

**An Exposition of
the (Book of)
Revelation**

THOMAS GOODWIN

TOLERATION: THE CUT-THROAT OF TRUE RELIGION

The Presbytery testify against a sinful and almost boundless toleration, granted anno 1712, a woeful fruit of the union; by which toleration act, not only those of the Episcopal communion in Scotland have the protection of authority, but a wide door is cast open, and ample pass given to all sects and heretics (popish recusants and anti-trinitarians some way excepted, who yet are numerous in the nation), to make whatever attacks they please upon the kingdom and interest of our glorious Redeemer, in order to the advancement of their own and the devil's, and all with impunity. The foresaid act warrants the Episcopal clergy publicly to administer all ordinances, and perform their worship after their own manner with all the popish canons and ceremonies thereof, and obliges all magistrates to protect and assist them, while it destroys the hedge of church discipline against the scandalous and profane, and is, therefore, a settling and establishing of prelacy in Scotland, giving it a security, little, if anything, inferior to that which the established church has. Again, by a clause in the toleration bill, the security given by former laws to Presbyterian church government and discipline, is undermined and taken away, at least rendered ineffectual, and made the subject of ridicule to the openly profane, by the civil magistrate's withdrawing his concurrence, in as much as it declares the civil pain of excommunication to be taken away, and that none are to be compelled to appear before church judicatories. There is nothing in religion of an indifferent nature; "For whosoever [saith Christ] shall break one of the least of these commandments, and shall teach men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven." It must, then, be the most daring wickedness, and an affronting of the Majesty of Heaven in the highest manner, for an earthly monarch to pretend to enact a toleration of religions, and thereby give a liberty where the divine law has laid a restraint; it implies an exalting of himself, not only to an equality with, but to a state of superiority above, the God of glory. Whatever principles are of divine authority require no toleration from man; it is wickedness to pretend to do it, seeing whatever comes under the necessity of a toleration, properly so-called, falls, at the same time, under the notion of a crime. And no less wicked is it for a magistrate to protect, by a promiscuous toleration, all heretics, heresies and errors; yet, it is a manifest breach to trust, and plain perverting the end of his office, seeing he is appointed to be *custos et vindex utriusque tabulae*, intrusted with the concerns of God's glory, as well as the interests of men. Experience has, in every age, taught, that a toleration of all religions is the cut-throat and ruin of all true religion. It is the most effectual method that ever the policy of hell hatched, to banish all true godliness out of the world. But however manifold the evils be that toleration is big with, this church, instead of opposing, seems to have complied therewith, and to be of toleration principles; which is evident, not only from their receiving into communion the Scots curates, of which above; but from their joining in communion with Mr. Whitefield (an English curate and member of that church, and ring-leader of the Methodists there), when he is in Scotland. Again, it is known, that when the Scots gentlemen are sent to attend the British parliament, or at any time in England, they do, many of them, join in communion with the prelatial church — nay, are guilty of taking the sacramental test (that is, taking the sacrament after their superstitious manner, to qualify them for any public post); yet this church receives them into the closest communion, without requiring any satisfaction for these evils; whereby they act contrary to Christ's example, in purging and keeping his house pure, and contrary to the Scripture; Rev. ii, 14, 15, 20.

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A PREFACE TO THE READER.*

How unfit I am to perform even this common and usual office of introducing thee to the entertainment which the following discourses will afford, the knowledge which I ought to have of myself is sufficient to convince me; for it cannot be expected that I should give a due character of the author, which hath been already drawn by a more excellent hand,† and which for me to attempt, as it would not be comely, so it is above my undertaking. It would as ill suit with my disability, who am inconsiderable and so little known, to offer my mean judgment needlessly to recommend any of his writings to the world. All that is proper and agreeable for me to do is to assure thee that these which I have had the care of publishing are the genuine issue of his thoughts,—most of them the mature fruits of the later years of his life,—and to give some short account of their order and general design.

I have here offered to public view, in a second volume of his works, several discourses upon great and important truths; that what were his own retired and profitable meditations may, by the divine blessing, become a common benefit.

The first which presents itself is *An Exposition on the Revelation*; a portion of Scripture so abstruse, that though it has exercised the thoughts and studies of many worthy divines, may yet, in some respects, be called 'a sealed book;' which will be more perfectly explained when he who alone is found worthy to open it, the holy Lamb of God, shall come to unfold all its difficult passages in their glorious accomplishment. As the author lived and rejoiced in this hope, he has here in this his comment pointed to the foundation upon which he grounded it, even 'a sure word of prophecy.' But as he was fully ascertained that God would in his own time make good his word, he was not over-curious in dating the day of his performance. You will find him modest in this point; he himself determines nothing, but ex-

* This preface, by Goodwin's son, prefixed to the second volume of the folio works, is inserted here, although but a small part of it refers to the treatises contained in this volume.—Ed.

† Mr Thankful Owen, in his Preface to the 'Exposition upon the Epistle to the Ephesians.' [Given in this Edition, vol. i, p. xxxix.—Ed.]

presses the opinions of others rather than his own, though he indeed illustrates them with reasons which might make them look probable; and though they have proved to be mistaken in their calculations, yet many things occur in drawing them up which are not altogether unworthy of being remarked. Their account indeed is now superannuated, yet it was proper enough for the author to mention it at the time of his writing this discourse, which was in the year 1639. It seems to be the divine prerogative to know the times and the seasons; and as he always chooseth the fittest, he reserves to himself the exact knowledge of his own appointed day.

