.) But that after his death, he should look towards his habitation; that is, his body: for the body is the habitation of the soul on earth, to which he will look, in hopes of a reunion at the time of the resurrection: but this union, he informs us, will not be as the natural union of the soul and body in infants, who are obliged to be reared, and taught, &c. but that it will be "Like the clear heat after rain, like a cloud of dew in the heat of harvest." For when the sun is clear and
pure

pure after a gentle rain, its effects are highly beneficial to the vegetable world: by which he acquaints us, that the body, which is the patient, will be in as fit a state to receive the soul, which is the agent, as the earth after a gentle rain, is to receive the pure heat of the meridian sun, and with equal benefit. By this metaphor, he has given us to understand, that man will then rise in a perfect state. As the prophet in another place, (Isai. xxvi. 19) compares the resurrection to dew, he here observes, "Like a cloud of dew in the heat of harvest." And as the distillation of the dew must be very beneficial, and highly acceptable in that warm season of the year, so will the resurrection be (but in an infinitely greater degree) to mankind in general: and by which figure, he also seems to allude to the mode of the resurrection.

It is also worthy of remark, that as the prophet Isaiah has compared the resurrection to the heat of the sun, &c. so hath the prophet Malachi, in speaking of the resurrection, and the day of judgment, said, "For behold, the day cometh, which shall burn as a furnace,
&c.

&c. But unto you that fear my name, shall the sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings." Which sun of righteousness, is to consume the wicked, and bring salvation to the just. He then informs us, when this stupendous miracle of the resurrection, is to take place, in these words, "For before the harvest, when the bud is perfecting, and the blossom is becoming a swelling grape." Before the end and destruction of the world, while the Jewish nation, whom he prefigures by the bud, is yet in captivity, and before their destruction can be perfected by their enemies and persecutors, the reward of the righteous will appear; which he aptly describes, by the blossom becoming a swelling, (or more properly ripening) grape: for the participle נִמְלֵךְ is derived from the Radix נָמַל, *to reward*: so that the real meaning of the expression is, that before the nation shall be swallowed up, the reward will bloom forth for the righteous of the nation: but as for the wicked, and those who were their enemies and persecutors, he observes, "He shall cut off the shoots with pruning hooks, and the branches he shall cut down, and cast away.

They

They shall be left together to the rapacious birds of the mountains, and to the *wild* beasts of the earth; and the rapacious birds shall abhor it; and every wild beast of the earth shall despise it."

By this figure, is represented the entire destruction of the wicked, both high and low, rich and poor, so that their power and government will be totally annihilated: and they be left to the rapacious birds and beasts, who will also loath them: so that they will be cast abroad upon the face of the earth: agreeable to what this prophet hath declared elsewhere, chap. lxvi. verse 24. "And they shall go forth and shall see, the carcasses of the men, who rebelled against me: for their worm shall not die, and their fire shall not be quenched; and they shall be an abhorrence to all flesh." Thus, will all the birds and beasts on account of the extraordinary stench and corruption fly from, and loath them. So that they will remain upon the earth as a standing monument of God's justice and vengeance for their enormous crimes.

And, as the resurrection will take place at, or near the restoration of the nation, the prophet

prophet says, " At that time shall a gift be brought to the LORD of Hosts." For this refers to the land shadowing *with* wings mentioned verse 1st. for it is from thence that the present is to be brought: and he farther informs us, what the present is, that is to be brought, " A nation scattered and pealed; and of a nation terrible from that day forward; a nation strong in faith, though trodden down, whose land the rivers have spoiled: to the place of the name of the LORD of Hosts, to Mount Zion." For it is there, that the glory of the Lord of Hosts will be manifested; as the prophet says, (chap. ii. verse 2d. and 5th.) O house of Jacob, come ye, and let us walk in the light of the LORD." And as he hath said elsewhere, " And they shall bring all your brethren from all the nations, for an oblation to the LORD." (Chap. lxvi. verse 20th.)

This explanation of the prophecy, at once removes all the obscurity, and other difficulties which Bishop Lowth imagined he found in it; so that the whole, appears regular and connected, not only with itself, but also with the three last verses of the preceding chapter, which contains a description of the invasion, and the sudden

sudden overthrow of Sennacherib, as I have above shewn, and which the Bishop himself acknowledges: for in his notes on these three verses, he observes, "The last verses of this chapter seem to have no relation to the foregoing prophecy, to which they are joined." It is a beautiful piece, standing by itself; for neither has it any connection with what follows: whether it stands in its right place or not, I cannot say. It is a noble description of the formidable invasion, and of the sudden overthrow of Sennacherib, which is intimated in the strongest terms and the most expressive images; exactly suitable to the event."

From the words of the Bishop here quoted, it is clear, that he acknowledges, that these verses, describe the invasion and overthrow of Sennacherib; and which is all the use I intended to make of it; for if this is allowed, their connection with the prophecy under consideration, will appear natural and unaffected; and will fully establish the truth of my position beyond dispute. I cannot however, help observing, that by this confession, the Bishop confutes his own hypothesis: for if these verses have no connection with what follows,

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(as he observes) how can he apply the prophecy under consideration to the Egyptians? more especially, as in his notes on verses 3d. 4th. and 7th. he observes, that the standard and trumpet denote the meteor, the thunder, the lightning, &c. by which Sennacherib's army shall be destroyed. And that the gift is, from, the Egyptians to Hezekiah, because they were very nearly interested in the miraculous deliverance of that kingdom by the destruction of the Assyrian army. To me, and I trust to every candid and impartial mind, it must appear inexplicable.

I have now only to observe, that according to my explication, it is manifest, that the end and purport of the prophecy, has never yet been fulfilled, either at their return from the Babylonish captivity, or at the coming of Jesus: for history does not inform us, that at any time such an universal resurrection took place: much less that in consequence thereof, the children of Israel were brought from beyond the rivers of Cush to the place of the name of the LORD of Hosts, to mount Zion, as a gift or present. Whence it is clear, that the prophecy remains still to be accomplished at the coming of the true Messiah.

The fourth prophecy commences at verse 16th. chap. xxivth. and is continued to verse 6th of chap. xxvi. in which, the prophet meant to inform us first, of the restoration of the nation: and by the manner which he ushers it in, seems, as if he said, I see it, but not now; I view it, but it is not near; "From the uttermost parts of the earth." Towards the end of the world, in the latter days, the nations will say, "We have heard songs, glory to the righteous." To the righteous nation, and the true Messiah. But if ye ask me, (says he) when this will be, I cannot tell ye; for I say, "It is a secret with me: it is a secret with me;" agreeable to what Moses said, (Deut. xxxvi. 34.) and as was said to Daniel, (xii. 9.) But, (proceeds the prophet) this I will inform you of, that before the redemption and salvation will take place, great trouble and afflictions will befall the nation; for, first, "Wo is me, the plunderers plunder," Meaning those who destroyed the nation, and the land of promise: but these will again be destroyed by others, as was the case of the Babylonians, the Persians, the Greeks, and the Romans; and therefore, he
observes,

observes, "Yea the plunderers, in succession, continue their cruel depredations." And he farther informs us, secondly, that those who were any ways instrumental in the destruction of the nation, will all receive their due reward, as he says, verse 17th. "The terror, the pit, and the snare, are upon thee, O inhabitant of the land: And it shall be, that whoso fleeth from terror, he shall fall into the pit; and whoso escapeth from the pit, he shall be taken in the snare." And all this (he observes) will be, by the immediate interposition of Divine Providence. "For the flood gates from on high are opened; and the foundations of the earth tremble. The land is grievously broken; the land is utterly shattered to pieces; the land is violently moved out of her place; the land reeleth to and fro like a drunkard, and shall be removed like a lodge for a night; for her iniquity lieth heavy upon her; and she shall fall and rise no more." The prophet, in these verses, points to the destruction of the four monarchies; for by the land being grievously broken, the Babylonian empire is typified; and by its being utterly shattered to pieces, the Persian empire is

is delineated; and by its being violently moved out of its place, the Grecian empire is denoted: and by the land reeling to and fro, &c. the Roman empire is depicted: and whose iniquity is so heavy, that she is doomed to fall, and rise no more. He also informs us, thirdly, that at the time of the redemption, "God will summon on high the host that is on high; and on earth the kings of the earth: And they shall be gathered together, who are bound in the pit, and closely imprisoned in prison: and after many days they shall be visited. And the moon shall be confounded, and the sun shall be ashamed: for the LORD of hosts shall reign, on Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem: and before his antients shall be glory." By the sublime figurative language in these verses, the prophet informs us of, the great and extraordinary revolution that is to take place in the world at the restoration of the Jews, who are now as prisoners bound in the prison of captivity: and who are to be visited, after many days, and gathered together: when all false worship, whether of the heavenly bodies, heroes, or
dead

dead men, is wholly to cease: because the LORD alone will be King over all the earth; agreeable to what the prophet Isaiah says, chap. ii. verse 17, 18. "And the pride of man shall bow down; and the height of mortals shall be humbled; and the LORD alone shall be exalted in that day: and the idols shall totally disappear, when they shall all go into caverns, &c." But, before his antients shall be glory; that is, the antients of his people Israel, and not the antients of any other people.

The prophet, having thus prophecied the future restoration of the nation, the punishment of their enemies, and the total subversion of all false worship, breaks out in rapturous exclamation, "O LORD! thou art my God: I will exalt thee: I will praise thy name: for thou hast effected wonderful things; counsels of old time, promises immutably true." In this verse, the prophet praises God for the accomplishment of the prophecies foretold by the prophets; and which he emphatically calls, "counsels of old time," because it is a long, long time, since they have been delivered; but nevertheless, they are "promises immutably

immutably true." He then descends to the particulars contained in those prophecies. The first of which is, the punishment of the enemies of the Jews as in verse 2d. "For thou hast made the city an heap: the strong fortified citadel, a ruin: the palace of the proud ones, that it shall be no more a city; that it shall never be built up again." And, as those which remain of the nations will by those things be brought to the true faith, he observes, verse 3d. "Therefore shall the fierce people glorify thee; the city of the formidable nations shall fear thee." Those who have been so fierce and cruel to the nation, will then glorify and praise the LORD; for they will then not only see the accomplishment of their own punishment, as foretold, but will also find, that the preservation of the Jewish nation, during so long and dreadful a captivity, was fully verified, as predicted by the prophets. "For thou hast been a defence to the needy in his distress: a refuge from the storm; a shadow from the heat: when the blast of the formidable rages like a winter storm." In this verse, the prophet shews, that notwithstanding all the furious rage of the most powerful nations was directed

directed against this people, yet, God shielded and protected them in such an extraordinary manner, that they were not able, by any means whatever, to destroy them, although they earnestly sought it: but for which, God would nevertheless punish them severely; as he says, verses 5th and 6th. "As the heat in a parched land, the tumult of the proud shalt thou bring low; as the heat by a thick cloud, the triumph of the formidable shall be humbled. For the LORD God of Hosts shall make, for all the people, in this mountain, a feast of fat things, a feast of wine on the lees: of delicacies exquisitely rich, of wines on the lees perfectly refined." The prophet here informs us, that the punishment of the nations will be on the holy mountain, agreeable to what the prophet Obadiah says, i. 16. "For as ye have drunken upon my holy mountain, all the nations round shall drink." And that God will give them such strong rich wine to drink, that they will be perfectly drunk and stupified; and which denotes their total destruction.

He then says, verse 7th. "And this mountain shall he destroy, the covering, that covered the face of all the people; and the veil that
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that was spread over all the nations." By the covering and the veil, he clearly points to the erroneous doctrines and opinions, which have been maintained and inculcated by the different nations, in opposition to the true word of God: and which operated as a covering or veil, and prevented their seeing the light of truth. But this covering will be destroyed; for (as I have already observed) by the restoration of the nation, &c. they will all be brought to the knowledge of the one true God.

He then proceeds to inform us of the happiness of the nation, at their restoration. "And he will utterly destroy death for ever." That is, all violent death; such as the nation had suffered from their enemies during this long and dreadful captivity: and thereby, "The LORD God will wipe away the tear off from all faces; and the reproach of his people shall he remove from off the whole earth; for the LORD hath spoken it." For on the restoration of the nation, the reproach cast upon them by Christians, &c. that the LORD had cast them off, and made choice of the Gentiles, instead of them, will be entirely removed; and the consequence of this great and glorious change will be, that,
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“In that day, the nation will say: behold, this is our God; we have trusted in him, and he hath saved us: this is JEHOVAH: we have trusted in him; we will rejoice, and triumph in his salvation.” This is our God: our living and ever existing God, in whom we trusted, in spite of the numerous dreadful afflictions heaped upon us by our enemies for our constancy; but we still persevered; we trusted in his great name; and he hath not deceived us; for he hath saved us, and caused us to rejoice in his salvation. He then continues his description of the punishment of the nations, and the salvation of Israel. “For the hand of the LORD shall rest upon this mountain; and Moab shall be threshed in his place, as the straw is threshed for the dunghill. And he shall stretch out his hands in the midst thereof, as he that swimmeth, stretcheth out his hands to swim: and he shall bring down their pride with the sudden gripe of his hands; and the bulwark of thy high walls shall he lay low; he shall bring them down to the ground; he shall lay them in the dust.” In this manner, the prophet shews the dreadful destruction that is to come on the nations in the latter days; for it is not only
Moab

Moab that is to be thus destroyed, but also all those who oppressed the nation; but the prophet mentions Moab, as being one of those, of whose great pride he had already spoken, chap. xvi. 6. and who was also one of the nations that were to be finally subdued by the Jews in the days of the Messiah: and therefore, having shewn their utter destruction, he in chapter xxvith. informs us, that the very reverse will be the case of the Jews at that time: for, "In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah; we have a strong city; *God* will establish salvation for *its* walls and bulwarks; open ye the gates, and let the righteous nation, constant in the truth, enter. Thou shalt preserve, in perpetual peace, those whose mind is stayed on thee, because they have trusted in thee." And as the prophet in these words, has shewn that their future happiness will in a great measure be owing to their trust and confidence in Divine Providence; he admonishes them to be careful to continue stedfast in that conduct, and to put their sole trust in God, by saying, "Trust ye in the LORD for ever; for in the LORD is never-failing protection." For, "He hath humbled those that dwell on high; the

the lofty city, he hath brought down: he hath brought her down to the ground: he hath levelled her with the dust. The foot shall trample upon her: the feet of the poor, the steps of the needy." For God will not only punish all those who persecuted his chosen people, but will also subject them to them: and which is what the prophet means by saying, that the feet of the poor, and the steps of the needy, shall trample upon the proud city, &c. for the Jewish nation, it is acknowledged on all hands, is well known by that appellation, as being the outcasts upon earth, not having any country of their own. From all which, I presume it is manifest that the promises, contained in this prophecy, viz. the restoration and happiness of the nation, after a long series of misfortunes; and the punishment of their enemies, hath never been fulfilled by Jesus; of course, he could not be the Messiah as foretold by the prophets, who was to accomplish these things.

Before I quit this prophecy, I have one observation to make; which is, that Bishop Lowth, in his notes on the xxvth chapter of Isaiah, observes, "It doth not appear to me, that

that this chapter hath any close and particular connexion with the chapter immediately preceding, taking separately and by itself. The subject of that was the desolation of the land of Israel and Judah, by the just judgment of God, for the wickedness and disobedience of the people: which taken by itself, seems not, with any propriety, to introduce a hymn of thanksgiving to God for his mercies to his people in delivering them from their enemies." But this remark of the Bishop's, plainly shews that, he did not understand the prophecy, neither was he able to enter into the spirit of the language of the prophet: for, according to the real sense of it, as here explained, there is a very close and particular connexion between the latter part of the xxivth chapter, and the xxvth. For what can be more natural, than for the prophet to introduce a hymn of thanksgiving to God, for the restoration of his people, and the punishment of their enemies. Indeed, nothing could be introduced with greater propriety, than such an hymn, which praises God for the accomplishment of prophecies delivered

so many centuries back, that he very justly calls them, "counsels of old time." No wonder then, when he, in a prophetic vision, saw the accomplishment of these prophecies, he should break out in rapturous praise to God for the same. This, I think, is so manifest, that any thing more said in support of it, would appear entirely superfluous.

The fifth prophecy, commences verse 7th of chapter xxvi. and is continued to the last verse of the xxviiith chapter: in which he treats of the resurrection, and future restoration, &c. of the nation.

It must be observed, that the prophet having, in the preceding prophecy, foretold the future restoration of the nation, &c. began now to exhibit his complaint to the Supreme Being, and as it were, to enter into a contest with him, in behalf of those of the nation, who died during their long captivity, especially those who were massacred, and destroyed by fire and sword, for the sake of his holy name; because, he had not communicated any thing particular to him, concerning them. He therefore begins his complaint thus: "The way of the righteous is perfectly strait." It

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is proper that the righteous should act with perfect rectitude: and as, "Thou most exactly weighest the path of the righteous." For the just weight and balance is the LORD's, in order to weigh the path of rectitude. And, as this is thy constant method of proceeding, it is proper, that the ways of thy judgments should be strictly just: and therefore, (as he says verse 8th,) "Also, in the way of thy judgments, have we hoped, O LORD! *for* in thy name, and in thy memorial, is the desire of our soul." For as thou weighest the actions of the righteous in a just balance, we earnestly hoped to see the justice and rectitude of thine actions: and that, for the love and veneration which we have for thy name, and thy memorial, which is that of strict justice.