That which comes next in order of these treatises is, *A Discourse of the Knowledge of God the Father, and his Son Jesus Christ*; which I have placed the first of these theological tracts, (and of others that are to follow, if Providence permits me an opportunity of publishing them, which insist upon other the chiefest heads of divine knowledge,) because it is the design of the first rudiments of religion to instruct us what due apprehensions we ought to have of the Deity. As our Saviour tells us, 'that this is life eternal, to know God the Father, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent,' so it is the firm foundation whereon the beautiful and uniform structure of all other truths is built; and sad experience in all ages hath made us understand into what wild imaginations, as to the other parts of our Christian religion, those unhappy men have wandered, (as the Arians in the primitive times, and the Socinians in our own,) who have stumbled, and so made a false step in their entrance at this first and principal truth. The author, who considered the irremediable mischiefs of the least error in these first articles of faith, and saw the proneness in men to mistake, has made it his chief design, in all the parts of this discourse, to direct our thoughts to due conceptions of the divine nature, of the Trinity, and the person of Christ. And as his assertions herein are no other than according to those measures the word of God has prescribed, he has fetched his proofs from the same magazine; and the evidence of his arguments is the more convincing, since it proceeds from that light which he beats out by comparing places of Scripture together. If any should judge some of his notions to be too fine, and condemn his thoughts for taking too high a flight, and leaping over the common bounds of knowledge; this may be pleaded in defence, that he has at least asserted nothing that contradicts a received truth, or which by any consequence may weaken the foundations of religion. Nay, he asserts nothing but what divine authority in Scripture does countenance; he proves all by plain texts, and by an easy, unforced explication, without racking or torturing them to make them speak his own mind. He is the venter of no new opinions, since what he delivers he clearly evinces to be the sense of the eternal oracles of truth. Nor is he too boldly curious, since he is not wise beyond what is written; and the inquisitiveness of his mind should not be prejudged, when his inquiries have proceeded according to the conduct of an infallible guide. And if they have gone further than others, it is only because, having seen the glimpse of a truth, he could not leave it till he had pursued it down through the most intimate recesses of Scripture. It is certainly allowable to

dig deeper in those mines which are inexhaustible, and where those who come after the diligence of others may still find new and far richer treasures. Our spiritual knowledge surely is capable of increase, and further degrees may be yet added to it; for even after those glorious times wherein God has promised to bless his people with larger effusions of his Spirit, who shall lead them into all truth, they yet will then know but in part: and indeed all the successive ages of the world put together afford too short a time for us perfectly to search into the deep things of God, since eternity itself will give us but space enough to know and admire them.

The discourse which follows is, *Of the Creatures, and the Condition of their State by Creation*; which I have placed before that of *Election*, because though indeed the electing decree externally preceded the framing of this world, yet God made his choice out of the creatures which he determined to make, and considered them in the state wherein they were placed by creation. And the author, when he evinces the necessity of an election-grace to save certainly and infallibly any of either angels or men, draws his most cogent proof from the mutability of the creature, which absolutely required a supernatural grace to secure its establishment. And he therein refers the reader to this discourse, wherein he proves that the creature, as such, was changeable and uncertain in the best circumstances of its condition, and had a very unfixed station when it stood, and flourished in all the glory of its innocence. It is therefore requisite for the intelligent reader, if he would understand the force of the argument, to peruse what is discoursed in this treatise concerning the weak and unstable condition of the creatures, which renders the grace of election indispensably necessary unto their salvation. And as the author had it in his eye and heart, not only to prove the absolute need we have of this grace, but also to celebrate unto the height its glory and praise, in prosecution of this design he compares all the advantages which Adam, as an innocent creature, by nature possessed, with all those signal mercies which belong to that condition whereunto grace advances the elect since the fall, and endeavours to convince us how vastly those blessings we receive from Christ, the second Adam, excel all the benefits which the Creator's bounty bestowed upon the first; how grace instates us in a higher happiness than we should have enjoyed, though we had lived with our first father in innocence; how grace makes us gainers by the loss of all paradise's pleasures, though we are apt to envy and regret that we have lost them; and how the state of the meanest soul that belongs to Christ, who is blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in him, is infinitely preferable to Adam's primitive condition, with all its enjoyments. Thus in this discourse he prepares the mind of the reader to admire and adore the riches of that grace, which further to evince and illustrate is the whole design of that which follows in the last place of this volume.

The last discourse, then, is *Of Election*, which to so many is a hard saying, a stumblingblock, and a stone of offence. He discourses this high truth with such a wary exactness, that its greatest opposers will not find anything in what he asserts whereon to fasten those invidious reflections, those harsh

and horrid consequences with which they use to deform this doctrine, to make it look affrighting. He is very tender in the point of reprobation, and expresses himself no otherwise concerning it than the Scriptures themselves do: viz., that there are some of mankind whom God has left out of the compass of his gracious decrees, as indeed he was not obliged to share equal favour to all; that these are the rest, or remainder, Rom. xi. 7, when God has chosen out the others; that these he resigns to the conduct of their free-will, and leaves them to go on in their own ways, Acts xiv. 16, and to reap at last the bitter fruits of their evil actions. After he has proved the necessity of such a grace as is derived from the decree of election to assure the salvation of both angels and men, and that all whom God hath rescued from the misery and ruin of the fall were really saved by this grace, he proceeds to illustrate the infinite greatness of it by many considerations: as, that it appoints, and certainly brings us to a higher glory and blessedness than was the design of creation to confer on the creature, though they had continued in innocence; and that it commends itself by a discriminating love, which makes a difference between the elect and the other of mankind. He then discourses how infallibly God's decrees of election obtained their designed issue, and proves largely how an effectual invincible grace does certainly accomplish what the decree and counsel of God's will had determined. These were the truths which exercised the thoughts and heart of the author, the element in which he lived, the air in which his soul breathed, and by which a spiritual life was constantly maintained in it. And as he experienced that they afforded him comfort and support against all his temptations and trials, he committed them to writing, that others might receive from them the same solace and refreshing help as he did.

It renders his loss the more supportable, that he has left behind him, now that he is retired out of sight, what may perpetuate a grateful remembrance of him among men; that though God hath withdrawn him to heaven, he may yet be useful to His church here on earth; that his service is not ended with his life, nor buried with him in the dust; and 'though he rests from all his labours, yet the fruits of them may follow him,' even after he is gone hence to receive their reward. He lives again in this offspring of his better part, his mind; and 'being dead, he yet speaks' in them the same truths, which when living were the most delightful entertainment of his thoughts.

But I forget that I assume too much to myself, in delivering my own thus freely, in things which are indeed so much above me; and I know not how a zealous affection for the memory of a father's name, whom I cannot but love and honour in the grave, hath carried me beyond the bounds of that reservedness and modesty which would perhaps have far better become

AN

EXPOSITION OF THE REVELATION.

THO. GOODWIN.

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PART I.

CHAPTER I.

The design of the Book of the Revelation.—That it is a prophecy, wherein, as in a vision, the story of all times is represented.—The prophetic part of it begins at the 4th chapter.—An exposition of the 4th chapter.—The vision of the throne, beasts, and elders.—A representation of the church in all ages.

THE three first chapters contain seven epistles to seven particular churches; but from this 4th chapter to the end of the book, is laid down a more general prophecy, from John's time to the world's end. There is therefore this character of difference put between that part of this book in those three first chapters, and this that begins here: that *that* concerned things that then were past, things that then were, and things to come hereafter, as chap. i. 19; whereas *this* delivers those things only which 'must be hereafter,' chap. iv. 1.