He then proceeds, as speaking in his own person, "With my soul have I desired thee in the night: yea, with my inmost spirit in the morn have I sought thee." All night long have I pondered on this; and in the morning, when the imagination is free, and the brain is not clouded with the vapours of meat, I attentively considered it.

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He then shews the utility and benefit of this investigation, "For when thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world learn righteousness," Having thus expressed himself in this prefatory manner, he now proceeds to state the principle of the complaint itself, as follows, "Though mercy be shewn to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness: in the very land of rectitude he will deal unjustly; and will not regard the majesty of the LORD." For notwithstanding that thou art merciful and gracious to the wicked, yet do they not attribute their success to thee, but say, By the strength of my hand have I done it, Isai. x. 13. And therefore, "LORD, *when* thy hand is lifted up, they will not see:" They will not acknowledge thy power: it therefore is not just that they should be thus favored: "*But* cause them to see with confusion, thy zeal for thy people: yea, the fire shall burn up thine adversaries." And, although, all the prophets prophecied concerning the future restoration of the nation, yet, was the prophet, not satisfied with this, and for which, he states his reasons in the following verses. "LORD, thou wilt ordain
peace

peace for us: for *even* all our *great* works hast thou wrought for us." I know, O LORD! that thou wilt certainly restore the nation, by means of the Messiah; for all which hath happened to us in our captivity, hath been by thine appointment, and not by chance, or accident, as the wicked say: and therefore, as all the calamities ordained by thee to come upon us, have been fully accomplished; I cannot entertain the least doubt of the accomplishment of the good which thou hast promised us. But still, I have a great objection to make, and that is, "O LORD, our God! other lords besides thee, have had dominion over us." The kings and rulers of the Gentile nations, who have so cruelly persecuted and destroyed us. But, notwithstanding that we have suffered innumerable afflictions, and misery beyond measure, during this long and dreadful captivity; yet, have we not forsaken the name of our God, nor spread forth our hands to a strange god: and which he forcibly expresses, by saying, "But thee, and thy name only, do we mention." We invoke none but thee; and constantly, and firmly acknowledge thy UNITY, in opposition to every other doctrine;

doctrine: and, as we have thus strictly adhered to thee, and thy name; what wilt thou do for those righteous and pious persons, who have been put to death, and suffered martyrdom for the sake of thy holy name, during this long and cruel captivity; so that they and their offspring have all been cut off from the land of the living? Of what benefit, therefore, will the future restoration of the nation, be to them? Seeing they are dead, and of course have not experienced any of its blessings, as he observes, (verse 14th.) "They are dead, they cannot live; they are deceased, they cannot rise: because thou hast visited, and destroyed them: and all memorial of them hast thou abolished." Thus, says the prophet, hast thou acted by thy chosen people! whilst on the contrary, thou hast been kind and bountiful to the wicked and idolatrous nations: but this hath not redounded to thy glory, as would the salvation of the nation: as he says, verse 15th. "Thou hast encreased the Gentile nation, O LORD; thou hast encreased the nation: but art thou glorified? though thou hast extended the borders of their land." This verse, perfectly agrees with verse 10th, and both tend to shew, that the
nations

nations do not ascribe their power, extent of dominion, commerce, &c. to the immediate providence of God, but to their own sagacity, wisdom, industry, &c. so that God is really not glorified by their prosperity, as the prophet observes. But as this charge might appear to be an heinous crime, as it seemed to arraign the conduct of the Supreme Being; the prophet, endeavors to exculpate himself therefrom, by shewing, that all which he had advanced, was only to apologize for, and vindicate the conduct of the nation during the captivity; as may be plainly perceived by the explanation of verses 16, 17, and 18. "O LORD, in affliction have they sought thee; their humble supplication was poured out, when thy chastisement was upon them," The sense of which is, as if the prophet had said, O LORD, our God, thy people were in great distress when they sought thee, and their humble supplication was offered when they were in deep distress, because thy chastisement was upon them, but yet, this was not a murmuring and repining, the consequence of want of faith, and reliance on thy promises; a defection of their love to thee, or a denial of thy divinity: but only, "As a woman, that hath

hath conceived, when her delivery approacheth, is in anguish, crieth out aloud in her travail: thus have we been before thee, O LORD." By this image, the prophet, has most elegantly, and emphatically, painted the real state of the nation; for as the travailing woman at the time of child-birth, crieth aloud, because of the pain and anguish that she is in, and yet, hath not the least animosity towards her husband, who, as we may say, she considers as the cause of all her pain. Just so, is it with the complaint of the nation: for although, the dreadful calamities and afflictions with which they are overwhelmed, cause them to cry aloud, and utter their complaint, yet, have they never swerved from their love and allegiance to God, or entertained the least doubt of the accomplishment of those glorious promises delivered to them by the prophets in his name: notwithstanding all that has been said, and written by Christians, Deists. &c. to weaken their faith in them; by telling them, that they have a veil before their eyes; are a blind, obstinate, ignorant, and superstitious people: that they do not understand the true intent and meaning of these glorious promises; for that they have
been

been long since accomplished, in the person whom they had so scornfully rejected, and inhumanely treated: that God had therefore utterly cast them off, and made choice of the Gentiles, &c. &c. But all these pompous, sophistical, and delusive arguments, have not had any effect on them, or been able in the least to move them: and therefore, the prophet, very justly calls them, a nation strong in faith, as already observed, page 150, &c. The prophet farther observes, that, although the resemblance is thus strong between the nation, and the woman in travail, yet, is there still a great and wide distinction between them: because, the woman, on delivery, quickly forgets her pains, as she thinks herself fully recompensed, by the joy and delight of embracing her dear offspring; but this is not the case with us; for, "We have conceived: we have been in anguish; we have as it were brought forth wind: salvation is not wrought in the land; neither are the inhabitants of the world fallen." Notwithstanding that our pain, trouble, and affliction hath been exceedingly great, yet, have we received no consolation; for salvation hath

hath not been wrought in the land of promise, for our redemption; neither have our enemies been punished, for the great cruelties exercised towards us during this long and dreadful captivity.

The prophet, having thus exhibited his complaint, immediately received a most benign and consolatory answer, "Thy dead men shall live; my deceased, they shall rise." The case, says God, is not as you have conceived, and represented: for you imagine, that, as they are dead, they never will see the Lord's salvation. No, says he, it is not so: for, thy dead men shall live: that is those of thy people, who have died a natural death: My deceased; they shall rise: that is, those who have suffered death for my sake; who were cruelly put to death for a strict adherence to me; shall all of them arise, and live; and therefore he says, "Awake, and sing, ye that dwell in the dust," For they are not only to be brought to life, which the prophet calls awaking, but are to sing, and shout for joy, on account of beholding the salvation and redemption of the nation. But, as it is extremely difficult, for man to form an
idea

idea of, or comprehend the nature of the resurrection, on account of the separation and conversion of matter and substance, (as will be seen presently by the philosophical objections made to it) the prophet by a most beautiful image, informs us, how it is to be affected, "For thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead." For as the dew lights on the earth, and fertilizes it, so will the soul light on the original **STAMEN**, and reanimate it.

Before I proceed, I deem it necessary to take notice of two things: first, to shew the falsity of what Christians in general maintain, viz. that the Jews were unacquainted with the doctrine of the resurrection, till they learned it from Christ's followers; and which I suppose to be the reason, that induced Dr. Lowth, late Bishop of London, to consider this prophecy, not as a prophecy foretelling a future resurrection; but as, "Images used to represent the deliverance of the people of God, from a state of the lowest depression *:" For if he had allowed that, this, and other like prophecies †, denoted a promise
of

* Notes on Isaiah, page 144

† Ezek. Of the dry bones.

of a future resurrection, he would have been obliged to have relinquished one of the most important points, that Christians so strongly contend for, viz. Christ's being the first teacher of the doctrine of a future resurrection. But, as that would have been so highly repugnant to the system of Christianity; he, of course, was obliged to explain it as above. But his explanation is extremely fallacious, and carries its own confutation with it: because it is necessary that, an image used to express or represent any thing by way of allegory or metaphor, in the prophetic writings, should be an image commonly well known and understood, otherwise it would, by no means answer the purpose for which it was assumed. And this, the Bishop himself acknowledges: for in his notes on Isaiah, chap. xxvi. he observes, "It appears from hence, that the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, was at that time a popular and common doctrine: for an image which is assumed, in order to express or represent any thing in the way of allegory or metaphor, whether poetical or prophetic, must be an image commonly known and understood, otherwise

otherwise it will not answer the purpose for which it is assumed." Whence it is manifest, that the Jews were certainly well acquainted with the doctrine of the resurrection in the days of Isaiah, who lived almost eight hundred years before the incarnation: it must therefore, of course, have been taught some time before, in order to be well known or understood; so that it is clear, Jesus could not have first taught, what was well known for almost a thousand years before he was upon the earth. Nay, I am confident that the doctrine of the resurrection was taught by Moses himself, and which I have already shewn in the Dissertation on his second prophecy, &c. which thence was so popular, and well known in the nation, that even the women were acquainted with it, as in 1 Samuel, chap. ii. verse 6. where we find Hannah, in her song, praising God, and saying, "The LORD killeth, and maketh alive: he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up." From all which, it is plain, that Jesus cannot in the least lay claim to the character of having first taught the doctrine of the resurrection, seeing, it had been taught and well known, so long before his time

The second thing I mean to take notice of, is to enquire, what the end and purpose is, that is to be effected by this great and stupendous miracle; and to endeavor to give a solution to the objections that are raised against the doctrine of the resurrection; that is, of the soul with the same identical body: for I must freely acknowledge, that if the soul does not reanimate the same identical body, it cannot be called a resurrection; but on the contrary, is properly a creation, or transmigration; but, as this is contrary to what we are taught by the prophet, I think, it requisite to remove those philosophical objections which seem to represent the resurrection as impossible: though, if we reflect that, it will be a supernatural act: and at the same time consider what infinite power can effect, it will easily be perceived that their objections cannot impair it. We cannot properly contradict what we do not understand: nor pronounce that impossible, which we do not comprehend, or which does not imply a direct and absolute contradiction. But, as the race of modern philosophers, (i. e. Deists, Freethinkers, &c.) will not believe any thing, but what they see, and have certain, and
positive

positive knowledge of; and yet, frequently assert, what they neither know, nor are able to explain, thereby misleading ignorant and unwary people; it is highly necessary to apply an antidote to their poison, by shewing what little force their is in their objections. It must be allowed, that it is easier to start difficulties, than to solve them: but as these philosophers, think themselves wiser, and better instructed than the rest of mankind, I shall take the advice of Solomon, who observes, (Proverbs, chapter xxvi. verse 5th.) "Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own conceit." That is, lest they presume on our silence, and think their arguments unanswerable, than which, there cannot be any thing more dangerous: I shall therefore state, what to me appears to be the true end and purpose of the resurrection, including an answer to the objections raised against it: in illustration of which, shall lay down the following principles.

I. That the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead is clearly taught by the different prophets: and to shew that, it is not a transmigration, but a real resurrection of the soul

soul with the same body, they are represented as *sleeping*; for thus saith Isaiah, "Thy dead men shall live, my deceased * shall arise: awake and sing, ye that sleep in the dust of the earth." Thus also the Angel said to Daniel, xii, 2. "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake." They are therefore described as sleeping, to shew us, that we are not to consider them as dead, and past vivification, but only as sleeping in their graves. And, as during sleep, there is a suspension of the mental faculties, but which is removed on waking: even so, will those who sleep in the dust, awake, and be restored to life; as the prophet says, "For thus hath the LORD said unto me, I shall be at rest, and look towards my habitation." By which image, the prophet informs us, that after he should die, and be at rest from the turbulence of this world, he would still look towards his body in hopes of a reunion with it, as I have already shewn at large.

II.

* And some explain, נבלתי MY DEAD BODY: and which, the Prophet spoke of himself, to denote his faith in the doctrine of the resurrection.

II. Of the Form and Manner of the Resurrection.

There have been many objections made to the nature of the resurrection, as it is impossible, that the body can again exist, after having been corrupted, dissolved, and dispersed. Thus the philosophers argue *. The same piece of matter, or substance, may happen to be a part of two or more bodies. Thus a fish, feeding on a man, and another man afterwards feeding on the fish, part of the body of the first man becomes first incorporated with the fish; and afterwards, in the fish, with the last man. Again, instances have been known of one mans feeding immediately on another: and, among the cannibals of the West Indies, the practice is frequent.

Now, say they, where the substance of one is thus converted into the substance of another, each cannot arise with his whole body

* Chamber's Cyclopaedia.. Article—Resurrection.

body: and to which shall the common part be allotted? To this, some answer, that, as all matter is not fit, or disposed to be assimilated to the body, and incorporated with it, human flesh may very probably be of this kind; and therefore, what is thus eaten, may be again excreted, and carried off. But that which appears to me to be the more solid answer, is, what I understand from the words of the prophet, "For thy dew is as the dew of herbs." For as the dew lights on the herbs, and causes them to vegetate, (as above observed) so will that, which God will appoint at the resurrection, light on the original stamen, and animate it; and this original stamen, may very properly be called the same body; as it is supposed to be so minute, as not to be separated or torn asunder, and united with the stamen of any other man.—This agrees with Mr. Leibnitz's answer to the objection; for he observes, "All that is essential to the body, is the original stamen which existed in the semen of the father: nay, and on the footing of the modern theory of generation, which existed in the semen of the first man. This we may conceive as the most minute

minute speck or point, imaginable; and therefore, not to be separated, or torn asunder, and any part of it united with the stamen of any other man.—All this bulk we see in the body, is only an accretion to this original stamen; an addition of foreign matter, of new juices, to the primary, solid stamen. There, is, therefore, no reciprocation of the proper matter of the human body.”

III. *Of the State and Condition in which the Dead are to rise.*

This, leads, to the second objection, which is this.—The human body, we know by the late discoveries, in the animal œconomy, is continually changing; a man has not entirely the same body to day, as he had yesterday; and it is even computed, that, in less than seven years time, his whole body undergoes a change, and not a particle of the same body remains.—Which of those many bodies, then, which the same person has in the course of his

his life, is it that shall rise? or does all the matter that has ever belonged to him rise again? or does only some particular system thereof? The body, *e. gr.* he had, at twenty, at thirty, or at sixty years old? If only this or that body arise, how shall it be rewarded or punished for what was done by the other? with what justice does one person suffer, &c. for another?

To this it may be answered, on Mr. Lock's principles, that personal identity, or the sameness of a rational being, consists in self-consciousness; in the power of considering itself the same thing in different times and places.—By this, every one is to himself what he calls *self*; without considering whether that self be continued in the same or divers substances. So far reaches the identity of that same person. It is the same self now it was then; and it was by the same self which now reflects on an action, that action was performed.

Now, it is this personal identity that is the object of rewards and punishments, which we have observed may exist in different successions of matter; so that to render the rewards
and

and punishments just and pertinent, nothing needs, but that we rise again with such a body, as that we retain the consciousness of our past actions.

This objection, though not in precisely the same words, has been started by Abarbanal, in order to confute it: for he observes,—In what state and condition, are the dead to rise? For, as the human body, suffers a continual change daily, according to the nutriment which it receives, &c. and in particular, the change from childhood to youth, and from youth to manhood, and old age; it is requisite that we enquire, in what state, or condition they are to rise; whether in youth, or manhood? To which he answers,—that they are to rise in exactly the same state and condition they were in when they died: nay, even with their very defects: as, for instance, if they were lame, deformed, &c. And this, is extremely proper, in order that they may be known to be the same identical persons; and which will plainly be perceived to be the more necessary, when we come to consider.

IV.

IV. *The End and Purpose to be effected by the Resurrection.*

It must be allowed, that in every action, the cause ought to be proportionate to the effect. Now if this be necessary in respect to common, or natural causes; it is surely much more so, that those which are supernatural, should be every way commensurate to the effect, they are designed to produce: it is therefore, highly proper, that we seek an adequate cause for this stupendous miracle; and seriously enquire,—Why the soul, after being separated from the body, and within the pale of heavenly bliss, should be obliged to enter it again?—To this, some * answer, that the end of the resurrection is, that the body and soul of which man is compounded, may receive, either the reward, or punishment, due to him for his good, or evil deeds. But the futility of this is evident: for as the learned Abarbanal observes,
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* R. Saadias, Nachmanides, &c. &c. Which also seems to be the opinion of Christian writers in general.

the future reward, or punishment, is for the soul only, not for the body. And, if it was necessary for both body and soul to receive the reward, or punishment; they might have received it in this world, and there would then be no necessity for this miracle: he therefore, is of opinion, that there are two great ends to be effected by the resurrection: the one particular, and the other general. That which is particular, is for the Jews; and the other, which is general, is for them, and all the other nations. The first great end, which I call a particular one, as it is for the Jewish nation only, is to effect, what I have above mentioned, viz. that those who have been persecuted and slain, during this long and dreadful captivity, for adhering to the true faith, may enjoy the salvation of the LORD, according to what the prophet says, verse 19th, "Thy dead men shall live, &c." And as he says in Isai. lxvi. 10, &c. &c. "Rejoice with Jerusalem, and exult on her account, all ye that love her: be exceedingly joyful with her, all ye that mourn over her, &c. And ye shall see it, and your heart shall rejoice: and your bones shall flourish like the green herb: and the hand of the Lord shall

shall be manifested to his servants, &c." From all which, it is clear, that those who mourned for Jerusalem, during this long captivity, are the same that are to rejoice with her at the restoration, which the prophet tells them they are to see: but this would be impossible, unless by means of the resurrection; which he, by a most beautiful figure, calls, the flourishing of their bones as a green herb; and which is to be effected by the hand of the LORD being manifested to his servants, by this great and stupendous miracle, which men at present cannot comprehend, on account of its magnitude.