In this prophecy, as in a vision, is the story of all times acted and represented. A comedy is the representing of a story past, by men; this a prophetic vision of things to come, acted by angels answerably. As in such interludes and shows there is first a stage built, a scene or place supposed where the things were done, and a chorus or company of spectators sitting on the stage continually, and giving their judgment and approbation, which was the custom in comedies of old; so in this chapter the Apostle hath the vision of the scene, theatre, or stage, namely the church of Christ, in a general view throughout all ages, presented; the members whereof are the chorus, who upon any great or solemn occasion give their *plaudite* or acclamation of glory unto God. So the four beasts, and four-and-twenty elders, you may in this book often observe to do. And then, as in such shows and representations there used to be a prologue, so, chap. v., you have as artificial a prologue acted as in any poem; from whence, chap. vi., the representation of the story of things begins.

Chap. iv. 1.—John is called up from the earth into the air, (by which heaven is here meant, as often elsewhere it is,) the place of John's vision;

and in the air a door seemed to open, in at which he entering, sees the sights following.

Ver. 2. *And immediately I was in the Spirit.*—The phrase, *in the Spirit*, is like to that when we say a man is *in love*, or a mill is said to be *in the wind*; as noting out such a repletion or filling with the Spirit, as possessed and took up all the powers of his soul to attend this vision. It filled all, it carried all in him unto the thing in hand, and wholly acted his faculties by a supernatural motion of the Spirit, so that his understanding and senses acted not in their natural way, but as moved by the Spirit. Now this his being in the Spirit was extraordinary, and to an extraordinary purpose; even to see these visions, and by the Holy Ghost to write them: yet to us it should be ordinary, so far as, in our ordinary course, to walk in the Spirit, and be in the Spirit; that is, to give up ourselves, our powers and faculties, to the Spirit's rule and guidance, so that he should move all wheels in us.

Obs.—Now from this *immediately* observe, That a believing soul may presently be in the Spirit; he soon and suddenly comes upon a man.

The vision that follows is of the church, which is made the scene of all things prophesied of in this book; for all things done are either for it or concerning it. And though passages of judgments on the world are recorded, yet for the church's sake they are recorded, and are done as by God out of the church. Now this vision of the throne, beasts, and elders is a representation of the church (wherein God hath his throne) of men on earth, universal in all ages; set forth according to the form or pattern of institution of a church, into which all saints on earth should be moulded. To prove this in the several parts of it:—

I. It is a *representation of the church*; for—

1. In the church only is God worshipped; as here, ver. 8–10. In the church only is God known; and there 'they speak of his glory,' Ps. xxix. 9.

2. The throne here is evidently God's seat in his temple the church; so chap. xvi. 17, 'A voice came from the temple, from the throne,' &c.

3. Accordingly, the allusion in this vision is to Solomon's temple, and to the tabernacle, which were the types of the church to come under the new testament. Therefore God here sits on a throne, as he did then in the holy of holies; and there are seven golden lamps here, as there the candlestick; and a sea of glass here to wash in, as there was there one of brass: all ornaments and utensils of that temple typifying forth ours.

II. It is the representation of a church of *men*, not angels; for—

1. These elders and beasts sing that they 'are redeemed by the blood of the Lamb;' which the angels were not, chap. v. 9. And—

2. Ver. 11, the angels are reckoned distinct from these elders and beasts, and are said to be 'about them;' as also chap. vii. 11.

III. It is of the church of men *on earth*; for—

1. The allusion is to the marshalling of the church of the Jews about the tabernacle; as shall be shewn.

2. Here are seven spirits; that is, variety of the gifts of the Spirit, which in heaven do cease.

3. Here is a sea of glass, for the priests and worshippers to wash in; which supposeth a remainder of defilement, at least of the feet; as John xiii. 10.

4. The distinction of beasts and elders in this company,—namely, officers and brethren,—which in heaven ceaseth, argueth it also.

IV. Of the church *universal*.

1. In all *ages*; therefore placed at the beginning here, and often brought in in this prophecy as spectators.

2. In all *places*; so chap. v. 9, 'redeemed out of every kindred, tongue, and nation.'

V. This church universal, represented whilst on earth as cast into the *pattern of a church*, instituted according to the rules of the word, the measure to square churches on earth by; and though in all ages they kept not that pattern,—therefore, chap. xi. 1, John is bidden to measure the temple of that age, as having swerved from the original form too far in Antichrist's apostasy,—yet such a pattern is given forth here as the only true pattern, into which all should be cast; and God sets forth his church as it should be in all ages, and as it was in John's time. All saints, in all ages, should be cast into such companies. So that here is the church with her appurtenances.

The church consisting of three states—1. Christ the head; 2. The four beasts, the officers; 3. The twenty-four elders, who are the brethren—

There are the appurtenances also: as the seven lamps, which are the gifts of the Holy Ghost; and the laver, which is Christ's blood, to wash in, &c.

First, Ver. 2, 3, *I saw a throne*—which is an allusion to the holy of holies in the temple, where God did sit. Therefore, Isa. vi. 1, when the Lord was presented sitting upon his throne, it is said, 'the residue of his train filled the temple;' that is, those other parts of the temple, the throne being the holy of holies. Therefore, Ezek. xliii., when the glory of God returned to the temple, ver. 4, 5, God calls it, ver. 7, 'the place of my throne, and the place of the soles of my feet, where I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel for ever.' The like you have, Jer. xvii. 12, which throne is here in the midst of the four-and-twenty elders and the beasts; signifying, as himself interprets it, Ezek. xliii., his dwelling in the midst of his church, according to that saying of Christ, 'I will be in the midst among you.'

Obs.—To set up a church is to set up God and Christ a throne. A church is his only visible throne on earth, till the kingdoms of the world become his visibly.

Now, secondly, for him who sitteth on the throne: Mr Brightman would have God in the Trinity, or the three Persons, set forth in those three colours mentioned. But to make the rainbow which encompasseth the throne to be the Holy Ghost, whenas that rainbow is presented as divided and distinct from him who sitteth on the throne, is *nimis durum*, it is too much. I take it, it is God in Christ, in whom he is reconciled unto his church, and by whom he rules it; chap. iii. 15, and chap. xii., it is called the throne of God. And Ezek. i. 26, in which chapter the same kind of vision is represented, he who sits on the throne there is the 'Son of man;' as also in Isa. vi. 1, which place Christ in John xii. interprets of himself. So that God, considered as in Christ, is he that sitteth on the throne. And, chap. vii. 10, he that sitteth on the throne, and the Lamb, are made distinct, yet mentioned together.