The second great end, which I call a general one, because it effects all mankind, whether Jews, Gentiles, or Christians; who are all interested in the great end that is to be affected by this miracle, as I shall presently shew.—It is well known, that the world was early sunk into the most gross and stupid idolatry: that there was but one nation on earth that professed the doctrine of the DIVINE UNITY: which nation hath been long in captivity, dispersed throughout the earth; during which time, different religions and
sects

sects have started up: whilst they, for their firm adherence to this great truth, have been so cruelly persecuted, that it is one of the most singular wonders of Providence, that they now exist as a nation. And, as it was the intent of the Supreme Being, that all men should thus acknowledge him; it is not to be supposed, that his intention can be frustrated: he therefore, according to his consummate wisdom, will shew all mankind the way wherein they are to walk, and the work that they are to do: so that sins may cease in the earth, and the idols be entirely cut off: that they may all know and understand that the kingdom is the LORD's, and that he only is the Supreme Governor of the nations: that the firm belief of his UNITY may be so unalterably fixed in their hearts, as that they may attain the end for which they were created, to honor and glorify God, as the prophet Isaiah observes xliii. 7, not to fill the world with the most enormous crimes, as they have done.—This great, this important, this glorious end, is to be effected by means of the resurrection: for when man-

kind

kind shall see the dead arise, in the different parts of the globe; consisting of the most distinguished personages that have lived on earth: the most eminently righteous men: the antient patriarchs, prophets, and other eminent persons: some of the most distinguished heathen princes, philosophers, and lawgivers; together with some of the most eminently wicked princes and tyrants; as likewise those who shall recently have left the world.—When all these shall arise, and with one voice, unanimously testify and declare, that the **LORD God is ONE**, and his name is also **One**: when the Gentiles shall say, surely our fathers have inherited lies, vanity, and things wherein there is no profit: Jerem. xvi. 19, and that, on the contrary, the Law of Moses, is the only true revelation.—I say, when men will thus see the wonderful works of God; and hear all those who shall arise, declare the immortal bliss that is prepared, as a reward for the righteous; the punishment and torments prepared for the wicked; and explain to them the nature of true worship, to the **One true God**; the falsity, and vanity of every other doctrine: the hearts of mankind will naturally

naturally be highly affected, by what they see and hear of those who arise: and being thus fully convinced of the truth; (for it is impossible, that any should be able to withstand such evidence as this:) the consequence will be, that they all will forsake their idols, and false doctrines; sincerely acknowledge the LORD, and no more follow vanity; but all will worship the One true God, according to what the prophet says, (chap. ii. verse 2d.) "And it shall come to pass in the latter days; the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be established on the top of the mountains, &c. And all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go, and shall say; come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD; to the house of the God of Jacob: and he will teach us of his ways: and we will walk in his paths," &c. Thus also, (chap. xxv. verse 7.) "And this mountain shall he destroy, the covering that covered the face of all the people: and the veil that was spread over all the nations." Which denote the erroneous doctrines maintained, and inculcated by the different nations, in opposition to the true word of God; operating

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as a covering, or veil, and preventing their seeing the light of truth, as hath been already observed. This, is properly, the "great and terrible day of the LORD," mentioned by several of the prophets *. This, leads us to,

V. The Punishment which God will inflict on the wicked for their crimes.

I have just shewn, what is to be the principal end of the resurrection; and it is such, as I doubt not, will appear to every rational person, one of the most important purposes possible to be effected; as tending to the real happiness of mankind: and therefore, every way worthy of the great Author of our being. But in order to render it perfect, another extraordinary event is also to take place, which in its nature, will greatly contribute towards perfecting mankind in the knowledge of the One true God; and wean them from all false worship; namely, the punishment

* Joel iii 4. Zephan. i. 14. and Malach. iii 23.

punishment of the wicked, who will arise at the resurrection; for when mankind shall see the exemplary corporeal punishment inflicted upon them for their idolatry, superstition, &c. and that they, publicly, and in the presence of all men, will acknowledge the justness of the sentence passed upon them, by the great and all-wise Judge; the whole world will be fully convinced of the dreadful consequence of the sin they have committed: and having, at the same time a just conception of the existence and attributes of the Deity, they will, of course, abstain from all false worship, and serve him only, in sincerity and truth.

The prophets, therefore, very justly call it, "The great and terrible day of the LORD:" for it will be terrible to the wicked, on account of the dreadful punishment they will receive: and great, and important, in the reformation that it will effect, as being the means of bringing all men to the knowledge of the true faith.

That the punishment of the wicked, at the resurrection, is to be corporeal; is plain from the words of the prophet, (Isai. lxvi. 24.)
"And they shall go forth and shall see, the carcasses of the men, who rebelled against me;
for

for their worm shall not die, and their fire shall not be quenched: and they shall be an abhorrence to all flesh." And this very punishment, which they will receive, will be the cause of what is mentioned in the preceding verse, that all flesh will come to worship before the LORD. Thus, have I shewn that, the punishment of the wicked, or reward of the righteous, as to body and soul together, is not the principal end of the resurrection; but only as accessory towards the great end of bringing mankind to the knowledge of the One true God. Neither did the prophet mean to instruct us in any such thing: for the true reward of a future state, is for the soul only, being purely spiritual: and therefore, God said to Moses, "No man can see me and live." (Exod. xxxiii. 20.) No man can behold the divine essence, while clothed in the garment of flesh. But, when the soul is freed from matter, and no longer clogged with it, it will eternally enjoy divine glory in the presence of the Supreme Being, and contemplate his divine essence; which it cannot taste, while united to the body.

To return. The prophet having informed the nation of the resurrection, acquaints us, that

that it would be at a great distance of time, in the latter days; and therefore says, verse 20th. "Come, O my people; retire into thy chambers; and shut the doors about thee." Be patient, and resigned, under oppression, without murmuring at Providence; and be careful to keep the commandments, for they will shield you; which is expressed in figurative language: for as the door shields us from robbers, so will the keeping of the precepts, shield them from evil. He then says, "Hide thyself for a little while, for a moment, until the indignation shall have passed away. For, behold, the LORD issueth forth from his place, to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity." Here, the prophet informs us of the punishment of the nations, which is to be effected, by their slaying and destroying each other with fire and sword, in the wars, which God, in his wrath, will move them to wage against one another: and exhorts the nation not to interfere in these quarrels, for that they are caused by the LORD's issuing, to punish the nations; they therefore must not be seen in the tumult; but retire, and hide themselves, till the indignation be passed: this, seems perfectly

perfectly conformable to the command of Moses to the Israelites, when the destroying angel was to pass through the land of Egypt, (Exod. xii. 22.) that none should go out of the door of their houses till morning. A strong corroboration this, of what I have advanced, concerning the semblance of the future restoration, with that of Egypt, as heretofore mentioned, &c. He then informs us, that in that period, God will thus punish the nations; and the resurrection will instantly take place, "For the earth shall disclose her blood, and shall no longer cover her slain." From the expression here made use of by the prophet, it is manifest, that he alluded both to those who died a natural death, during this long and dreadful captivity; as well as those, who were cruelly put to death for their adherence to the true faith: for by the earth's disclosing her blood, he meant those that died naturally: and by *her slain*, he alluded to those that were violently put to death: by which, he shewed us that, both one, and the other, should arise. A strong circumstance this, in support of the position laid down above, that the resurrection has two great and important ends: the one particular

particular for the Jewish nation, &c. as already mentioned at large.

He then proceeds to inform us farther of the punishment to be inflicted on their great and powerful enemies; (as in verse 1st of chap. xxviiith.) “In that day the LORD shall punish with his sword; his well tempered, and great, and strong sword; Leviathan, the rigid Serpent; and Leviathan, the winding serpent: and shall slay the monster, that is in the sea.” He thus, in allegorical language, informs us of the terrible destruction of the great potentates, enemies, and persecutors of God’s people; by the vengeance which God will take on them. And although he will thus avenge himself of their enemies and persecutors, yet, will he visit the nation with kindness and mercy; which is shewn by his constant care of his vineyard; the allegory of which, is carried on in direct opposition, to what the prophet described it in chapter vth. when he used it, to reprove the nation for its wickedness; and a denunciation of the vengeance that was to be brought upon them: as will be shewn as we proceed. “In that day, sing ye unto her a vineyard of red wine.”

wine." For as he had before compared her to a vineyard that brought forth wild grapes; or, more properly, poisonous berries; he now informs us, that she shall bring forth red wine; a strong, generous, intoxicating liquor. And, as he had before observed, that on account of the nation's wickedness, the hedge should be removed, and it should be devoured: he now says, "It is I, the LORD, that preserve her:" I have preserved them during the continuance of a long and dreadful captivity: agreeable to what Moses said, (Deut. xxxii. 10.) He preserved him, as the apple of his eye." And, as in the days of her wickedness, he said, "I will command the clouds, that they shed no rain upon it." He now, on the contrary, says, "I will water her every moment;" I will take care to water it at proper times; and that gently, and not with heavy showers, for fear of injuring it: as he says, "I will take care of her by night; and by day I will keep guard over her."

He then proceeds to state, that even during the captivity, he did not act by them, according to their desert; for says he, "Fury is not in me; I should have been as thorns and
and

and briers in battle; I should have marched through them; I should have burned them up together." For if he had acted against them with fury, the afflictions brought upon them, would have been so many, and so great, as to have destroyed them at once. But instead of that, he observes, "Or let him, (that is every one of them) take hold of my protection." Let them keep my Law, which is a sure protection; as Moses says, "That thou mayest obey his voice," &c. for he is thy life, &c. (Deut. xxx. 30.) Again, "Ye shall command your children to observe to do all the words of this Law. For it is not a vain thing for you; because it is your life," &c. (Ibid. xxxii. 47.) And therefore, the prophet observes, that they should take hold of God's protection, that is, keep his law: and thus endeavour to be at peace with him. However, he observes, those that return from captivity, shall greatly rejoice, and will no more commit sin; and in consequence, will not be punished any more; but spend their days in peace and plenty, as in verse 6th. "He shall cause them that come of Jacob, to take root; Israel shall bud forth, and flourish;

flourish; and they shall fill the face of the world with fruit." The prophet then continues to shew the lenity and moderation, with which the severity of God's judgment against them had been tempered: as in verse 7th. "Hath he smitten him, according to the stroke of him who smote him." The meaning of which, according to the original, (to which it is scarcely possible to do justice, in a translation) is, that the stroke with which he struck Israel, was not proportioned to the power of him, who inflicted the stroke; or they would have been totally consumed, and annihilated: but as they have been preserved to this hour, it is manifest, that the infliction was not equal to the power of him who smote them; but was greatly tempered with mercy: this, is properly what the prophet meant by the expression.

He then adduces another proof of God's lenity towards this people; "Or is he slain according to the slaughter, of those slain by him." The meaning of which is, that Israel was not punished, as were the rest of the nations: for when their measure was full, and God punished them, they were totally
destroyed;

destroyed; so that scarcely any name, or remainder of them was left; as was the case with Sodom and Gomorrah; the Canaanites, Babylonians, Persians, &c. &c. But on the contrary, this was not the case with this nation. But, "In measure, when thou didst send her forth, didst thou debate with her; he stayed his rough tempest, in the day of the east wind." When their measure was full, and God was resolved to punish them, it was by sending them out of the land of promise, that he debated the matter with them; not by utterly extirpating them: and therefore, even in the day of the east wind, that is, when his wrath was kindled, and he was inflicting the punishment, he stayed his rough tempest: he tempered it with mercy, and only sent them into captivity. And this very captivity, was not for the purpose of revenge; but for their benefit; "For by this shall the iniquity of Jacob be expiated; and this is all the fruit to remove his sin; when he rends all the stones of the altar, like the lime stones scattered abroad: that the groves and images rise no more: then the strongly fortified city shall be desolate; an habitation forsaken,

forsaken, and deserted like a wilderness. There shall the calf feed, and there shall he lie down, and consume the branches thereof. When her boughs are withered, they shall be broken: women shall come, and set them on fire; for it is a people void of understanding: wherefore he, that made him, shall not have pity on him; and he that formed him, shall shew him no favor." The prophet here informs us of the great benefit and advantage, which the nation will reap from the captivity: namely, the expiation of all their sins, as I have shewn at large in my explanation of Daniel's famous prophecy of the seventy weeks: and also farther informs us, that when their sins of idolatry, &c. shall be thus expiated; so that their redemption will draw near; the city which is so strongly fortified, (by which he means the strong and powerful states) shall be desolate, utterly forsaken, and deserted like a wilderness: by this, he points out the utter destruction of their enemies. And, as besides the guilt of their persecuting of God's chosen people, they had imbibed, and maintained such erroneous and impious doctrines, as is scarce credible of beings endowed with ratiocination;

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(so forcibly expressed by *וכלה סעפיה*, which properly denotes, and he shall destroy her vain or erroneous imaginations) he calls them a people void of understanding; and informs us, that he who made and formed them, would shew them neither pity nor favor, but would utterly destroy them.

Having thus shewn the exemplary punishment of their enemies, he again returns to speak of their redemption in the following verses.

“And it shall come to pass in that day, the LORD shall beat off from the channel of the river, (which properly denotes the river Euphrates, beyond which, the ten tribes were carried captive) to the stream of Egypt: and ye shall be gleaned up, one by one, O ye children of Israel.” By this, he clearly points out this long and dreadful captivity; during which, such numbers of them have been destroyed by the numberless persecutions and massacres which they have suffered; which hath been the cause of their being scattered in all parts, and so few of them remaining, that, according to the figurative language of the prophet, the LORD, to find them, will beat for them, as a person threshes the corn out of the husk;

husk; and they will be gathered, one by one; according to what the prophet Jeremiah says, iii. 14. "And I will take you one out of a city, and two out of a family, &c." Which is a manifest proof, that this prophecy was not fulfilled at their return from the Babylonish captivity.

He then proceeds to relate other circumstances that are to take place, at the restoration of the nation, as in verse 13. "And it shall come to pass in that day, the great trumpet shall be sounded: and those shall come who were perishing in the land of Assyria, and who were dispersed in the land of Egypt: and they shall bow themselves to the LORD, in the holy mountain in Jerusalem." This, is what appears to me, according to the language of the prophet, to be the real and true explanation of this great and important prophecy: (for nothing can be of greater import, than bringing the whole world to the knowledge of the One true God, and the true faith) the subject matter of which, plainly and evidently shews, that it hath never yet been fulfilled; neither at their return from Babylon, nor yet by, or in Jesus: of course,
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it remains to be fulfilled at the coming of the true Messiah, whom God may send speedily, Amen.

The Sixth prophecy commences verse 1st, chap. xxxiv. and is continued to the end of the last verse of chap. xxxv. The introduction of this prophecy, plainly shews it to be of the highest importance, and of universal concern. "Draw near, O ye nations, and hearken; and attend unto me, O ye people!" This is to inform them, that this prophecy was not concerning Israel and Judah only, as the other prophecies; but concerning all the nations, who had provoked the LORD of Hosts, by persecuting his chosen people; all nations are therefore called upon to attend to the declaration; and to hear the decree which the wrath of God hath denounced against them. Thus he says, "Let the earth hear, and the fulness thereof; the world, and all that spring from it." That they may all know, and understand, that it is the decree of the most High; "For the wrath of the LORD is kindled against all the nations; and his fury against all their hosts:
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he hath devoted them; he hath given them up to slaughter. And their slain shall be cast out; and from their carcasses the stench shall ascend; and the mountains shall melt down with their blood. And all the host of heaven shall be dissolved; and the heavens shall be rolled up like a scroll: and all their host shall wither; as the withered leaf falleth from the vine, and as the blighted fruit from the fig tree. For my sword that is in heaven, shall be satiated with blood: behold, on Edom it shall descend; and on the people justly devoted by me to destruction. The sword of the LORD is glutted with blood; it is pampered with fat: with the blood of lambs, and of goats; with the fat of the reins of rams: for the LORD celebrateth a sacrifice in Botsrah, and a great slaughter in the land of Edom. And the unicorns shall fall down with them: and the bullocks together with their bulls; and their own land shall be drunken with their blood, and their dust shall be enriched with fat. For it is the day of vengeance to the LORD; and the year of recompence for the controversy of Zion. And the streams thereof shall be turned into pitch, and her dust into sulphur:

sulphur: and her whole land shall become burning pitch. By night or by day it shall not be extinguished; for ever shall her smoke ascend: from generation to generation she shall lie desert; to everlasting ages no one shall pass through her: but the pelican and porcupine shall inherit her; and the owl and the raven shall inhabit there: and he shall stretch over her the line of devastation, and the plummet of emptiness. Her nobles who do not there proclaim it a kingdom, and all her princes, shall utterly fail. And in her palaces shall spring up thorns; the nettle and the bramble in her fortresses: and she shall become an habitation for dragons, a court for the daughters of the screech owl. And the jackals and the mountain cats shall meet one another; and the satyr shall call to his fellow: there also the screech owl shall pitch; and shall find for herself a place of rest. There shall the night raven make her nest, and lay her eggs; and she shall hatch them, and gather her young under her shadow: there also shall the vultures be gathered together; every one of them shall join her mate.