Ver. 3.—For 'the rainbow that was round about the throne,' it notes out the memorial of his covenant of grace; that as the rainbow was the sign of the covenant of nature, to put God and us in mind he would not destroy the world any more by water, so this rainbow is to God a memorial of his covenant of grace to his church: 'This is to me as the waters of Noah; for as I have sworn that the waters should no more go over the earth, so have I sworn not to be wroth with thee,' saith God, in Isa. liv. 9. Which covenant is round about his throne, so to put him in mind, in all his dispensations towards his church, to 'remember his covenant;' that let him go forth any way in his dispensations towards his church, he may still be minded of mercy; and his church again, in all their intercourses with God, and all dis-

penations from God, and occasions coming to him, may be put in mind of mercy also, and his covenant of grace, to trust in it; and that the prayers of the church may still pass from them through the rainbow, as all God's dispensations to the church do come through the said rainbow also.

Now for the situation of the church. Both elders and beasts are *about the throne*, ver. 4, 6, 7. It is formed after the enquartering of the people of Israel about the tabernacle in the wilderness, Num. ii. The Levites were next to the tabernacle, and the tribes about the Levites. So here, the beasts (the officers) were, as in ver. 6, in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne; that is, as Beza interprets it, their station is between the throne and these elders, who did surround the throne about the four beasts. The phrase, *in the midst*, in Scripture being put for *between*, or *among*; so Gen. xxiii. 6. The beasts, though nearest the throne, yet are mentioned after the elders; for though their place be nearer, yet they are but the church's servants, and the radical power is in the church, here signified by the twenty-four elders.

Ver. 4.—To begin with the elders, who, as was said, do signify the church:—

First, They are called elders, (1.) because the church under the new testament is grown up to an elderly age, in opposition to the church under the old testament, who are termed 'children under age,' Gal. iv. 1–3, &c. As also, (2.) for that gravity that should be in all church assemblies, and in their proceedings and administrations.

Secondly, For their number. They are twenty-four, in allusion to the twenty-four heads of those orders of Levites who were porters and singers, established by David in the temple, 1 Chron. xxiv., xxv., and xxxi. 25, 26. And this, to shew the increase of the church under the new testament, in comparison of that under the old, whereof that proportion made by David was a type. The heads of the twelve tribes then were multiplied to twenty-four. Now in like manner Solomon's temple had a double proportion to that of the tabernacle of Moses; that also being an after-type of the church's increase under the gospel.

Thirdly, They are 'clothed in white raiment,' signifying that they are priests, Exod. xxviii. 40.

Fourthly, They had 'on their heads crowns of gold,' to shew their kingly power, and that it belongs to them to judge matters in the church; as, 1 Cor. v. 12, 'Do not you judge them that are within?'

Fifthly, They were 'round about the throne.' The meanest saint is as near and dear to God as the greatest. Therefore the word in Cant. i. 12 is 'a round table,' which the saints sit at with Christ; it shews also their equality. And Christ is in the midst here, and will be so in heaven. We shall eat of 'the tree which is in the midst of the paradise of God.'

Ver. 5, *And out of the throne proceeded lightnings, and thunderings, and voices.*—By thunderings and lightnings are meant the judgments of God. Ps. xviii. 13, 14, 'The Lord also thundered in the heavens, and the Highest gave his voice, hailstones and coals of fire. Yea, he sent out his arrows, and scattered them; and he shot out lightnings, and discomfited them.' And, Ps. xxix. 3, 'The voice of the Lord is upon the waters: the God of glory thundereth: the Lord is upon many waters.' They are said to come 'out of the throne,' because all judgments do come from God, as sitting in his church, and for his church's sake doth God use them. Ps. lxxviii. 35, 'O God, thou art terrible out of thy holy places: the God of Israel is he that giveth strength and power unto his people. Blessed be God!' Amos i. 2,

'And he said, The Lord will roar from Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the habitations of the shepherds shall mourn, and the top of Carmel shall wither.' Voices also proceed out of the throne; which is more general, and extends unto promises, and answers to prayers.

Seven lamps, which are the seven spirits of God.—By these are noted out the Holy Ghost, and the variety of his gifts and operations, or manifestations of himself in the church. That the Holy Ghost is meant is evident by chap. i. 4, where John wishes 'grace and peace from the seven spirits which are before God's throne;' which he ought not to have wished from any, but from the Holy Ghost, who is the third Person. And these manifestations are counted seven, because of the variety of gifts. For otherwise, that Person is but 'one Spirit,' 1 Cor. xii. 11. They are compared to fire, because they give light and heat; and the allusion here is to the candlesticks in the temple.

Ver. 6.—There was a 'sea of glass like unto crystal,' in allusion to Solomon's sea; but this was purer than that, which was only of brass, Exod. xxx. 17–20, and typified out Christ's blood to wash in, both for justification of person and sanctification of life: so Heb. x. 22, 'Let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water;' 1 Cor. vi. 11, 'And such were some of you; but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God;' Tit. iii. 5, 'Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost.' And this blood of Christ stands in the church, as the sea in which we must wash, chiefly when we come to worship. Therefore wash before you worship.

And there were 'four beasts full of eyes before and behind;' by which are meant church officers:—

1. Because of the situation of them, between the throne and the elders, who are round about.

2. Because they are the leaders of the praise, and so the mouths of the congregation, ver. 9, 10. They are not beasts properly, as we understand and speak; not brutes, but living wights: the Greek word, which wants a full and proper expression in one English word, signifies so. They are called *living*, to shew that they have, or should have, *life* in them to quicken others. They are *four*, and the throne is *four-square*, and so they are said to be in the midst between every angle; to shew that they are complete for number, and should look every way to all the necessities of the church, both for soul and body.

They are 'full of eyes,' because they are to be overseers, Acts xx. 28. And they have eyes *within* as well as *without*, to see to their own hearts, as well as to others.

Ver. 7, *And the first beast was like a lion*—who is the *ruling elder*, who needs the courage of a lion, to deal with men's spirits in case of sins, that deserve to be brought to the church, or to have admonition to prevent that course.

The second was like a calf, or ox,—for so the Septuagint translates the Hebrew word forty times,—the *pastor*, who is like an ox for laboriousness, and taking pains in treading out the corn.

The third beast had a face like a man—the *deacons* and *widows*,* which are all one office in a kind, who have a face of a man; a man's heart being

* Apparently referring to 1 Tim. v., where widows seem to be spoken of as specially eligible as deaconesses.—ED.

disposed and inclined for mercifulness and pitifulness, which is proper to a man, not beasts.

And the fourth beast was like a flying eagle—the teacher, who hath eyes like an eagle, quickly to spy out all errors; and then they soar aloft into high mysteries.

Ver. 8.—They had ‘each of them six wings,’ to shew their aptness and readiness to fly and act all manner of ways. So in Ezekiel* the cherubim had, who were types of these. ‘They rest not day nor night;’ to shew they labour continually; crying *Holy, holy, holy*. These worshipped God in Trinity. And they are the mouths of the congregation; for when they begin, the four-and-twenty elders fall down: ver. 9–11, ‘And when those beasts give glory and honour and thanks to him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever, the four-and-twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.’ And then they altogether, both one and the other, praise him for his works of creation; acknowledging him both the efficient and the end for which they were created: and not only for whom they were created at first, but for whom they are so still; their being and motion serving to that end, and working for his glory materially.

* The cherubim in Ezekiel are represented with *four* wings; the seraphim in Isaiah with *six*.—ED.

CHAPTER II.

The exposition of the 5th chapter.

THE stage being built in the 4th chapter, the chorus, which is the church, being set, here begins the prologue; and that so elegant and stately a one as was never heretofore invented, or put before any poem.

First, Here is a ‘book sealed,’ presented in his hand who sits on the throne. Which book contains God’s decrees to be executed until the day of judgment.

Secondly, Here is a proclamation made to all creatures, to find out one who should be found worthy to open it.

Thirdly, There were none such found in heaven, nor in earth.

Fourthly, John weeps, thinking there would be an end of his visions, and that he must put up his pen.

Fifthly, In this strait comes Christ, and takes upon him the opening and fulfilling of this book, and all the decrees therein contained.

Sixthly, At this the chorus fall down and worship.

Ver. 1.—First, What is this book? Many make it to be the Scriptures. But it is plain, by what all along does follow, that it is a book containing the affairs of the world and the church, and God’s decrees about them both. For upon the opening every seal, John sees a vision containing the matter of the ensuing chapters, namely, the 6th, 7th, 8th, and 9th. And when the seals were all taken off, chap. x. 8, then John is bidden to ‘eat the book,’ that he might prophesy again the other part of this prophecy. So that it is this very book of the Revelation, and the government of the world and his church that is set forth therein, which Christ, by taking the book, undertakes to manage, perform, and execute, and gives it to John. Which agrees with what is said at the beginning of this book, chap. i. 1, ‘The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John.’

Ver. 2.—A strong angel thereupon proclaims, ‘Who is worthy to loose the seals of this book?’ &c. The use of the seals is not simply to shew that it cannot be known, as Daniel’s sealed book did shew that the things in it could not be known till the end: Dan. xii. 4, ‘But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.’ This signified not only so, but it is for the setting out the glory of Christ, and how he was only able to take the book, and loose the seals, &c.

1. God causeth a general proclamation to be made to all creatures; as some kings have done for some noble service, promising a great reward, as Saul did, 1 Sam. xvii. 26, 27.

2. An angel makes this proclamation, to shew that none among men

could; and it was a strong angel, that so his voice may reach all creatures. The end of which was—

(1.) To stir up strong desires in John, and all else that read, to search into the meaning of this prophecy. What he did exhort to, chap. i. 3, and by promise provoke unto, here he does the same again by this proclamation.

(2.) To set out the weakness of the creature, still to the end that so the honour of Christ might the more appear, in that he only can do this. It is God's manner thus to endear mercies to us, as he did a wife unto Adam. He first brought all creatures unto him, that so he might see that there was not a meet help for him among them. So in the work of salvation, he lets the soul try all means first, as to run to duties, and all other helps, and then he brings it to Christ, 1 Cor. i., that his power may appear. First, he lets the world try their 'wisdom,' what that could do; and then sends 'the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe,' ver. 21, 25. It is a question among the school-men, whether any mere creature could satisfy for sin? Some say it might; and some say it is a needless question. But it is a necessary thing to know that a creature cannot; for it glorifies Christ the more, as that all creatures here were first challenged: which is an argument against that also; for if they could not open the book, they could much less have redeemed us, that being made a greater thing, ver. 9, where they sing that 'Christ was therefore worthy to open the book, because he had redeemed us.'

Use.—Hence learn we to renounce all kings, priests, and prophets, except Christ, who is a priest to redeem, a prophet to teach and reveal the mysteries of God, and a king to execute all God's decrees. It is good to go over all the creatures, and to renounce them, and say, I will be saved by none of you. Suppose the work of redemption were yet to be done, and God should make this proclamation, as here: 'Find me out a party able to redeem; call a council, and seek one fit for the purpose.' Surely none would be found; and then how would we howl and weep, as John did here, and count ourselves undone! And then, suppose God should set out Christ at last, as one able to save to the uttermost, but this not till he had tried what you could do for yourselves; surely this would nonplus you. But God would not thus put you to it; and therefore took another course, and the more to commend his love unto us, he himself found out Christ, and spake to him to die for us, and do the work of redemption to our hands.

Who is worthy?—It is not simply an act of power to break open the seals; but there must be an authority by *worth*. So that which puts the value on Christ's satisfaction was the worth of his person. And thus in this act of opening the book, a mere creature might have had as much habitual grace, and performed as much duty; but who is worthy? It was a personal worth which carried it: 'Such an high priest became us, who is higher than the heavens,'—that is, than the angels,—Heb. vii. 26.

Ver. 3, *None was found worthy.*—Observe the word *none*; it is not restrained to man, (*no man*), but never a reasonable creature, either in the heavens, as the angels; nor on earth, as men; nor under the earth, as devils; nor holy men departed, who are said to go down to the grave: all these, nor any of these, were 'able to open the book, neither to look thereon,'—that is, so as to understand it, for else John could, and did look on it, ver. 1.