By this sublime figurative language; this
high-

high-wrought terrible description; the prophet informs us of several circumstances: for in verses 2d. 3d. and 4th. he speaks in general terms of the destruction of the nations; and in verse 4th. he shews the total ruin of their polity: for in the figurative language of the prophets, the heavens and the things therein, signify thrones and dignities, and those that enjoy them: the sun * is used to denote the whole species and race of kings, in the kingdoms of the world politic. The dissolution of the heavens, denotes the ruin of the world politic. The sun, the kings; and the falling of the stars, the degradation of the subordinate princes, and great men. The prophet therefore, by the expression, "And all the host of heaven shall waste away," &c. shews the total destruction of the ecclesiastical and civil polity of the nations, who are to be punished in the latter days.

Having thus spoken in general terms of the punishment of all the nations, who had provoked to anger the defender of the cause of Zion, he, in verse 5th. &c. descends to speak
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* Lowth on Isai. xxiv. 21—23. Sir I. Newton's Observations on the Prophecies, Part I. chap. ii.

of the particular dreadful destruction of Edom. "For my sword, &c. Behold on Edom it shall descend, &c." And thus proceeds to explain the particulars of their destruction; and that not only of them, but also of those who should come to assist them; "And the unicorns shall fall down with them," &c. By which he means those powerful states, that should come to assist Edom in the war; so that the helper will fall, and the holpen be overthrown; and all of them be destroyed together. He also informs us, why they are to be thus punished with such dreadful slaughter and bloodshed, "Because it is a day of vengeance to the LORD; and the year of recompence for the controversy of Zion." Here are two causes; the one, the vengeance of the LORD: because his name hath been so greatly profaned by the nation; and the other, the year of recompence for the controversy of Zion. That is, for what they inflicted on the Jewish nation during this long and dreadful captivity. And it is not a little remarkable, that Moses expressed himself in nearly the same language, "To me belongeth vengeance, and recompence, at the time that their foot shall slip,

slip, &c." So that the truth of this prophecy, is supported in the uniformity of the language, by what Moses said. He farther informs us, that exclusive of the dreadful slaughter, which they are to suffer, the city of Botsrah itself is to be totally destroyed, and become pitch and sulphur, &c. (as was Sodom and Gomorrah) which is not to be extinguished day or night; and this dreadful destruction, is the consequence of the enormous crimes which they have committed; for Botsrah, denotes ROME; which may justly be called the very sink of corruption; the contaminated fountain, from whence flow idolatry, bigotry, and superstition. And, it is well known that, the pernicious doctrines taught at Rome, were the sole cause of the dreadful persecutions, and massacres, which the Jews have suffered among Christians for so many hundred years; it therefore is to be utterly destroyed. That Edom, means the Romans, and that Botsrah denotes Rome, has been shewn at large by Abarbanal in his comment on this chapter. And it is a received tradition by our sages, and mentioned in the Talmud, Midrashim, &c. and also by Josephus Ben Gorion, that the Romans were descended
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from the dukes of Esau, or Edom; namely, duke Zepho, Gen. xxxvi 15—43. whom they called Janus, to whom the month of January was consecrated; and duke Magdiel; which Basnage * attempts to invalidate from the arguments of the Bishop of Burgos, an apostate Jew. But these arguments of the Bishop, had been before considered by Abarbanal, and completely refuted by him. And if we seriously consider the purport of the prophecy, it will be manifest that, neither the ravages and devastation committed upon the Edomites by Nebuchadnezzar, nor their subjection to the Jews, by Hyrcanus, can be what the prophet had in view: for those events, as far as we have any account of them in history, seem by no means to come up to the terms of the prophecy, or to justify so high wrought, and so terrible a description †. Neither is it easy to discover what connexion the extremely flourishing state of the people of God, described in the next chapter, could have with those events, and how the former could be the consequence
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* History of the Jews, Book III. Chap. vii. Sect. 15.

† This is also the opinion of Bishop Lowth. Notes on Isaiah, xxxiv. and xxxv.

of the latter, as it is there described to be: But what appears to me, (and I doubt not to every candid and dispassionate mind) to be conclusive, is, the exact description given of Rome by the prophet, verse 12th. "Her nobles, who do not there proclaim a kingdom." And can any thing be more particularly described, than is thus Rome, under the name of Botsrah? for by the expression, "Her nobles," it is plain he alluded to the cardinals, who, properly speaking, are the nobles of Rome, because, they are, as their name implies, the hinge * and government of all the affairs of the Romish church; and by whom, the Pope is elected out of their own number; and who is not called king, but only Bishop of Rome; or, as he stiles himself, the Vicar of Christ; and the title given him, is, his holiness; neither is his territory, denominated a kingdom, but the territory of the Church, or the holy see, &c. And the reason that Rome is spoken of under the name of Botsrah, is to represent the extraordinary power, and influence, that it would have over all those that followed the doctrines embraced by Edom: for בצרה

Botsrah,

* Ayliffe's Parergon.

Botsrah, is derived from בצורה בצר, *Strong, fortified, &c.* And as in time of war, the people fly to the strong fortified towns for protection; so did all Christendom, repose an entire confidence, in Rome and its Bishop; and fly to him for spiritual protection; for indulgencies, absolutions, &c. He also in (verse 6th.) compares the numerous herds of pampered ecclesiastics, to lambs, goats, and fat rams. And as the revenues of the numerous religious houses, which the prophet calls her palaces, serve to maintain these drones in idleness, he informs us, that then, "In her palaces shall spring up thorns: the nettle, and the bramble, in her fortresses: and she shall become an habitation for dragons, &c." All which, I presume, is a manifest proof of the truth of my position, that *Botsrah* is Rome; and that this prophecy has a view to events still future: to great revolutions to be effected in latter times, at or about the restoration of the nation, as may be perceived from the subject matter of the succeeding chapter.

To return. As this prophecy, as I have just observed, points to a very distant time;
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the prophet observes, that they should not despair, or doubt the accomplishment of it; as thinking it impossible, according to the flourishing state of the nations in general, or Botsrah in particular; for, "Consult ye the book of the LORD, and read:" that is, the books that contain the prophecies: for they were all given by one shepherd: all came from God; for which reason, he very properly calls them the book of the LORD: and therefore, "Not one of these shall fail; none shall want her mate:" Not one of the numerous prophecies delivered shall remain unaccomplished: "For the mouth of the LORD, hath given the command; and his spirit itself hath gathered them." He hath commanded the prophets to deliver them. "And he hath cast the lot for them:" hath cast the lot for the wild beast and birds above-mentioned, to dwell in Botsrah: "And his hand hath meted out their portion by the line: they shall possess it for ever; from generation to generation shall they dwell therein."

The prophet having foretold the punishment of the nations in general, and of Edom in particular, observes, that the immediate
consequence

consequence of these events would be, that, "The desert, and the waste place, shall be glad; and the wilderness shall rejoice, and flourish as the rose." By this image, he had a view to the land, and cities of Israel; which, during the captivity, were waste and depopulated; but will then rejoice on being rebuilt, and inhabited, as he observes, verse 2d. "It shall abundantly flourish, and rejoice, even with joy and song: the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the beauty of Carmel and of Sharon: these shall behold the glory of the LORD, the majesty of our God." Here the prophet not only informs us of the extremely flourishing temporal state of the nation, but likewise of their exalted spiritual state; for by the glory of Lebanon, &c. is denoted their flourishing temporal state; or that their houses, &c. should be built of the cedar of Lebanon, &c. as in the days of Solomon. And by the expression, these shall behold the glory of the LORD, &c. the return of the Divine Glory, is clearly depicted.

The prophet having thus prophesied of those great, those important events; addresses himself to the sages, elders, and leaders of the nation,

nation, thus: "Strengthen ye the feeble hands, and confirm ye the tottering knees. Say ye to the faint-hearted, be ye strong; fear ye not; behold your God will come *with* vengeance; *with* the retribution of God: He himself will come and save you." When ye see the dreadful persecutions and massacres which the nations will inflict on the chosen people, for their adherence to the true Unity of God, overwhelming the nation; so that they are ready to sink under them: and those which have not sufficient fortitude to make head against such dreadful misfortunes, are ready to abandon the true faith; as hath actually been the case in Spain, Portugal, &c. as already mentioned in this work. Or those who, by the length of the captivity, and the pompous sophistical arguments made use of by Christians, and apostates of their own nation, to induce them to embrace doctrines repugnant to those delivered by God to Moses, may be wavering in their faith, and staggering in their minds. When ye see these things, says the prophet, ye are to strengthen the feeble hands, and confirm the tottering knees. Ye are to instruct them in the truth; and teach them not to despair;
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but manfully to bear up against these misfortunes: and that they may depend upon it, from the word of God, the truth and verity of prophecy, that, notwithstanding the great length of time that hath elapsed since the commencement of their captivity, and the numerous afflictions which they have suffered, yet, may they rest assured, that their God, will at last come, and avenge their sufferings; and that he himself will redeem them; and, "Then shall the eyes of the blind be opened; and the ears of the deaf be unstopped. Then shall the lame bound like the hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing.

In this figurative language, the prophet, in a most masterly manner, has drawn an exact picture of the state of the nation during this dreadful captivity; for on account of the great troubles they have undergone, they may be said to be blind; their sight being darkened as it were, by the excessive afflictions which they have suffered; (darkness being an emblem of affliction) and which caused them to totter, as a lame person: their ears may be said to be deafened with the loud complaints of each other, without having it in their power to offer
relief

relief to their fellow sufferers: and by the prophets comparing them to a dumb man, he plainly pointed to the unparalleled patience and submission, with which the nation hath borne their afflictions; which perfectly confirms the truth of the character given of the nation by this prophet elsewhere, "As a lamb was he led to the slaughter, &c." Isai. liii. 7. as will be shewn at large in the second part of this work, when we come to treat of such prophecies, as Christians *only* apply to a Messiah: for it is really worthy of remark, that the Jews, in whatever place or country, they have been dispersed, have, with scarce a murmur, and without any rebellion or sedition whatsoever, patiently endured, and submitted to the infliction of the most unexampled oppressions and cruelties: so that they may justly be said to be dumb. But at the future redemption by the Messiah, he informs us, all these evils will be removed: "For in the wilderness shall burst forth waters, and torrents in the deserts: and the parched *ground* shall become a pool, and the thirsty soil bubbling springs: and in the haunt of dragons shall spring forth the grass, with the reed and the bulrush." By this,
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he shews the abundant good which they will enjoy, instead of the hunger, thirst, &c. which they suffered during the captivity, when they were exiled and drove from place to place, and their whole property confiscated, without the least crime committed on their part. He then informs us, that in those waste and desolate places, where no man heretofore passed, "Shall be a path, and an highway; and (that) it shall be called the way of holiness; no unclean person shall pass through it." This image of a path and an highway in the wilderness, points out the future restoration of the nation; and also informs us, that the wicked amongst them; such as do not believe the word of God, in the promises of a future redemption, will all be cut off, and not be allowed to enter the holy land; (as will be shewn at large in the explanation of the prophecies of Ezekiel) for none but the faithful are to enter the land of promise: agreeable to what the prophet said elsewhere, "Open ye the gates, and let the righteous nation, constant in the truth, enter." (Isai. xxvi. 2.) But as to those of the nation, who do not firmly believe in the promises of God, by his prophets; whose
minds,

minds, are defiled, and contaminated with the impure stream of scepticism and unbelief; and which are properly the unclean persons mentioned by the prophet; they are not to pass through this holy path; because God himself will be at their head: "But he himself shall be with them, walk in the way:" that is, he will lead them in the right path, as the cloud and pillar of fire led them when they went out of Egypt; so that, "The simple shall not err therein."

He then proceeds to inform us, that at their return, none of all the powerful kings or potentates will dare oppose them, or throw any impediment in their way, as was the case on their return from Babylon. This, is powerfully expressed by the utter exclusion of all the ravenous beasts from the holy path, as in verse 9th. "No lion shall be there; nor shall the tyrant of the beasts come up thither: neither shall he be found there: but the redeemed shall walk in it. Yea, the ransomed of the Lord shall return: they shall come to Zion with triumph: and perpetual gladness shall crown their heads. Joy and gladness shall they obtain; and sorrow and sighing shall flee away."

In this verse, the prophet informs us of three things, which are to be accomplished at their future restoration, extremely opposite to what took place at their return from Babylon. First, that they shall return in triumph: whereas, at their return from Babylon; they were scoffed at, and hindered in the building by their enemies. Second, they are to be crowned with perpetual gladness; which was not accomplished at their return from Babylon, or during the existence of the second temple, as is well known to every person, in the least acquainted with scripture, or the Jewish history. Third, they are not only to obtain joy and gladness, but sorrow and sighing are to be totally banished: for they are for ever to dwell in peace and plenty, and never go into captivity more. Hence, it is manifest, from the tenour of this remarkable prophecy, and the explanation of it here given, that it never yet hath been fulfilled: neither at their return from Babylon, nor at, or during the time of Jesus. A brief recapitulation of the whole will set the matter in its true light.

The first part contains a denunciation of
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the most extraordinary punishments; indeed, nothing short of the total destruction of the enemies of the people of God; the prophet, therefore, introduces the subject by a magnificent exordium, calling upon universal nature to attend to the proclamation of these events, in which the whole world, it should seem, are so much interested. He then publishes the decree of the Most High for the extirpation of all those nations against whom his wrath was kindled; and amplifies this act of vengeance and destruction, by an admirable selection of the most splendid imagery; illustrating it, by images borrowed from the Mosaical chaos, as if he was describing the total subversion of the universe itself. Having thus, in the four first verses, delivered himself in general terms concerning all those who had provoked to anger the defender of the cause of Zion; he in verse 5th, speaks particularly of Edom and Botsrah, and those who should come to their assistance: for the unicorns, bulls, and wild goats, &c. denote, the ferocious, haughty, and cruel tyrants and chiefs of the nations, who provoked God, either by their impious doctrines, or in persecuting his chosen people,

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as expressed verse 8th. He then, in verse 9th, &c. by a succession of images borrowed from the overthrow of Sodom, and the appearance of a vast solitary desert, again describes the dreadful destruction of Botsrah, a city whose inhabitants are in the highest degree abnoxious to God, and his people. In verse 16th. he refers us to the word of God, for the truth of his predictions. And in chapter xxxvth, he, by the most beautiful imagery, taken almost entirely from the objects of nature, points out to us, the great and lasting happiness, both spiritual and temporal, which the nation will enjoy at its restoration; so that they are to be perpetually crowned with glory: a manifest proof, that this exalted degree of happiness hath never yet been enjoyed by them; but will certainly be accomplished, as well as the total destruction of their enemies, at the coming of the true Messiah. But, as nothing of this, was accomplished by Jesus, when he was upon earth, it is plain he could not be the person spoken of by the prophets, who was to save Israel in the latter days.

The seventh prophecy commences verse 1st of chapter xli. and is continued to verse 16th of chapter xli.

The prophet having, in the preceding chapters, related the invasion of Senacherib, and his overthrow: as also the sickness of Hezekiah, and his restoration; and delivered a very explicit declaration of the impending ruin of the kingdom, the captivity of the royal family, and the people; proceeds now to inform us, that when they shall have received the due reward of their iniquities, they should certainly be redeemed; and therefore, opens the subject with great perspicuity and elegance, declaring God's command to his prophets *, to comfort his people in captivity, to strengthen them in the true faith, by imparting to them the joyful tidings, that their punishment having now satisfied the Divine Justice, the time of their reconciliation and favor was near at hand; (and which perfectly agrees with what the prophet said, chap. xxxv. verses 3d and 4th. as explained, in the preceding prophecy) as he observes, "Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people, saith your God: speak animating words to Jerusalem, and declare unto her, that her appointed time is accomplished; that the expiation of her iniquity is accepted; that she

* See the Chaldee paraphrast, Jona. on the passage.

she hath received at the hand of the LORD double the punishment of all her sins." These expressions are highly consolatory and animating: for nothing can be more so to the nation, than to be informed, that not only the appointed time, which the Most High had decreed, that they should remain in captivity, was accomplished; and that the expiation of their iniquity was accepted, but that they had received the full measure of punishment for all their sins, in the DOUBLE captivity, viz. that of Babylon, and the present; so that they need not be under any apprehension of going into captivity again; for that all their sins had been expiated by the severe punishment they had received. He then seems to introduce a harbinger, giving orders to prepare the way for God, leading his people, as he did formerly from Egypt, "A voice crieth in the wilderness; prepare ye the way of the LORD; make straight in the desert an highway for our God. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill be brought low; and the crooked shall become strait, and the rough places a smooth plain." By this figurative language, he informs us that God himself will lead them to his holy mountain,

ain, and that no impediment whatever will be suffered to retard their progress: which will shew the truth and verity of prophecy, as he says, verse 5th. "And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed; and all flesh shall see together, that the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it." When the nations shall all see the salvation and redemption of the nation, in such a glorious manner, after so many hundred years captivity, degradation, and persecution, by almost every nation upon earth; they naturally, will all acknowledge the truth of prophecy; and that all that hath happened to the nation, is the word of God; and his appointment: for which reason, the prophet calls this illumination, which will be the means of bringing all mankind to the knowledge of the One true God, the glory of the LORD: for while the nation is in captivity, and the glorious promises made to them, are not accomplished; his name is profaned among the nations, (as already observed in the course of this work) either by the erroneous and impious doctrines maintained by several of them; or the disbelief of divine revelation in general, entertained by others. These enlightened philosophers also, as the
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latter are pleased to call themselves, will not acknowledge the justice of God in the punishment of the nations for their crimes. But when the redemption, and the glorious restoration of the nation shall be effected; they all will be obliged to acknowledge the truth of prophecy, and the Justice of God, not only in punishing the wicked, but also in rewarding the good: and thus will his holy name be glorified: because men will then be fully convinced of the free agency of man; and of course, they all will be induced to serve God in sincerity and truth.