Now to loose the seals, and open the book, is not simply to know God's mind in his decrees, but to make the vision of them to John, and to execute and fulfil them in their times. It is an allusion to those who take a com-

mission, who do it, not only to look on it, but to fulfil it. It is a commission sealed, so that this proclamation is in effect thus:—'Who is able to be God's commissioner, to take this book, and make the visions to John, and in their times to produce and execute them?' And this appears from chap. vi. 1, 'And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard, as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, Come and see.' Still as the seals are opened by the Lamb, there is a vision made to John of what shall be done. Therefore the Lamb is presented, not simply as one that should take the book, but as one that hath eyes and horns—eyes of providence, and horns of power to execute. And this agrees with Gen. xlix. 9, 10, where Judah is made a type of Christ, and called a lion's whelp, and a sceptre, and a lawgiver, to take God's laws from him, and execute them; for in that respect it is that Judah is called a lawgiver in the place above cited, not in respect of making or giving laws, but in respect of executive power to see God's laws kept. So Christ here takes this book as to deliver it to us, to execute the decrees of it.

Ver. 4, *And I wept much.*—His despairing put him upon weeping; he was called up to heaven to see visions, but meets with a stop. This was to set off the mercy, to try his heart, and to render his joy greater.

Obs.—God in greatest mercies may make greatest stops; he may so bring to despair that no hope shall be seen, yet at length shew himself in mercy. So to John here. So likewise in the first work of conversion many times; and so in other great works. John was called to see visions, yet a stop and pause was in his view made.

Use.—Here John is comforted, first, by a stander-by, endeavouring to uphold his heart; and, secondly, by the sight of the Lamb, ver. 6.

Observe here the degrees God useth to comfort his people by; first, letting fall something giving hopes of Christ, so to draw the soul patiently to wait; then, secondly, shewing it Christ himself. God might have at first shewed John the Lamb, but he first comforts him by a stander-by, (as Job first heard by the hearing of the ear,) and then his eye saw the Lamb.

Christ, the only opener of this book and giver of this prophecy, is diversely expressed:—

1. He is called 'the root of David,' out of Isa. xi. 10. Christ put this riddle to the Pharisees, How David could call him Lord, if he were his son? So here it may be asked, How could he be called the *root* of David, if he were the *son* of David, and so a branch of that root? The truth is, he is the root of David, and of all the saints. He was the root of his ancestors, and the father of his mother. The root of any family is in Scripture put for the eldest son in it, who is as the root of the rest. So, Isa. xiv. 30, 'I will kill thy root with famine;' that is, thy first-born, the root of thy house; for in opposition he says, 'and the first-born of the poor shall be fed.' So Mal. iv. 1. Therefore, in that Christ is called the root of David, is meant, that he is the first-born among all his brethren, as he is called in Rom. viii. 29. And Ps. lxxxix. 27, so God calls David in the type, but intends Christ thereby, when he says, 'I will make him my first-born, higher than the kings of the earth;' and, ver. 29, 'His seed shall endure for ever.' In this is Christ the root of David, that he is the first-born of every creature; of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named.

2. He is called the 'lion of the tribe of Judah;' and this in a manifest allusion to the prophecy in Gen. xlix. 10, wherein Judah, as this place shews, is made a type of Christ. And it warrants the application of all there unto Christ. Now Judah was called a lion—

(1.) Because out of Judah came all the worthies and lion-like men, as Joshua,* Othniel, and David, who were all shadows of Christ; therefore, Gen. xlix. 9, he is called *an old lion*, as the word is, a courageous, hearty lion. So, 2 Sam. xvii. 10, valiant men are said to have hearts like lions. Such was Christ, who durst 'engage his heart to draw near to God,' Jer. xxx. 21.

(2.) Judah had the kingdom, whereof a lion is the emblem; therefore sceptre and lawgiver are attributed to him, ver. 10. So that it is as much as to say, Christ, the king by inheritance, as Judah was, shall overcome.

(3.) Judah did take the prey, the land; it was done by Judah's worthies, Joshua, Caleb, &c. And when, as a lion, they had taken that prey, they couched and had rest, as in Solomon's days, 1 Kings iv. 21; which was also prophesied of, Num. xxiii. 24, 'Behold, the people shall rise up as a great lion, and shall not lie down till they have eaten the prey.' And, Gen. xlix. 9, 'He couched as an old lion; who shall raise him up?' So Christ, when he had led captivity captive, sits down quietly in heaven, as it were, couching and lying in wait, especially till the day of judgment, and till before, when he shall see an opportunity to avenge the enemies to his church, when he will appear as an old lion, who, being roused, suddenly leaps on the prey; especially in the latter days, when 'the gatherings of the people shall be unto him,' as the context is, then shall his kingdom be as of a 'lion among beasts,' Mic. v. 8, where the prophet speaks of Christ's kingdom and conquest in the calling of the Jews, as he had done of Christ's birth, ver. 2. Now that kingdom is the scope of this book.

Ver. 6, *And in the midst of the elders stood a Lamb as it had been slain, &c.*—John had heard of Christ as a *lion*, but he sees him as a *lamb*. So many a poor soul is afraid of him, till it comes to see him, and be acquainted with him. But he in the end will be found to be a lamb, and a lamb that hath seven eyes to run to and fro through the earth for the good of his saints; and seven horns, not to hurt them, but to defend them, and to butt his and their enemies. Therefore let not your thoughts of Christ be all as of a lion; for though he hath the courage and strength of a lion, yet he hath the meekness of a lamb too unto you; who, therefore, have cause to wonder at and praise this mixture in him. Christ is called a lamb in allusion to the sacrifices of the old law, which were most commonly of lambs; two lambs a day, Num. xxviii. 3. Here he was to be represented as a priest; as before, in being called a lion, he was presented as a king. And therefore it follows, 'as it had been slain.'

This Lamb 'stood in the midst of the throne,' nearer than the four beasts who stood between the throne and the elders; and this, for that he is the Mediator between his church and God.

As it had been slain.—That is—

1. As if he were newly slain, his blood perpetually remaining fresh, as if he had been slain but yesterday, Heb. ix.

2. But *as slain*, to shew that he doth not remain slain and dead, but is alive. So, chap. i. 18, 'I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore.'

Stood a Lamb.—Standing imports a readiness to afford help. When Stephen died, he saw Christ *standing* at God's right hand, as ready to receive him. It also shews his readiness to intercede.