The prophet next proceeds to inform us, that the time is far distant when the redemption shall take place; during all which time, the spirit of prophecy will wholly cease, and the prophets find no vision from the LORD; because the nation will be banished from the holy land, and the Divine Presence departed from the temple, which was the fountain of prophecy: for no one ever prophesied, but either in the holy land, or concerning it, as the author of the book of Cozri observes*: we are therefore told, that at the future restoration, the
spirit

* Vide, Lib. Cozri, pars II. sect. 14.

spirit of prophecy will be again restored to the nation, (as already observed in different parts of this work) and the prophets will prophecy as aforetime: as he says, verse 6th. &c. "A voice sayeth, proclaim." This is the voice of prophecy, commanding the prophets in the latter days to prophecy, of the redemption of the nation; but the prophets knowing the deplorable degraded state of the nations, will answer, "What shall I proclaim? all flesh is grass, and all its glory like the flower of the field. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth; because the spirit of the LORD hath blown upon it: verily this people is grass."

By this image, the prophet shews that, when the spirit of prophecy shall return to the nation, and the prophets be commanded to prophecy the near approach of their redemption; they, on account of the abject state of the nation, will observe, what shall I proclaim? seeing the nation is in a state of the utmost wretchedness, deprived of every good, withering and drooping in captivity, as the grass of the field, without the hope of vivification; and that because the anger of the LORD hath blown on this people, and destroyed them by thousands and
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tens of thousands ; so that there is but few of them left ; and those scattered all over the face of the globe, in such a deplorable state, as to have no means left to effect their restoration. All which, is a manifest proof, that the redemption is not to take place, till after a great length of time, when the nation hath suffered numberless persecutions, and massacres ; so that they will be reduced to the lowest ebb, and almost driven to despair ; as well on account of their sufferings, as on account of the great length of the captivity ; nearly despairing of their being ever redeemed ; as is the case at present with many of the nation ; and as Christians in general pretend : and which, is also an evident sign that the prophet does not speak of their return from the Babylonish captivity ; for they were not brought to so low, and depressed a state in Babylon. Nay, they were rather in a more flourishing condition in Babylon, than they were after their return ; and which was the reason, that the rich and opulent, who were the most numerous, did not choose to return : so that the poorer sort only returned. The prophet therefore, observes,
that

that when the prophets shall make this reply, God will answer, "The grass withereth, the flower fadeth; but the word of our God shall stand for ever." Notwithstanding, saith the LORD, that they should be thus reduced, yet, shall they not be entirely destroyed, but shall certainly be redeemed at the appointed time; for the word of God which thou art now commanded to declare, shall stand; shall be fully accomplished: I therefore enjoin thee by all means to proclaim it: to which purpose, "Get thee up upon an high mountain, O thou who proclaimest glad tidings to Zion: lift up thy voice with strength, O thou who proclaimest glad tidings to Jerusalem: exalt it; be not afraid: say to the cities of Judah, behold your God." By this image, the prophet gives us to understand, that though, according to human probability, it was not likely that the nation would ever be restored to their own land again, on account of their dispersion in the different parts of the world, their decrease, the consequence of their sufferings; and their total inability to help themselves, as above shewn; yet, should he not be afraid of the accomplishment of his prophecy; but proclaim aloud the
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glad tidings to Zion and Jerusalem, saying to them, Behold your God. That is, that although your God, hath during the captivity hid his face from you, as Moses predicted; Deut. xxxi. 18. yet, is he now come to dwell amongst you as aforetime.

He then proceeds to inform us also, that God would fight their battles, and avenge them of their enemies, as in verse 10th. "Behold, the LORD God will come with strength; and his arm shall prevail for him. For though Israel is weak as the withered grass, or the faded flower, and consequently, hath not power to oppose his enemies; lo, the arm of the LORD God shall prevail for them: for it is he that will fight their battles, as was the case when they came out of Egypt. Exod. xiv. 14. And he also will avenge them of their enemies; for, "Behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him." He himself will punish them, as was the case in the destruction of the first born of the Egyptians.

The prophet then informs us, that although God will thus punish the nations, he will be exceeding careful of the Jewish nation, for, "Like a shepherd shall he feed his flock;
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in his arm shall he gather up the lambs, and shall bear them in his bosom; the nursing ewes shall he gently lead." By this beautiful figure, expressing with the greatest propriety as well as elegance, the tender attention of the shepherd to his flock, the prophet points out to us, the care and solicitude of the Supreme Being, in the preservation of the nation; and that on account of their low and weak state, he does not compare them to oxen, goats, &c. but to lambs; in the driving of whom, the utmost care and tenderness is necessary, as clearly appears from Jacob's apology to his brother Esau, (Gen. xxxiii. 13.) and as shewn by Sir John Chardin, as Bishop Lowth observes.

The prophet then, addressing himself to the nations in the person of God, says to them, do not be surprised or wonder at what I say, concerning the redemption of the nation from captivity, after so many hundred years of oppression; than which, nothing seems more improbable, considering the helpless state they are in; but he who created the world, and called it into existence, is undoubtedly able to effect this also, as he observes, verse 12th, &c.

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“Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand; and hath meted out the heavens with a span: and hath comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and hath weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance? Who hath meted the air? The LORD: and who is the man that instructed him in counsel? With whom did he consult, to make him understand, and teach him the path of judgment; that he should impart to him science, and inform him in the way of understanding?” Now, if God by his infinite power was able to effect all this, how much more is he able to do what he pleases with the nations of the earth: for, “Behold, the nations are as a drop from the bucket; and as the small dust of the balance are they accounted: Behold, he taketh up the islands as an atom.”

The prophet then, by a beautiful and uncommon image, informs us, that nothing will be able to divert God from his purpose of punishing the nations: for not all the beasts that they possibly can offer, will suffice to make an atonement for them, as he observes, verse 16th. “And Lebanon is not sufficient for the fire: nor his beasts sufficient for a burnt

burnt-offering. All the nations are as nothing before him; they are esteemed by him as less than nought, and vanity."

The prophet then, in a strain of eloquent, energetic, and sublime language, draws a comparison between the God of Israel, and the gods of the different nations; which is continued from verse 18th, to verse 7th, of chapter 41st. In which, is also introduced, the call of Abraham, the choice made of him and his posterity, his success over the kings, and the alarm of the idolaters at the event. After this, he again returns to the consolation of Israel, assuring them, that as God had preserved them hitherto, he would cause them to triumph over their enemies also, verse 8th. &c. "But thou, Israel, my servant; thou, Jacob, whom I have chosen: the seed of Abraham my friend: thou whom I have led by the hand from the ends of the earth: and called thee from the principal men thereof; and I said unto thee, thou art my servant; I have chosen thee, and will not reject thee. Fear thou not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God. I have strengthened thee, I have assisted thee; I have even supported thee with
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my faithful right hand. Behold, they, that were enraged against thee, shall be ashamed and confounded: they, that contended with thee, shall become as nothing, and shall utterly perish. Thou shalt seek them, and shalt not find them, even the men that strove with thee: they shall become as nothing, and as mere nought, even the men that opposed thee in battle. For I am the LORD thy God, that holds thee fast by thy right hand: that says unto thee, fear not; I am thy helper." Having thus shewn how God preserved the nation amidst the numerous enemies that surrounded them, and were ready to swallow them up: he again returns to speak of their redemption, and the vengeance that God will take upon their enemies, verse 14th. "Fear not, thou worm of Jacob; ye mortals of Israel." By this image, the prophet has inimitably described the state of the nation in this long and dreadful captivity: for they are actually considered, in the scale of mankind, as worms, mere reptiles; the reproach of men, and despised by all people. And as to valour, they are considered but as dead men, of little or no value; for that is the real sense of *מת*, which

which I have translated *mortals*, it being impossible to convey an adequate sense of the energetic meaning which it bears in the original, in a translation. But, though thou art thus, says the prophet, yet, fear thou not; for as thy redemption is not to be effected by natural causes, there is no necessity, for thee, to muster great and powerful armies, for, "I am thy helper, saith the LORD: and thy redeemer is the Holy One of Israel. Behold, I have made thee a threshing wain; a new corn-drag, armed with pointed teeth: thou shalt thresh the mountains, and beat them small; and reduce the hills to chaff: thou shalt winnow them, and the wind shall bear them away; and the tempest shall scatter them abroad: but thou shalt rejoice in the LORD: in the Holy One of Israel shalt thou triumph." By this imagery, the prophet has shewn the entire destruction of the enemies of the Jews, at the time of their redemption: the subject of which, is continued to verse 6th, of chapter xlii. except some small portion, addressed to idolaters, &c. I shall take notice briefly of the different parts which speak of the nation.

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The prophet immediately proceeds, verse 17th. to shew the miserable state of the nation in captivity: at the same time assuring them, that the LORD JEHOVAH, would certainly redeem them; by which they will be fully convinced that the LORD only is God. "The poor and the needy seek for water, and there is none; their tongue is parched with thirst:" this forcibly exhibits the lamentable and deplorable state of the nation; in contrast to which, the prophet has finely described the deliverance of the nation, and the plenty they are to enjoy. "I the LORD will answer them; the God of Israel, I will not forsake them, I will open in the high places rivers; and in the midst of the vallies fountains; I will make the desert a standing pool; and the dry ground streams of waters. In the wilderness I will give the cedar: the acacia, the myrtle, and the tree producing oil: I will plant the fir-tree in the desert; the pine and the box together: that they may see, and that they may know, and may consider, and understand at once, that the hand of the LORD hath done this,

and

and that the Holy One of Israel hath created it." When they all will see the nation suddenly elevated from a state of the most abject misery to that of the most exalted happiness; they all will instantly be obliged to acknowledge, that it was not owing to any natural cause, but to the interference of the Holy One of Israel, whose power is over all; and whom they will then all acknowledge for the only One true God, the Sovereign of the Universe. Thus, it is clear, that all the world will be brought to the knowledge of the One God, by means of the Jews, as I have already observed in my Letters to Dr. Priestley *; for as they are now scattered almost over the whole face of the earth; their miraculous restoration, &c. will of course, be made known in all parts of the globe; and thus, will the truth by their means be disseminated throughout the world.

In verse 25th, &c. The prophet, in very concise terms, informs us of the captivity of the ten tribes, and of their return in the latter days. As he had in the preceding verses
observed,

* Letters to Dr. Priestly, in answer to his First Letters to the Jews, page 54, 1st Edit. and page 50, of the Second and Third Editions.

observed, that there was not one among all the Gentile nations, that could of a truth, foretel future events; he now acquaints us, that this was not the case with Israel; for that they had real prophets among them, who by the true spirit of prophecy, foretold future events, as he says, "I have raised (one) up from the north, and he is come." I foretold by the mouth of the prophet the coming of the king of Assyria, whom I had appointed to destroy Samaria, Jerm. i. 14. and iv. 6, and it is come to pass: for at the time that this prophecy was delivered by Isaiah, Samaria was already destroyed; he therefore says, he is come; an evidence of the truth of what the prophet predicted.

He then speaks of their restoration, "From the rising sun shall he (the Messiah) invoke my name: and shall come upon the princes, as on mortar; even as the potter treadeth down the clay." For then the kings and princes of the earth, will be esteemed by the Messiah, but as clay. Having thus shewn the captivity of Israel, as also their redemption, (for Halah, and Habor, &c. where the ten tribes were carried captive, lay north-east of
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the holy land) two events diametrically opposite to each other, he again challenges the gods of the nation, ver. 26th. "Who hath declared this from the beginning, that we might know it? and before hand, that we might say, The prediction is true."

The prophet then informs us, that three perfections are included in the certain prediction of future events. First, the perfect and exalted degree of him (the One true God) who commands the prophet to proclaim such and such events. Second, the perfection of the prophet who declares the prophecy. Third, the perfection of the nation among whom the spirit of prophecy exists. But none of all these ever had existence, among any of the nations except the Jews; and therefore, he says, "There was not one that foretold it." Not one of all their oracles was able to predict it. "Not one that declared it." There was no true prophet among them, to declare it. "There was not one that heard your words." Here, as if speaking to the idols, he tells them that no one could hear their words; for that it was all fiction: neither were any of the nations worthy of having true prophets among them,

them, because they suffered themselves to be deluded by such vanities.

He then proceeds, ver. 27, "I first (say) to Zion, behold they are here; and to Jerusalem will I give the messenger of glad tidings." This sentence, I find, has greatly perplexed the generality of Christian commentators; who not being able to enter into the true spirit of the language, its idioms, and phraseology; have totally mistaken the sense of the passage: for it is not the reading of Hebrew superficially; or collating of incorrect and faulty manuscripts, how numerous soever, that forms the true Hebraist, and enables him to understand perfectly, the prophetic language, so as to know for a certainty, where an ellipsis, emendation, or transposition is necessary: No: these will not effect it: on the contrary, it requires a profound knowledge in the language, which is scarcely attainable, but by many years intense study, and application; especially, an early acquaintance with it in ones youth, so as to become habituated to it, as to a mother tongue. It therefore, is no wonder, that inferior judges, often imagine that to be obscure, which had they been thoroughly acquainted with the language

language, (so different in the boldness of its style: but above all, in the sudden transitions of person, time, and place) would have appeared exceeding clear. Of this, we have an instance, in the passage now under consideration: for Dr. Lowth, late Bishop of London, in his notes on Isaiah, observes, "This verse is somewhat obscure; by the transposition of the parts of the sentence, and the peculiar manner in which it is divided into parrallel lines." He then, attempts to explain the form and sense of it by a paraphrase, which is far from the real sense and meaning of the prophet, as will be shewn presently. And a late writer observes *, "The meaning of this verse is doubtful. I follow the LXX and Arabic, who seem to have had the word אָתָּן in the first sentence, and not in the last," But both these opinions, are so far from truth, that on the contrary, the verb אָתָּן *I will give*: has no connexion whatever with the first part of the sentence; the real meaning of which, I shall also explain by way of paraphrase: but must first premise that the prophet having
shewn

* A new translation of Isaiah, with Notes, &c. by a LAYMAN.

shewn the captivity of the ten tribes, as also their restoration at the coming of the Messiah; and having challenged the idols as above mentioned, observes in confirmation of the truth of divine revelation, "Of the first (i. e. their captivity) I say to Zion, Behold they are here;" Behold, it is already come to pass; so that ye may plainly see, that this prophecy is exactly fulfilled; and therefore, ye ought to believe the truth of the second prediction, viz. "That to Jerusalem I will give the messenger of glad tidings." This, is the real sense of the prophecy, in which, there is not the least obscurity, but the whole is thus rendered plain and connected. In the last two verses of the chapter, he again speaks of the vanity of the idols, &c.

In chapter xlii. verse 1st, till the end of verse 4th, he speaks of the Messiah, whom he characterizes as follows. First. That he is to be God's chosen servant, the same as was his ancestor David. "Behold my servant, on whom I will depend;" the same as a king depends on a confidential and tried servant. "My chosen in whom my soul delighteth." Second. He is to be endowed with the spirit
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of prophecy; "I have made my spirit rest upon him:" and thus says the prophet elsewhere, (chap. ii. 2.) "And the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him," &c. And as he will be thus gifted, he will not only judge his own people, but, "He shall bring forth judgment to the nations." Conformable to what the prophet said, (chap. ii. 4.) "And he shall judge among the nations; and he shall plead with many people." And as those who judge, or admonish, often express themselves, in a loud, haughty, authorative tone; the prophet informs us, that the conduct of the Messiah will be the very reverse of this, for, "He shall not cry aloud, nor raise a clamour, nor cause his voice to be heard without." Neither will he rule arbitrarily, nor oppress even the weak and defenceless, as he says verse 3d. "The bruised reed he shall not break; and the dimly burning flax, he shall not quench: he shall bring forth judgment to truth." For as his knowledge will not be a natural, but supernatural endowment, an emanation of the spirit of the holy God, he of course, will judge according to truth. He then informs us, verse 4th, that he will
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not be under the necessity of fatiguing himself, by being obliged to go about from place to place in different countries, in order to establish his authority, and inculcate his doctrine, for that the nations will of their own accord receive his law, and therefore, "He shall not be fatigued, nor (his force) be broken, until he hath firmly seated judgment, in the earth; and the islands shall earnestly wait for his law."

This, is the character of the Messiah, as given by the prophet, in a plain undisguised manner: and which Christians in general apply to Jesus. And Bishop Lowth, in his notes on Isaiah, observes, "In this chapter he proceeds to the great deliverance: and at once brings forth into full view, without throwing any veil of allegory over the subject, the Messiah. Behold, my servant, Messiah, says the Chaldee. St. Matthew has applied it directly to Christ: nor can it with any justice or propriety be applied to any other person or character whatever." That it cannot be applied to any person or character that has hitherto appeared, I heartily
assent

assent to ; but whoever will carefully and candidly, in an impartial and unprejudiced manner, take a view of the acts recorded of Jesus in the New Testament, and compare them with the character of the person here given, will be fully convinced that, he could not be the person meant by the prophet ; for not one of the conditions of the character of the Messiah, so plainly foretold by the prophet, was ever fulfilled in the person of Jesus : for in the first place, he was not entitled to the character of a prophet, because he was deficient in the essential character of a prophet, as I have shewn at large, in my Answer to Dr. Priestley's First Letters to the Jews. Second, he was so far from judging the nations, that he was not even a judge among those of his own nation, as I have already shewn in this work, and in my Letters to Dr. Priestley, &c. Much less did he fulfil the third condition, of firmly seating judgment in the earth. Nor fourthly, did the nations or islands earnestly wait for his law ; on the contrary, he went about from place to place preaching and teaching, &c. and afterwards sent out twelve
apostles

apostles to preach and inculcate his doctrine, which afterwards, from the time of Constantine, was so successfully promulgated by fire and sword, in direct opposition, to what the prophet informs us is to be the peaceable kingdom of the Messiah, as must fully convince every candid, impartial, and unbiassed mind, that the character here given of the Messiah, can by no means, with justice be applied to Jesus; because, not one of the characters which distinguish the Messiah, were accomplished in his person, consequently, the accomplishment of them remains to be fulfilled in the person of the true Messiah, who is to appear at the appointed time, to redeem the nation, as predicted by the prophet.