Having seven horns.—Horns are put for power, with which to push. So, chap. xvii. 12, 'and the ten horns are ten kings.' So by seven horns here is

* It is strange that Joshua should be repeatedly mentioned as of the tribe of Judah, whereas he was of the tribe of Ephraim.—ED.

meant all kingly power. Seven is a number of perfection; and it shews that Christ hath power to open the seven seals. And as there are seven trumpets and seven vials, so Christ hath seven horns; that is, power to fulfil all these. Antichrist riseth like Christ, and comes with power, Rev. xiii. 12. But what discovers him? He hath but two horns; the church needs not fear him. The Lamb hath seven horns to vindicate himself of his enemies. Fear not kings neither, though they be ten; Christ is King of kings. And fear not the devil, who is as a roaring lion; for Christ, the lion of the tribe of Judah, is stronger than he, and will bind him sure enough for hurting of thee.

And seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.—The Spirit, not in his personal subsistence, is here meant, but in his instrumental working by gifts and providence, and so is called seven spirits before, in chap. iv. 5; which seven spirits before the throne are gifts in the church which are from Christ, for he is the fountain of spiritual gifts, and hath the Spirit without measure. But here, by the seven spirits in Christ are not meant gifts poured out, but eyes of providence sent into the earth, by which he knows and sees all things; which alludes to that in Zech. iv. 10, 'For who hath despised the day of small things? for they shall rejoice, and shall see the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel with those seven; they are the eyes of the Lord, which run to and fro through the whole earth;' and implies the perfection of the knowledge and providence of Christ, to order all affairs on earth for his church's good, as in 2 Chron. xvi. 9; and in Zechariah, before quoted, he ordered the affairs of the Persian monarchy for the building of his church. Christ, as man, hath eyes as well as horns, to discern and guide all things here below. His human nature is the instrument of all God's power; all goes through his hands; and all the works of God's providence go through his view: he knows whatsoever is done in the whole world. But why should Christ be presented here in this chapter under these notions of a lion of Judah's tribe, and a lamb, and the root of David, rather than any other?

1. In that he speaks in the language of the Old Testament, and of John the Baptist, who was under the Old Testament; for Christ is everywhere spoken of throughout the volume of that book, as appears by Luke xxiv. 27, where it is said that Christ, 'beginning at Moses, and all the prophets, did expound unto them the things concerning himself.' Now Moses called him 'a lion,' Gen. xlix. 9; Isaiah called him 'a lamb,' chap. liii. 7, and 'the root of David,' chap. xi. 10; and then John Baptist called him 'the Lamb of God, which bears the sins of the world.' Wherefore, as all other things in this book are set forth in allusions to the Old Testament, so these descriptions of Christ also.

2. He gives Christ these titles in relation to the work of redemption, of which mention is made, ver. 9.

Now to that two things are required:—

(1.) A price to be paid to God; and so as a lamb he hath 'redeemed us to God by his blood,' ver. 9.

(2.) Power to deliver us out of the hands of our enemies; and so he is a lion that overcomes.

3. It hath relation especially to the opening of this book, and executing the affairs contained in it, and so those titles are most proper; for—

(1.) He needed to die for it, and so is presented as 'a lamb slain.' For that very price that salvation did cost, the same must each revelation to us cost also. And his being simply the Son of God, and so knowing the

counsels of God written in his decrees, was not enough for him to make them known to us ; but to reveal this counsel, as in a book to be opened to us, he must needs die, our sins otherwise hindering it. Hence it is said, ver. 9, 'Thou art worthy to open the book, for thou wast slain,' &c. So therefore, as a lamb, he is said to take sin away, that hindered the revelation of it to us.

(2.) As a lion he needed courage to encounter God's wrath ; and by breaking through a consuming fire, to approach his throne, and take the book. 'Who is this that hath engaged his heart to draw near unto me?' Jer. xxx. 31. No angel durst have presumed to come so near God.

(3.) As a lion he needed to overcome death, and rise to execute the contents of this book. They say that a lion sleeps the first three days after he is brought forth, but then being roused by the roaring of the old lion, he, after that, sleeps the least of any creature. So did Christ rise by the power of his Father, to sleep no more.

4. Being risen, he is set forth—

(1.) As a lion of Judah ; for that in that prophecy, Gen. xlix 49, as also, Ps. lx. 7, Judah, in respect of his kingly office, is called God's lawgiver ; not simply in respect of giving the laws,—that Moses, of the tribe of Levi, did,—but because Judah executed them. Now, in that Christ did here take the book of God's decrees, and undertook to execute and fulfil them as God's commissioner, therefore he is in this respect most properly here called the 'lion of the tribe of Judah.'

(2.) He is here set forth as 'a lamb having seven horns, and as many eyes ;' and this, in as fit and proper a respect as might be, to signify his being one not only fit to give this prophecy, but to effect the things contained in it by his horns and eyes. And he is said to have seven horns and seven eyes, to shew his full power to open the seven seals, and to blow the seven trumpets, and to pour out the seven vials. He is such a prophet as never was, in that he not only makes a bare revelation of things, but brings them to pass, and makes them good. God gave him the platform of occurrences to come, and power and wisdom to order the accomplishment of them. He is also set forth both as a lamb and a lion to shew his priestly and kingly office ; and how, by virtue of both, he makes us kings and priests, as they sing, ver. 10 ; and having his kingdom in their eye, they are confirmed in the promise of it by a remembrance of him as a lamb and a lion, thus strong and powerful. As a lamb, he purchaseth the revelation of what concerns his church ; and as a lamb with horns and eyes, he effects the accomplishment of it. And the scope and sum of this book being to shew how Christ rules the world and his church, till he hath put down all rule, and how he then takes the kingdom himself ; therefore he is described as a lamb, in respect of his quiet governing the affairs of the world and the church, until that his kingdom, which then, as a lion, by open force he assumes, and rescues the church, as a prey, out of the enemies' jaws, and that by the right of a promised succession from Judah and David ; for which cause those titles of the 'root of David' and 'lion of Judah' do here come in.

1. In a word, this title of his being the root of David shews his right to that kingdom which he is to receive, of which David and his kingdom was but the type.

2. His being called a lamb slain is to shew both a right and title to that kingdom, and also the price by which he purchased it, even his own blood.

3. His being a lion is to shew the power by which he conquers, obtains, and possesses it ; therefore this heavenly chorus, or company, here, when

they once see Christ, by taking the book, to undertake the accomplishment of this prophecy, (the conclusion of which is his instalment into his kingdom,) they, in the joy and faith of it, shout out beforehand, saying, 'We shall reign on the earth ;' as looking on all that was to forego his kingdom, and to come between this vision and his kingdom to come, all as already done, and having this kingdom chiefly in their eye which should come.