The prophet then proceeds to inform us, that we are not to consider the restoration of Israel by the Messiah, as a light and trivial matter: but that, considering the degraded and oppressed state of the nation, it may rather be deemed a species of creation, and therefore only to be effected by him, who created the world at the beginning, as he says, verse 5th. "Thus saith the God, even the LORD, who created the heavens, and stretched

stretched them out; who spread abroad the earth and the produce thereof; who giveth breath to the people upon it, and spirit to them who walk therein." He who hath done all this, he alone, is able to restore the nation, from its abject, and deplorable state; and therefore, speaking to the Messiah, he says, (verse 6th.) "I the LORD have called thee in righteousness;" I have a long time spoken of thee by the mouth of my prophets; and therefore, at the appointed time of the redemption, "I will take hold of thee, and will preserve thee:" I will give thee power and dominion above all men, and will support thee in it. "And I will give thee for a covenant to *my* people, for a light to the nations." You shall be a covenant of peace and safety to my people, and shalt also enlighten the nations, as farther explained, verse 7th. "To open the eyes of the blind; to bring the captive out of confinement; and from the dungeon, those that dwell in darkness." Here, the proper office of the Messiah is clearly shewn, as well in respect to the nations as to Israel: for as to the former, who may justly be said to be in a state of spiritual blindness on account of their not having a clear idea of the

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the truth and Unity of God: he is therefore, to enlighten them, and open their eyes to the truth: and as to the latter, who are in a state of bondage, he is to bring the captive out of confinement, &c. Thus, will he bring ALL to the knowledge of the true faith. And therefore, the prophet says, verse 8th, "I am JEHOVAH, that is my name; and my glory will I not give to another, nor my praise to the graven images." God will not then any longer, suffer any other to assume the honor due to him, as Creator of the world, as hath been, and as is the case at present, when men pay divine honors to images, and dead men; No; such things will then cease to be: for the Messiah will bring all mankind to the knowledge and worship of the One eternal living God. And as an evident proof of the truth of what he had thus predicted, he says, verse 9th, "The former predictions, lo! they are come to pass; and new events I now declare before they spring forth, I make them known unto you." Nothing can be a stronger, or more convincing proof of the truth of prophecy, and the accomplishment of the future events so foretold, than this position: for if the former prophecies,

prophecies, delivered so many centuries back, foretelling the dreadful calamities that were to befall the nation in consequence of their disobedience, and their dispersion into almost every part of the globe; and at the same time, clearly pointing out their miraculous preservation amidst such a number of surrounding enemies, have all been fully accomplished; not the least doubt, can possibly be entertained of the completion of the future events predicted by the prophet.

The prophet having in the preceding verses, shewn the great blessings that will attend the coming of the Messiah, who will be the means of bringing all mankind to the knowledge of the One true God; now exhorts them, to return thanks to him, for his great mercy and kindness: and also informs us, that God will not for ever suffer his people to remain in captivity, oppressed by their persecutors; but will rouse himself as a mighty man, to avenge them of their enemies, whom he emphatically styles his enemies; as in verse 10th, &c. "Sing unto the LORD a new song; his praise from the ends of the earth: ye that go down to the sea, and all that fill it: ye distant sea coasts,
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and ye that dwell therein. Let the desert, and the cities thereof lift up their voice; the villages inhabited by Kedar; let the inhabitants of the rock utter a joyful sound; let them shout from the top of the mountains: let them ascribe glory to the LORD; and in the islands make known his praise. The LORD shall march forth like an hero; like a mighty warrior shall he rouse his vengeance: he shall cry aloud; he shall shout again; he shall prevail over his enemies. I have long held my peace: shall I yet keep silence? shall I still contain myself? I will cry out like a woman in travail: I will swallow up, and devour them at once. I will make waste the mountains and hills, and burn up all the grass that is upon them: I will make the rivers islands; and scorch up the pools of water." He then informs us, that God will at that time lead his people back to the holy land, through ways not known to them; alluding to what the prophet Ezekiel said, (chap. xxv. 35.) "And I will bring you into the wilderness of the people," &c. as will be shewn at large in the explanation of that prophecy. He also shews that, at that time those who had trusted
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in idols and vanities, will be ashamed and confounded, verse 16th, &c. "I will lead the blind in a way, which they have not known; and through paths which they knew not will I guide them; I will turn darkness into light before them; and the rugged ways into a smooth plain. These things will I do for them, and will not forsake them. They who went backward, shall be utterly confounded, even they who trust in the graven image; who say unto the molten image, ye are our God!"

The prophet then proceeds to shew the cause of our captivity: for as he had in the preceding verses mentioned that, God had long held his peace; he now gives the reason, why God had thus long held his peace, and suffered his people to remain in captivity; because they did not hearken to the words of the prophets, but insulted them, as shewn verse 18th, &c. "Hear, O ye deaf; and ye blind, look attentively, that ye may see." Here the prophet upbraids them with acting as blind and deaf persons; since they would neither hear the words of the prophets, nor see, and consider the wonderful works of God: on the contrary, they

they scoffed at, and mocked, the prophet, saying, "Who is blind but my servant; and deaf as my messenger, whom I have sent: who is blind, as he who is perfect; and blind as the servant of the LORD?" This was the manner, they treated the prophets, and therefore, the prophet Hosea says, (Hos. chap. ix. 7.) "The days of visitation are come: the days of recompence are come, Israel shall know that the prophet was foolish, that the man of spirit was mad: for the greatness of thine iniquity, &c." The prophet thus proceeds, verse 20th, "Ye have often seen, but ye regard not; your ears are open, but ye hear not." Ye have frequently seen the wonderful works of God, but have not paid attention to them, nor would ye hear the admonitions of the prophets, though sent by God to instruct you, and lead you in the right path, for, "The LORD was pleased for his own righteousness sake, to magnify the Law, and adorn it." He was desirous that the law should be magnified and adorned by Israel, by their strict observance of it, for their salvation; and therefore, continually sent his prophets

prophets to admonish them; but as they would not hearken to them, they are spoiled, &c. verse 22d. "For this is a people, spoiled and plundered: all of them are snared in holes, and plunged in dark dungeons; they are become a spoil, and there is none to rescue them; a plunder, and no one said, restore."

He then proceeds to shew that, notwithstanding all this hath happened to them, yet, is there none, that attend to, and consider it as the effect of God's wrath: acknowledge their guilt, and return to the LORD to seek his forgiveness, in sincerity and truth, verse 23d, &c. "Who is there among you, that will listen to this, that will hearken, and attend to it for the future? Who hath given Jacob for a spoil, and Israel to plunderers? Was it not the LORD against whom they have sinned; in whose ways they would not walk, and whose law they would not obey? Therefore he poured out upon them the heat of his wrath, and the violence of war: and it kindled a flame about him, yet did he not perceive it; and it burned him, yet he did not consider it."

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The prophet having thus shewn the cause of their dreadful captivity, &c. proceeds now to comfort them, by assuring them, that although they were on account of their manifold sins, sent into captivity, yet, should they not be afraid of being totally annihilated amongst the nations, whither they should be driven, as was the case of many great and powerful monarchies; for that he who created and formed them, would most assuredly protect them, chap. xlii. verse 1st. "Yet now, thus saith the LORD, who created thee, O Jacob; and who formed thee, O Israel: Fear thou not, for I have redeemed thee; I have called thee by thy name, thou art mine. When thou passest through waters, I am with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm thee: when thou walkest in the fire, thou shalt not be scorched; and the flame shall not take hold of thee." By this figurative language, the prophet clearly points to what hath befallen the nation in Spain, Portugal, and other parts, during this long and dreadful captivity: viz. that on account of the numerous fearful persecutions and massacres which they suffered, numbers who were not possessed of sufficient

sufficient courage and fortitude to hold up against these afflictions, apostatized; others had their children forced from them, as already mentioned; which clearly shews us, that though this hath happened to them, yet are they not to be entirely separated from Israel; but shall most assuredly be united again to the nation, as God says, "I have called thee by thy name: thou art mine." For as I originally called thee by thy name, and made choice of thee, to be my peculiar chosen people, it is not in thy power, by any means, to incorporate thyself with any other nation, or religion, without my consent; for thou art mine, and mine, thou must then of necessity remain: and therefore, though, "Thou passest through the waters, I am with thee. Although thou shouldest be baptized with water; yet, am I with thee; thou canst not withdraw thyself from my service; for though thou shouldest pass through all the rivers, yet, would they be insufficient, to wash thee, from thy allegiance to me: and which hath really been the case: for almost all those who apostatized, dissembled, and returned to the bosom of the nation, on the first opportunity that offered; and their descendants are continually

continually doing it to this day, as has been before quoted. And the consequence of this is, that they have constantly been accused of relapsing to Judaism, and are therefore without mercy, frequently committed to the flames by the inquisition: the prophet therefore assures them, that though they walk through the fire, they shall not be scorched; and the flame shall not take hold of them. Although their bodies are thus delivered over to the fire, yet shall not their souls, their immortal part be scorched, nor the flame take hold of it: "For I am the LORD, thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour; I have given Egypt for thy ransom; Cush, and Seba, in thy stead." And, as I have aforesaid given Egypt, &c. for thy ransom, so, "Because thou hast been precious in my sight, thou hast been honored, and I have loved thee: therefore, will I give men instead of thee, and people instead of thy soul. Fear thou not, for I am with thee: from the east I will bring thy children, and from the west I will gather thee together: I will say to the north, give up; and to the south, withhold not: bring my sons from afar; and my daughters from the ends of the earth; every
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one that is called by my name, and whom for my glory I have created; whom I have formed, yea, whom I have made." The prophet thus, plainly shews the restoration of the nation from all parts of the world, where they are dispersed in this present captivity; and that they are all to be collected; all that have been, or are called by his name; every one that belonged to the nation, called his peculiar people; although they or their parents had apostatized; yet, are they all to be collected; not one is to be left among the nations; because he had formed them, and chosen them for his glory; to hand down the knowledge of his Unity among the nations; and at their restoration, be the means, of bringing all mankind to the true knowledge of God; when he alone, will be acknowledged, and all false worship abolished: which may very justly be called, the true glory of God. These events, it must be acknowledged, have never yet been fulfilled, not at their return from the Babylonish captivity; and much less in the person of Jesus: for he was so far, from collecting the lost sheep of Israel, and punishing their enemies, as here foretold by the prophet; that on the
contrary

contrary, in his time, their enemies grew strong and powerful, and a few years after his death, carried them captive out of their land, which they have never recovered, but remain scattered in all parts of the globe to this very day. Whence it is manifest, that this prophecy, remains to be accomplished.

The eighth prophecy, commences chap. xlixth. verse 7th, and is continued to the end of the last verse of the same.

The purport of this prophecy is clear; its introduction is obvious: "Thus saith the LORD, the redeemer of Israel, his sanctifier." By this expression, the prophet informs us, that God was not only the temporal redeemer of Israel, but that he was their spiritual redeemer also; their sanctifier. He then proceeds, "To the despised soul; the abhorred nation; the servant of (many) rulers." In these few lines, the prophet has with a masterly hand, drawn a picture of the real abject state of the nation, and the estimation in which they are held, in this present captivity: for in the first place, Christians consider them, as a blind, obstinate, and superstitious people; laboring under a spiritual blindness: and that
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having crucified the lord of life, and still continuing to reject him, they are now in a state of damnation, and cannot be saved, unless they are regenerated by baptism, and thus brought into the bosom of the Church: he therefore, justly calls them, "the despised soul:" for their souls are considered as actually lost to salvation, in the state they are in at present. Secondly, being deprived of all temporal honor and glory, and on account of some peculiarities of feature, &c. held in perfect contempt; the prophet very properly calls them, "the abhorred nation." He then, thirdly, shews their extreme misery, in being "the servant of many rulers;" so that they are not oppressed by one master only, but are cruelly treated by different masters; and as these masters are sometimes at enmity with each other, they are sure to suffer, let who will prevail, and are not compassionated by any, nay, even the halcion days of peace, and the joyful moments of tranquillity, have been equally fatal to them, with those of war. The truth of this, may be easily proved, by a reference to their history in the east,

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in Spain *, Portugal, England, &c. where we may find, what prodigious numbers of our miserable and ill-fated ancestors were massacred, in cool blood, for pretended transgressions, the commission of which, was not only untrue, but impossible, as will be shewn more at large, in the second part of this work. The prophet therefore, to comfort them, assures them of the enjoyment of three things, instead of their sufferings, that will be really glorious and honorable to them; both as to their temporal, and spiritual state: for instead of being a servant to many masters, "Kings shall see (them) and rise up:" and instead of being an abhorred nation, "princes also shall worship (them.*)" And he farther informs them, that this would not be on account of their great power, &c. but, "For the sake of the LORD, who is faithful." Who is faithful in the performance of his promise to redeem them, which will then be fulfilled. And, instead of the reproach now cast upon them, on account of their religious tenets, for which, he calls them,

* See Basnage's History of the Jews. Anglo Judacai, &c.

them, "the despised soul," he informs us, that they will be acknowledged to be an holy and sanctified people, "Because of the Holy One of Israel, for he hath chosen thee." And who, consequently, will endow them with a state of spiritual perfection, under the immediate protection of his divine providence.

The Supreme Being then informs the prophet when this will be, verse 8th, "Thus saith the LORD: In the season of acceptance have I heard thee, and in the day of salvation have I helped thee:" Be not surprised, that I have not during this long captivity, answered thee in thy troubles, by redeeming thee; for behold, there is a certain appointed season for thy redemption, which, it shall by no means exceed: being the time, I determined to punish you in captivity, for your sins; from which, being cleansed, the acceptable season will commence, when I will answer you: and on the day decreed by me, for your salvation, I will help, and save you. But, as you may say, who will live to see this day? as perhaps, long before the appointed time, our enemies, by the cruel and dreadful afflictions which they inflict upon us, may totally destroy and annihilate us:

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I assure you, "That I will preserve thee;" I will preserve thee during the captivity: and at the time of thy redemption, will "Give thee for a covenant of the people." Ye shall be my covenanted established people for ever. And thus says Moses, (Deut. xxviii 9.) "The LORD shall establish thee an holy people unto himself &c." And at that time, the resurrection will also take place; for the appointed day above mentioned, shall be, "To restore the earth:" That is, as Jonathan explains it, **לאקמא צדיקיא דשכבין בעפרא** To raise up the righteous who sleep in the dust.

The prophet then, again mentions their return to their land, the redemption of the captives, and the resurrection of the dead: for as to the first, he says, "To cause the desolate heritages to be possessed." To cause them to possess their ancient inheritance, which hath been desolate, during this long captivity. Concerning the second, he says, "Saying to those who are bound, go forth;" For the captives, are compared to prisoners bound with fetters. And of the third, he says, "And to those that are in darkness, appear:" for the dead, are actually in the dark, in their graves

graves covered with earth; but at the time of the resurrection, will appear publicly to mankind. He also informs us, that they all will be restored, and that during their journey, they shall not be in want of any thing: "They shall feed beside the ways, and on all the eminences shall be their pasture. They shall not hunger, neither shall they thirst; neither shall the glowing heat, or the sun smite them: for he that hath compassion upon them, shall lead them: and by the springs of water, he will guide them. And I will make all my mountains an even way; and my causeys shall be raised on high. Lo! these shall come from afar; and lo! these from the north and west; and these from the land of Sinim." The description of the journey, the plenty that is to attend them, and the guidance of them by the LORD JEHOVAH; together with their collection from the four quarters of the globe: (for by the expression from afar, properly denotes the same, as if he had said **ממזרח** from the east, because, the east is far from the land of promise, it being situated rather more to the west. And the land of Sinim, denotes the south, as Jonathan observes, **מארע**

דרומא

מִן הַיָּם הַיָּבֵיטָה From the land of the south) all plainly demonstrate, that this prophecy, was not fulfilled at their return from the Babylonish captivity, as Christian commentators in general seem to explain it: neither will any be so hardy, as to say, that it was fulfilled by Jesus; as it does not in any one instance accord with any act of his recorded in the New Testament: of course, it is manifest, that it points to the future glorious restoration of the nation, from this present captivity, in the person of the true Messiah: and the latter part of the prophecy, tends greatly to strengthen the truth and force of this position.

In verse 13th, the prophet exhorts all nature to give thanks to God, for the great deliverance of his chosen people. Sing aloud, O ye heavens: and rejoice, O earth; ye mountains burst forth into song; for the LORD hath comforted his people, and will have compassion on his afflicted."

The prophet then proceeds to exhibit the complaint of Zion, during this long captivity, together with God's kind and animating answer. "But Zion saith, the LORD hath forsaken me, and my LORD hath forgotten me. Can a women

women forget her sucking infant; that she should have no tenderness for the son of her womb? even these may forget; but I will not forget thee." And here, it is proper, that we enquire, why God's answer, was not commensurate to Zion's complaint: for the complaint of Zion was twofold, viz. that the LORD had forsaken her, and that he had also forgotten her: whereas, God only answers her concerning the forgetfulness, but is silent to the charge of forsaking her: the reason of which is, that Zion, during this long captivity, complained, that the LORD had forsaken her, as a woman, whose husband hath forsaken, and left her and gone far distant from her; thus hath he left her a prey to the nations, without relieving her from her misery; and also complains, that he had not thus only forsaken her, but had also forgotten her, as if she was totally erased from his heart, and was no more in being: so that there is not the least hope of his ever returning to her again. To this, God answers, by seeming to acknowledge that, he had indeed forsaken her, on account of her manifold sins, but that he had by no means forgotten her, and therefore, brings an example from those whose
tenderness

tenderness is most exemplary, to shew that, although such might perhaps forget, yet, would he not forget; and as a proof, observes, verse 16. "Behold, on the palms of my hands have I delineated thee: thy walls are for ever in my sight." As it might have been common with mankind, when they wished to remember any thing in a particular manner, to bind something about their hands, or fingers, or perhaps write it on their hands; so, God, when speaking according to the language of man; expresses himself thus, to shew that, he is continually thinking of them; and that their walls, which are broken down, are for ever in his sight, always thinking to restore them to their former state. And it is not a little surprising, that Bishop Lowth, in his notes on this passage, should observe, "This is certainly an allusion to some practice, common among the Jews at that time, of making marks on their hands and arms, by punctures on the skin, &c.— They had a method of making such punctures indelible by fire, or by staining. See note on chap. xlv. 5 *." It is well known, that
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* In this Note, he has committed, a far greater blunder; and which clearly evinces his ignorance of the Prophetic language, and his slavish

the pilgrims at the holy sepulchre get themselves marked in this manner, with what are called the Ensigns of Jerusalem. Maundrel p. 75; where he tells us how it is performed; and this art is practiced by travelling Jews all over the world, at this day." As it is not to be supposed, that he could be so ignorant of the Jewish Ritual, as not to know, that the making of marks by punctures on the skin in the manner he describes, was strictly forbidden them, (Levit. xix. 28.) how could he then suppose it to be a practice common among them at that time? What! because ignorant, zealous, bigotted, and superstitious pilgrims, get themselves marked, at what they call the holy sepulchre, with some foolish signs, are the Jews therefore to be branded with a crime to which they were strangers? But is it reasonable to suppose, that God would make use of an image (allowing for a moment, that they had fallen into such an unlawful practice) so highly offensive to him,

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adherence to a wretched system, of correcting the printed text by manuscripts, &c. (See Jarchi, Kimchi, Aben Ezra, &c.) and of which, I mean to take notice in a future publication, dedicated entirely to that subject, and Kennicot's foolish, and ridiculous scheme.

as this must be, being the direct contrary to what he had commanded; to shew his continual regard and attention towards them: for that would appear, as approving of the practice, which he had condemned by the hand of his servant Moses: I am sure, nothing can be more absurd and improbable, than a supposition like this. He seems also to have been as little acquainted with their customs and manners at this present time; for no such art is practiced by the travelling Jews all over the world, at this day, as he has asserted: as I never knew, nor heard of any such in my life; notwithstanding a strict enquiry on this subject, in my correspondence with the learned Jews in several parts of the world, as well as those in this kingdom.

The prophet having thus shewn, that God had not forgotten them, but was continually thinking of them and their restoration; observes, "Thy children made haste:" Although I have not forgotten thee, yet have thy children the children of Zion, made haste to forget their country: they had no regard for it, but were the cause of its destruction, for, "Thy destroyers,

destroyers, and they that made thee waste, came forth of thee *." They were thine own offspring: which plainly shews, that they had forgotten their relationship to thee.

In contrast to this, the prophet proceeds to inform us, that at the time of the redemption, they will all be gathered together, from all parts of the globe; so that the country will be replenished and adorned with them: and that although they have been so greatly reduced in the captivity, by their extreme sufferings; yet, should they be so abundant at the restoration, as to be strained for room; as in verse 18th, &c. "Lift up thine eyes around, and see; all these are gathered together, they come to thee. As I live, saith the LORD, surely thou shalt clothe and bind thyself with them all, as the bride doth her ornaments. For thy waste, and thy desolate places,

* I cannot here forbear observing, that, Bishop Lowth's note on this verse, is one of the most false, and wretched pieces of criticism ever penned; and appears to me, to be the consequence of an infatuate adherence to systems; one of which, as already mentioned in the preceding note, may not unaptly be called the SCRIPTURE CORRECTING MANIA, with which, for some few years back, the Christian commentators, but more especially, the Authors of the *New*, and *Metric* translations of the Prophetic writings, have been so miserably afflicted.

places, and thy land laid in ruins: even now it shall be strained with inhabitants; and they that devoured thee, shall be removed far away. The sons, of whom thou wast bereaved, shall yet say in thine ears; this place is too strait for me; make room for me, that I may dwell. And thou shalt say in thine heart: who hath begotten me these? I was bereaved of my children, and solitary; an exile, and an out-cast; who then hath nursed these up? Lo! I was abandoned, and alone; these then, where were they?" As Zion will thus be surprised at the sudden return of her children, the prophet informs her, that all this will be effected by the power of God, who will make the very nations, that have hitherto so cruelly persecuted them, be the instruments of their restoration, as in verse 22d. &c. "Thus saith the LORD God: behold, I will lift up my hand to the nations; and to the people will I exalt my signal; and they shall bring thy sons in their bosom, and thy daughters shall be borne on their shoulders: and kings shall be thy foster fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers; with their faces to the earth, they shall bow down unto thee, and shall lick the dust

dust of thy feet. And thou shalt know that I am the LORD; and that those who trust in him, shall not be ashamed."

As mankind in general, may doubt the accomplishment of this promise, on account of the great power and strength of the nations; the prophet introduces them as arguing on the subject, as also God's answer to their reasoning; verse 24th, &c. "shall the spoil be taken away from the mighty? or shall the lawful captive be rescued?" For these were lawfully taken in battle; and therefore justly detained. "But thus saith the LORD: The captives of the mighty shall be retaken;" for I am more mighty than you. "And the spoil seized by the violent shall be rescued." For ye took it not lawfully, but by force and violence; it therefore shall not only be delivered out of your hands: but I will punish you in a most exemplary manner; and make ye the instruments of your own punishment; as in the latter part of verse 25th, &c. "For with those, that contended with thee, I will contend; and thy children I will deliver. And I will gorge thine oppressors with their own flesh; and with their own blood as with new wine, will I drench them: and
all

all flesh shall know, that I the LORD am thy Saviour; and that thy redeemer is the Mighty One of Jacob."

From the whole tenour of this prophecy, it must be manifest to every dispassionate mind, that it hath never yet been fulfilled: for their return from Babylon does not accord with any one feature of it: for as to their journey from thence, it did not in the least resemble that here described by the prophet: neither did they return from the east, north, and west, and the land of Sinim, or the south: whence it is clear, that this prophecy denotes the return of the *whole* nation: not the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin only, but the other ten tribes also: whose return, together with those that have apostatized, and those who shall rise at the resurrection, will so encrease their numbers, as to render the words of the prophet concerning the great populousness of the nation, which at present is so greatly reduced by their sufferings, as to raise doubts of the accomplishment of the prophecy, perfectly just, and strictly conformable to truth: this, it is well known, did not take place at their return from the Babylonish captivity.

captivity. Neither were they so long in captivity in Babylon, (not above fifty years) as that Zion could with propriety say, the LORD had forsaken, and forgotten her: neither were they held in such contempt and abhorrence in Babylon; nor after their return, were they held in such veneration, by kings, &c. as here mentioned: nor were their enemies punished, as the prophet declares they shall be, &c. And it would be wasting time to no purpose, to enquire, whether Jesus ever fulfilled this prophecy, as nothing of the kind, ever took place in his time; we therefore, cannot entertain the least doubt, of its full accomplishment by the true Messiah whose especial mission is, to restore the dispersed sheep of Israel, plant them safely in their own land, and subdue their enemies; and thereby, bring the whole world to the knowledge of the One true God. Amen.

The ninth prophecy, commences chapter 51st. verse 1st. and is continued to the end of verse 12th of chapter liid.

Before we proceed, it will be necessary to observe, that there are three following paragraphs, beginning with the same expression:

viz.

viz. Hearken to me ; attend to me ; hearken to me ; it is proper therefore, to enquire into the cause of this singularity, as the learned Abarbanal observes. The solution will presently appear, when we consider, that there are three great doubts, that naturally arise in the mind of the nation concerning the impediments that obstruct, and may prevent their future redemption ever taking place: First, on account of the great diminution which they have suffered in their numbers, by persecutions, banishments, &c. during this long and dreadful captivity ; so that there are now but very few to partake of it, if it should take place. Second, if the redemption is not to take place on account of the repentance, and righteousness of the nation, (as already mentioned in the course of the work,) but according to the absolute will and pleasure of the Supreme Being, we may ask, say they, why God will be pleased to redeem them ? and what is the reason that he will then be pleased to redeem them, since he hath not been pleased to redeem them hitherto, during this long captivity ? Third, on account of the great power and strength of the nations, amidst whom they dwell ;

dwell, as already mentioned; and who no doubt would instantly crush every attempt made towards the least innovation, or change in the balance of power; so that it would be next to an impossibility for them to assemble together from the different parts where they are dispersed in small bodies: because, such rising, would by the ruling powers, be termed rebellion, and insurrection against the state where they are settled; and would doubtless cause no small commotion in every country where they should rise: it consequently, would quickly be prevented, and crushed in the bud: they therefore, cannot morally hope for any thing else, but to remain as they are, dispersed in all parts, and subject to the state where they reside.

Now, in order to remove the doubts raised by these impediments; the prophet makes use of those expressions, in the forementioned paragraphs: for as to the first, viz. their diminution he says, "Hearken unto me, ye that pursue righteousness, ye that seek the LORD." For I do not mean, says he, to enter into a discussion with perverse and obstinate unbelievers, who will not acknowledge
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the force and truth of an argument, though it stares them in the face: but with ye, who pursue righteousness: who are willing to hear, and be convinced by the force of truth; and who seek the LORD: who properly and justly attribute every occurrence to the immediate providence of God: it is to you, that I say, "Look unto the rock, from whence ye were hewn, and to the hollow of the cave, whence ye were digged. Look unto Abraham your father; and unto Sarah, who bore you: for I called him a single person, and I blessed, and I multiplied him." Gen. xii. 1. I did not call a whole nation, or a great and numerous family, but a single person; one who continued so long childless, as almost to despair of ever having any: and as I then miraculously blessed and multiplied him: even thus shall the nation, after having been so long in captivity, as almost to despair of ever being redeemed; be visited, blessed, and multiplied, verse 3d. "Therefore the LORD shall console Zion: he shall console all her desolations: and he shall make her wilderness like Eden; and her desert like the garden

garden of the LORD: joy and gladness shall be found in her; thanksgiving, and the voice of melody."

Having thus answered the first objection or doubt, he proceeds to notice the second, as in verse 4th. "Attend unto me, O my people; and give ear unto me, O my nation; for the law from me shall proceed; and my sentence will I cause to give rest, (and be) a light to the people." You, (says the prophet in the person of the Supreme Being) who are my own people, and my own nation, ought to put confidence in my promises, and to believe, that the decree which I have decreed for your redemption, as well as that for your captivity, shall most certainly be accomplished; although the captivity hath continued thus long; and which decree, shall also give rest to the nations; shall cause peace to reign on earth, as the prophet says elsewhere, "And they shall beat their swords into plough-shares, &c." Isai. ii. 4. For, "My righteousness is at hand; my salvation is gone forth; and mine arm shall dispense judgment to all the people: me the distant nations shall expect; and to mine arm they shall look with confidence." The latter part of this
verse,

verse, may be said to be fulfilling at this present time; for all the nations, Christians as well as Jews, seem to talk with confidence of the speedy restoration of the nation, and the sudden appearance of the true Messiah. The prophet in confirmation of the truth of his prediction, proceeds to declare that, the heavens and the earth, and all that is therein, shall sooner be dissolved and perish, than that the faithful completion of God's promises to deliver his people, should fail, verse 6th *. Lift up unto the heavens your eyes; and look down unto the earth beneath: verily the heavens shall dissolve, like smoke; and the earth shall vex old, like a garment; and its inhabitants shall perish in like manner: but my salvation shall endure for ever; and my righteousness shall not decay,"

Having thus answered the second objection, he proceeds to the third, viz. the subjection they are in to the nations, as in verse 7th, 8th, "Hearken unto me, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law:" ye, who
know

* And thus says the Prophet Jeremiah, chap. xxxi. 96. "If those ordinances depart from before me, saith the LORD, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me for ever."

know and pursue righteousness, as mentioned in the first paragraph, in answer to the first objection; and who believe that my law and sentence shall be fulfilled, as in the second answer: ye who thus believe both these promises, “Fear not the reproach of wretched man; neither be ye borne down by their revilings * : for the moth shall consume them, like a garment; and the worm shall eat them, like wool: but my righteousness shall endure for ever; and my salvation to the age of ages.” This answer, is perfectly conformable to the objection: for the prophet, by the images of the moth and worm, shews, that as those small diminutive creatures, will consume and destroy a large garment, or a great quantity of wool, so shall they who are weak, and but few in number, prevail over those strong and powerful nations, who oppressed and persecuted them: and from whom, his righteousness and salvations shall never after depart.

The prophet, verse 9th, speaks in his own person, which is continued to the end of verse
11th.

* How fully this hath been accomplished, need not be insisted upon; as the contempt the nation is held in, is well known.

11th. For, as God in the three preceding sentences, had commanded him to promise deliverance to the nation, &c. and had made use of the expressions, " Mine arm shall dispense judgment, &c." He also in his address, makes use of the same expression, and by way of prayer, entreats him to exert that powerful arm, as he hath promised, saying, " Awake, awake, clothe thyself with strength, O arm of the LORD ! Awake as in days of old, the ancient generations. Art thou not the same, that smote Rahab, that wounded the dragon ? Art thou not the same, that dried up the sea, the waters of the great deep ? that made the depths of the sea a path for the redeemed to pass through : thus may the ransomed of the LORD return, and come to Zion with loud acclamation : and everlasting gladness crown their heads ; joy and gladness shall they obtain, and sorrow and sighing shall flee * away."

The prophet having thus delivered his ejaculation, God immediately answers him, " I, even I,

● It must be observed, that the exact words contained in verse 11, have already occurred in chap. xxxv. 10. But there, the passage must be considered, as a promise ; and here the prophet makes use of it by way of prayer, that, that very promise might be fulfilled in every particular.

I, am he that comforteth you:" and therefore, "Who art thou, that thou shouldest fear wretched man, that dieth; and the son of man, that shall become as grass? And shouldest forget the LORD thy maker, who stretched out the heavens, and formed the earth; and shouldest every day be in continued fear, because of the fury of the oppressor, as if he were just ready to destroy: and where now is the fury of the oppressor?" Ye stand in awe and fear of the surrounding nations who oppress you, and try all human means to escape from their fury: not considering that, they are but mortals, who may be suddenly cut off as grass: and at the same time are not afraid, of offending God thy maker: and dost forget that, unless he permits them to oppress thee for thy sins, it is not in their power to injure thee: on the contrary, it is in his power, to convert their very enmity into love, as Solomon says, "When a man's ways are approved by the LORD, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him." Prov. xvi. 7. And therefore, hadst thou repented, and "Cried aloud, he would have hastened to loosen *the bonds of* the captive, that

that he may not die in the dungeon, and that his bread may not fail. For I am the LORD thy God; who stilleth the sea, when the waves thereof roar: the LORD of Hosts is his name." By this image, the prophet shews that, both the oppressions which they suffer, and the tranquillity which they at times enjoy, and which he so forcibly describes, by the stilling of the roaring waves of the sea; are not the effects of accident, but proceed from the particular providence of God; who hath, and will still continue to watch over them till the time of their redemption, which he describes by the image of stretching the heavens, &c. as in verse 16th. "I have put my words in thy mouth; and with the shadow of my hand have I covered thee." I have hitherto protected thee, amidst the numerous enemies who surround thee; and that, because of my law; for I have put my words in thy mouth, that thou mayest continually speak of the words that I have commanded thee: Deut. vi. 7. thus shalt thou continue to be protected, till the time comes, "To stretch out the heavens, and to lay the foundations of the earth; and to say unto Zion, Thou art my people."

After this great, this important, and animating promise, the prophet says, "Rouse thyself, rouse thyself up, arise, O Jerusalem! who hast drunken from the hand of the LORD, the cup of his fury: the dregs of the cup of trembling, thou hast drunken, thou hast wrung them out. There is not one to lead her, of all her sons which she hath brought forth; neither is there one to support her by the hand, of all the sons which she hath brought up. These two things * have befallen thee; who shall bemoan thee? desolation, and destruction, the famine, and the sword; who shall comfort thee? Thy sons lie astonished; they are cast down; at the head of the streets, like the wild bull taken in the toils; drenched to the full with

* By this expression, the prophet points to the two captivities; namely, that of Babylon, and the present; during which, they have suffered the four great afflictions of desolation, destruction, &c. And in verse 20, the prophet mentions a fifth also, viz. Thy sons lie astonished, &c. This, is the real meaning of the expression of the prophet; the which, if Bishop Lowth had rightly understood, he would not have been so precipitate in censuring the Chaldee paraphrast, (who it is to be supposed, was much better acquainted with the idiom, phraseology, and form of the prophetic language than himself) as he has, for not rightly understanding the passage, as he absurdly thought; but which is the consequence of the system he has formed, that the prophet is speaking of the Babylonish captivity, than which, nothing can be falser. See Notes on Isai. chap. li. 19.

with the fury of the LORD, with the rebuke of thy God."

By this bold image of the cup of God's wrath, the prophet exhorts them to consider that, all the troubles which they have experienced, have been the consequence of the dreadful denunciations of God against them, for their heinous offences committed against him, who therefore, caused them to drink the cup to the dregs; that is, hath brought the full measure of all the inflictions denounced against them in the law, upon them: for this is the meaning of this image, here employed by the prophet with great force and sublimity; where Jerusalem is represented as staggering under the effects of it, destitute of that assistance which she might naturally expect, and hope for from her children; not one of them being able to support, or lead her: for they, abject and amazed, lie at the head of every street, overwhelmed with the greatness of their distress; like the wild bull intangled in a net, in vain struggling to rend it, and extricate himself. This, (as Bishop Lowth observes) is poetry of the first order, sublimity of the highest proof.

He then observes that, when they shall have received the full measure of their punishment for all their sins, God will say to the nation, "Therefore hear now this, O thou afflicted; and thou drunken, but not with wine. Thus saith thy LORD the LORD, and thy God, who avengeth his people." For while in captivity, thou didst exclaim, "O LORD, our God! other lords, besides thee, have had dominion over us." (As already observed.) But at that time, the LORD alone will be thy LORD, and thy God; who will plead thy cause, and avenge thee of thine enemies; and will cause thee to hear these gladsome tidings, "Behold, I have taken from thy hand the cup of trembling; the dregs of the cup of my fury; thou shalt drink of it again no more. But I will put it into the hand of them who oppressed thee; who said to thy soul, bow down that we may go over; and thou didst lay down thy body, as the ground; and as the street, to them that pass along."

The prophet, thus shews the perfect restoration of the nation, and the punishment of their enemies; and also informs us that,
they

they shall no more drink of the cup; shall no more go into captivity; and therefore says, chap. liid. verse 1st. "Awake, awake; be clothed with thy strength, O Zion: clothe thyself with thy glorious garments, O Jerusalem, thou holy city! For no more shall enter into thee, the uncircumcised and the polluted. Shake thyself from the dust: arise, sit (on thy lofty seat) O Jerusalem: loose thyself from the bands of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion." By the expression of the uncircumcised and polluted entering: the prophet plainly shews, that none of the nations shall ever more, have power over, or be able to oppress the nation: which is an evident proof, that they are no more, after the restoration here foretold, ever to go into captivity: this perfectly agrees with what he says, (chap. 51st. verse 11th.) that their heads shall be crowned with everlasting gladness.

In verse 3d. he points to the cause of their captivity, and the manner of their redemption. "For thus saith the LORD: for nought were ye sold; and not with money shall ye be ransomed." By this figure, the prophet shews that they were carried captive as a punishment

for

for the enormous crimes they had committed; and therefore, justly observes, that they were sold for nought; they were considered as insignificant, as a base and worthless slave, whom his master is glad to get rid of at any rate, even for the merest trifle; being reckoned only an useless burthen: as the Psalmist says, "Thou hast sold thy people for nought, and hast not increased (thy wealth) by their price." (Psalm. xliv. 13.) And that at the time of their redemption, they will likewise be redeemed without money: that is, without repentance, good deeds, or any merit of theirs; but solely by the absolute will and pleasure of the Supreme Being, after they have received the full measure of their punishment; as already mentioned; for the prophet, by his prescience, clearly foresaw that, they would not by a sincere repentance, be deserving of redemption: and therefore, compares their redemption to their captivity: that is, that they would be equally sinful at the time of their redemption, as at the time of their captivity.

He then proceeds to state the three different

ferent captivities, as they may be called *; viz. that of Egypt, Babylon, and the present; as in verse 4, and 5. "For thus saith the LORD: My people went down to Egypt aforetime, to sojourn there: but the Assyrian oppressed them without cause. And now, what have I to do here, saith the LORD: since my people are taken away for nought: (and) they that bear rule over them, make their boast of it, saith the LORD: and continually every day my name is blasphemed."

For they were not carried captive into Egypt, but only went to sojourn there, at the direct invitation of Pharaoh: Gen. xlv. 18, &c. the Egyptians therefore, who kept them afterwards in bondage, most grossly abused the rights of hospitality, by detaining them: he therefore, observes, "My people went down to Egypt, &c." They went down of their own accord, and were unjustly enslaved there. But even this plea, speaking of the Babylonish captivity, the Assyrian had not: for they did not go down to Babylon, but were taken by violence from their own land, and carried away captive: so
that

* Though the present, is properly a continuation of the Babylonish captivity.

that the Assyrian oppressed them without cause. As to the third, or present captivity, he observes, "And now, what have I more to do, saith the LORD, &c." For this captivity not only includes both the former calamities; but a much greater one, viz. the profanation of God's holy name: for the Romans, who destroyed Jerusalem, acted as the Assyrians did, by violently carrying them away captive; and numbers of the nation afterwards left the holy land, and went and sojourned among the nations, as they did when they went down to Egypt, and which has been the cause of a most dreadful misfortune, which hath rendered this captivity by far more terrible than the others: for by their being thus dispersed, and subjected to the different nations, who make their boast of it; saying, that they were thus driven out of their country, and scattered over the face of the earth, because they had crucified the lord of life, and saviour of the world, by whom all things were made: the consequence is, that the name of God is thereby continually profaned and blasphemed: for as Dr. Priestly observes *,

" If

* Letters to Dr. Horsley, in answer to his animadversions on the history of the corruptions of Christianity, page 109.

“If it be impiety to reduce a God to the state of a man, is it not equally *impious* to raise any man to a state of equality with God, that God who has declared, that he will not give his glory to another, who has no equal, and who in this respect stiles himself a jealous God? This you say, respects the gods of the Heathens. But what were the Heathen gods, but either the sun, moon and stars, or dead men, all creatures of God, deriving their power from him? And if Christ be not God, he must be a creature of God too; for there can be no medium between creature and creator.” Hence, it is manifest, that God’s name cannot be exposed to greater contempt and blasphemy, than by making any one equal to, or associate with him: against which, he has so solemnly declared, “To whom then will ye liken me? And to whom shall I be equaled? saith the Holy One.” (Isai. xl. 25.) “To whom will ye liken me, and equal me? and to whom will ye compare me, that we may be like? (Ibid xlvi. 5.) This prophanation of God’s name, the prophet seems to point out to us, as the principle cause of their redemption, exactly conformable to what Moses says: and Ezekiel (in chap. xxxvith. verse

verse 6th, says) " Thus saith the LORD God : not for your sakes do I this, O house of Israel, but for mine holy name, which ye have profaned among the nations, whither ye are gone, &c." And therefore when the redemption takes place, God's people will be confirmed in the truth of the doctrine, which they had always embraced, concerning the Unity of God, and the truth of the eternal existence of his name, as the only true God ; when his name shall no longer be thus profaned by false doctrines and opinions : as they will know, and be convinced of the truth of the promises delivered by the prophets, when they see the full accomplishment of them in the redemption and salvation of the nation, and not in confirmation of false and erroneous principles, as in verse 6th. " Therefore shall my people know my name : for in that day (they shall see) that I am he that did speak ; and lo ! here I am ! " I am the same that promised, and spake of their redemption to the prophets ; and I am the self same now : for I have not undergone any change, nor associated any other with me.

The prophet then in most sublime language,
describes

describes the sudden appearance of the messenger, bringing the long expected, and so much wished for news, of the deliverance and salvation of God's people from this dreadful captivity, verse 7th. "How beautiful appear on the mountains the feet of the joyful messenger; of him, that publisheth peace! of the joyful messenger of good: of him that announceth salvation! of him, that sayeth unto Zion, thy God reigneth!" This description of the proclamation of the joyful tidings, is highly poetical: and in order to understand it rightly, it is necessary, that we enquire into the meaning of the different expressions made use of by the prophet, and that of Nahum, which some take to be an imitation of this very pleasing image *: for Isaiah makes use of four different expressions: whereas Nahum only says, "Behold upon the mountains the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace." Nahum. ii. 1. But the true reason of this, as I shall shew, is, that Isaiah speaks of the future restoration and salvation of Israel, as also of the peaceable state
of

* Lowth on Isai. lii 7. Note.

of all the nations of the earth, in the time of the Messiah; and therefore, makes use of different expressions; which may not improperly be called general and particular. The former to all the nations at large, and the latter, to the Jews in particular. For to the nations he says, "Of him, that publisheth peace; of the joyful messenger of good." Because he will publish universal peace to all the world; so that, "Nation shall not lift up sword against nation; neither shall they learn war any more." Isai. ii. 4. And he will likewise be "the joyful messenger of good:" as by this love and universal peace, all mankind will be brought to the knowledge of the one true God; which is the only true, real, and desirable good. But to the Jews, he proclaims the glad tidings of God's salvation, in the deliverance of his people; and also informs them, that their God is acknowledged by all, and reigneth over all the nations; according to what the prophet Obadiah said, "And the kingdom shall be, &c." for which reason, he makes use of the verb *משמיע* *publisheth*, but twice, to the four different expressions; once to the nations in general, and once to the
 Jews

Jews in particular. But Nahum, only said, "Behold upon the mountains, &c." as above mentioned, because his mission, was only to inform the nation of the destruction of Ninevah, and that they had nothing more to fear from the king of Assyria.

We now, are to enquire, what or who this joyful messenger of glad tidings is: for some are * of opinion, that it is only used as an image, to denote the manifestation of the appearance of the Messiah, and the restoration of the nation; which will be so notorious all over the world, as if the messengers ascended on all the high mountains to proclaim, and publish it. But the Rabbins § are of opinion, that it denotes Elijah the prophet †, who

* Vide Kimchi in Locum.

§ When I say the RABBINS, I wish it to be understood as used to denote the ancient Doctors, the Talmudists, &c.

† It was this, no doubt, that gave rise to the Christian's scheme, of John the baptist coming in the spirit and power of Elijah. How little the character of John, agreed with the mission of Elijah, as described by the prophet Malachi, need not be insisted upon; as the effect which John's preaching wrought, was so diametrically opposite, to that which Elijah is to accomplish: for he is to bring universal peace to mankind; whereas Christ as well as his followers, lighted up the torch of war and blood shed: and were the cause of brother rising against brother; and children against their parents, &c. as already mentioned.

who is to be the messenger of the joyful tidings; according to what the prophet Malachi says, (chap. iiii. verse 23d.) "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet, before the coming of the great and terrible day of the Lord, &c." And as he will appear before the resurrection, the prophet observes immediately after, "Lo! the voice of thy watchmen; together shall they lift up the voice, and sing; for face to face shall they see when the Lord returneth to Zion." For the watchmen denote the prophets, (see Ezek. iii, 17. xxxiii. 6, 7, &c.) who had prophesied the redemption of the nation, as well as their captivity and afflictions; the prophet therefore informs us, that when they shall arise at the resurrection, and behold the glorious restoration of the nation, their hearts will naturally exult with joy, and they all together will give thanks and praise to God, for the accomplishment of the prophecies, delivered by them, in their former life time: and this is, what is meant by the expression, עין בעין יראו *They shall see eye to eye*; for they will then with their corporeal eye, see the accomplishment of what they had before only seen with the intellectual eye.

eye. And which is also the reason, that the noun קול *voice*, is repeated; which has so greatly puzzled Bishop Lowth, who not being able to enter into the true spirit of the prophetic language, pronounces it a mistake *; and

* This is the case, with all those that form new translations: who as soon as they meet with any thing, that they, through their want of a thorough knowledge in the sacred language, (so different in its genius from all others) cannot instantly comprehend, and adapt to the fastidious nicety of English metre; or that will not easily yield to their system, to pronounce it a mistake; the assistance of manuscripts is called in, and the poor printed text is immediately discarded. This brings to my mind a reflection that I have read somewhere, and which I shall relate in the words of the Author, as far as my memory will permit. "As there is not absolutely a very great difference between פרוה *Kine*, and פחות *Princes*. Could there not have been some, who in those amazing manuscripts, (made use of by Dr. Kennicot) might have imported this latter word? I know nothing of any such thing; but let us suppose it for a moment. I immediately represent myself as a copyist of the last century; or perhaps my cotemporary, who does his utmost to be expeditious in framing on the printed text, a very respectable manuscript for its ANTIQUITY. As he has been taught to read, write, and understand Hebrew indifferently, he finds in Amos iv. 1. "Hear this word פרוה הבשן *Ye kine of Bashan*." He stops, reflects, and instantly concludes, this cannot be: "Surely, says he to himself, it is a fault; but פחות denotes *Princes*. Let us write it: it is more noble "to address the word to the *Princes of Bashan*, than to the kine of that country." Thus, פרוה is unregistered and פחות recorded. How many thousand variations are of the same kind!

I now follow the steps of this manuscript, and see it some few years after, take its flight towards some famous Library. It is received, and treated there with a respect due only to venerable old age. They have

and would therefore read כל *All*, instead of קול *Voice*. But his reason, though plausible; is highly fallacious: for the repetition of the word קול is proper and necessary; as the true meaning of it is, as if the prophet had said, "Lo! the voice of thy watchmen;" behold, the voice of thy watchmen; their prophetic orations, are now accomplished: and therefore, together shall they lift up the voice, and sing praise to God for his goodness, in thus confirming what they aforetime had foretold.

The prophet then addresses himself to the holy land, and exhorts it to praise, and give thanks to God, and that, for two reasons; one on
account

given it a date, and that is sufficient. At last, they entrust some of the curious with it, that they may extract some variations from it. Here it is where my imagination forms a singular scene. I think I see five or six waggish boys round about their master, comparing, by cursing and swearing, some old ragged copies with the printed text. One of them having my manuscript before him, falls upon Amos, and finds in his copy פרוח Princes: and going back to the printed text, he reads there, פרוח Kine. Ah! master, he exclaims, what horror! the Hebrew text imports *kine*. The old pretended Hebraist runs to it, turns his spying glass, verifies by himself the two lessons, and applauds both the ignorance of his pupil, and that of the copyist. A variation of the *utmost consequence!* an acclamation of triumph; an *excommunication* of the printed text: a consecration *without reserve* of the manuscripts.—Is not this dream of my author very pleasant, and highly diverting? I am sure it must be extremely edifying to the profound critics.

account of the people, and the other, on account of the land, verse 9th. "Burst forth into joy, shout together, ye ruins of Jerusalem! for the LORD hath comforted his people: he hath redeemed Jerusalem." And as the redemption of the nation, will be known in the whole world, the prophet says verse 10. "The LORD hath made bare his holy arm in the sight of all the nations: and all the ends of the earth, shall see the salvation of our God."

The prophet proceeds to describe the return of the nation, by way of exhortation for their departure from among the nations, where they are dispersed, verse 11th. "Depart, depart ye, go ye out from thence; touch no polluted thing: go ye out from the midst of her, be ye clean, ye that bear the vessels of the LORD!" For ye have no occasion to be armed with swords and spears, to defend yourselves; but only to bear the vessels of the LORD; to keep his law and commandments: ye therefore have nothing to fear, for, "Verily not in haste shall ye go forth; and not by flight shall ye march along: for the LORD shall go before you, and the God of Israel shall bring up your rear." Ye shall not go forth in haste, as ye
did

did when ye came out of Egypt, as mentioned Exod. xii. 33. "And the Egyptians were urgent upon the people, that they might send them out of the land in haste," &c. Again, "For thou camest forth out of the land of Egypt in haste." Deut xvi. 3. Neither shall ye march by flight, as one that is afraid of his enemies, as ye were of Sanballat and others, at your return from Babylon; and that, because the LORD himself will go before you, and the God of Israel will bring up your rear: so that on no side whatever, will ye have any thing to fear. This, as well as the subject matter of the whole prophecy, plainly shews to a demonstration, that it never hath been fulfilled: and that of course, the prophet did not allude to the Babylonish captivity, as Christian commentators in general assert: for not one of the conditions here foretold, were ever accomplished at their return from Babylon: for their enemies were not punished nor did they prevail over them: neither were they crowned with everlasting joy and gladness; so as not to experience any more trouble, oppression, or captivity. On the contrary, their enemies, the uncircumcised, persecuted them
them

them most cruelly; and at last drove them entirely out of their own country, which they have never since been able to recover to this day. Moreover, the prophet mentions three captivities, as shewn in the explanation of the 4th and 5th verses of chapter liid. All which, is a manifest proof, that the prophet did not point to their return from Babylon.

And as we do not find it recorded in the New Testament, that any of these events took place, during Jesus his short stay on earth: it must be evident to the meanest capacity, that he could not be the Messiah, here foretold by the prophet, who was to accomplish those great, those glorious, and important events; which were likewise to be preceded by a messenger announcing universal peace to mankind, and salvation to Israel: because we have for almost eighteen hundred years, had evident and ocular demonstration of the direct contrary: as scarcely any thing, but wars and bloodshed, have stained the annals of history for that period. And at this present time, the year 1793, almost all Europe is engaged in a most horrid and dreadful

war;

war; in which, such enormous excesses are committed, as is scarce credible of human beings: especially of civilized mortals enlightened by revelation. Whence it is evident, that it remains to be fulfilled at the restoration of the Jews by the true Messiah, when it shall please God in his mercy, to redeem them.

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