Now from the 8th verse to the end of the chapter is a doxology, or a giving praise for the Lamb's taking the book ; which song consists of four parts, or was sung by four companies : as—

1. Four-and-twenty elders and four beasts—the church of men upon earth. They begin and raise the song : ver. 8, 'And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four-and-twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints.'

2. The angels join their voices : ver. 11, 'And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders ; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands.'

3. The creatures come in also : ver. 13, 'And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, honour, glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever.'

4. The beasts close all, saying *Amen* : ver. 14, 'And the four beasts said, *Amen*. And the four-and-twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever.'

Obs.—Observe in the general, That the sons of men are the eminentest praisers of God ; they are the leaders in this heavenly choir, and they conclude the song. The reason of which is, in that the highest work that God ever did is the work of redemption, which concerns us, not the angels ; for which, notwithstanding, the angels praise him, in Luke ii., as also here : yea, all the creatures rejoice in our redemption, ver. 13. But still we are the first-fruits, we are the leaders in the song, whom the angels follow. It is not said by them, 'Thou hast redeemed us to God by thy blood ;' that concerns us, though they sing praise too.

Use 1.—Learn we from hence to bless God for his mercy and goodness to others. We see the angels do so for us, who yet cannot sing as we, with an interest, and yet they praise God for our redemption ; and this is their highest grace.

Use 2.—Learn we to bless God in a sense of our interest. That will raise our hearts a degree higher, as it was with the church of men in their song here, ver. 9, 10.

Ver. 8.—The praisers, who were of the sons of men, are described, (1.) as having harps ; (2.) golden vials : in allusion to the Levitical service in the temple, where they had musical instruments, and incense in bowls or vials, which, Zech. xiv. 20, are called 'the bowls of the altar.' Not that musical instruments are to be in the worship of God now, neither incense : which, as it was the type of prayer and praises, Ps. cxli. 2, 'Let my prayer come up before thee as incense ;' so those harps were of that 'spiritual melody,' as the Apostle calls it, which we make in our hearts to God, even of 'spiritual songs,' Eph. v. 19. Therefore John himself interprets the odours or incense here to be the prayers of the saints. And their hearts are the golden vials, having faith purer than gold, as Peter speaks, which is the spring of all their prayers, and their harps also are their hearts ; *corda* and *chordæ* are near akin.

And *every one* is said to have harps; for in public worship all should join. The little strings go to make up a concert, as well as the great. Though thou hast but little grace, yet God's worship would not be complete without thee. And whereas John calls these odours the prayers of the saints, it makes nothing for what the Papists would hence collect,—namely, that the saints in heaven offer up the prayers of the saints on earth. For—

1. This company are, as we said before, the church of men on earth.

2. These here offer not the prayers of others, but their own; for both themselves make the song, and that a new one; and also the benefit they praise God for in it is their own, 'Thou hast redeemed us to God by thy blood.' Those words, therefore, 'the prayers of the saints,' are but the interpretation which John adds; and do imply only this, that these were saints, and their odours were their prayers.

Ver. 9, *And they sung a new song.*—1. You shall find, in the Psalms, that when David had a new occasion, in a further degree, to praise God, he says, 'I will sing a new song;' now here there was a new occasion given.

2. It is called *new* in opposition to the *old* song under the old testament; as, John xiii. 34, 'I give you a new commandment;' that is, of the gospel, called new, in opposition to the commandments of the old law. In the 4th chapter of this book, these elders had sung a song for the work of creation, ver. 11; but here they sing for the work of redemption, as ver. 9, which is the eminent work of the new testament, as creation was of the old; and therefore it is called a *new song*.

3. There is a more special reason why they should sing a new song, for that the *New Jerusalem* was in their eye: Christ's kingdom and their kingdom (we shall reign on earth); there 'all things shall be made new.' And therefore their song is now a new song for the instalment of their new king. Thus, Ps. xcvi. 1, which is a psalm of this kingdom of Christ, as appears by ver. 10–13, doth therefore begin with these words, 'O sing unto the Lord a new song.'

Use 1.—Learn we from hence to frame new matter of praise, and to have fresh affections upon every new occasion.

Use 2.—We are to bless God, both for our creation and our redemption, and to take in the mention of old blessings when we give thanks for new. As a good scribe is said to bring forth of his treasure new things and old, so in thanksgiving we are to sing the old song and the new.

The matter of the song is praise to the Lamb; where we have—

First, The person praised, the Lamb, 'Thou art worthy,' spoken in answer to the proclamation before made: 'Who is worthy?' Thou, and thou alone; for 'by him, and for him, are all things,' Col. i. 16.

Secondly, The things for which they praise him; as—

1. For his *death*, that he died to redeem them.

2. For his *resurrection*, intimated in this, 'Thou wast slain,' the one making us priests, the other kings; as follows, Rev. v. 10. 'And to this end Christ died and rose, that he might be Lord and King,' Rom. xiv. 9.

The word here which is translated *redeemed* is *ἡγόρασας*, *bought*, in the original. 'For thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and people, and tongue, and nation,' Rev. v. 9. From hence observe—

Obs. 1.—That the blood of Christ was paid as a price to God for the purchasing of our redemption. So, 1 Cor. vi. 20, 'bought with a price.' And in 1 Tim. ii. 6, it is called a ransom.

Obs. 2.—Yet Christ hath not redeemed all men; for it is not *every nation and people*, but *out of every nation*, the elect only.

Obs. 3.—In that they say, Christ is 'worthy to receive the book,' because 'he was slain,' it argues, this book of the Revelation is a special fruit of his death, and so should be the more prized by us. Before Christ's death, we have his own word for it that he knew not when the day of judgment should be; but now, since he was slain he doth, for he is pronounced worthy to take the seals, and to open the book, and to open the book, ver. 9.

Ver. 10, *And hast made us unto our God kings and priests, and we shall reign on the earth.*—Christ was before set forth as a lion, for a king; so as a lamb, for a priest. And both were mentioned, to shew the ground of our being both kings and priests: 'We shall reign on earth.'

From hence observe—

1. That this comforted the saints of old, even the consideration of Christ's kingdom on earth. And how peremptory are they! 'We shall reign.' They mention that, because that is the end and scope of the Revelation, and the conclusion of this book, when the seals are off, and the contents of the book accomplished; and therefore they have that in their eye. And seeing Christ undertakes the accomplishment of all, whereof this is the issue, they are confirmed in the faith of it.

2. That this kingdom of Christ on earth to come is a far more glorious condition for the saints than what their souls have now in heaven; for these here overlook that condition which yet they were to run through, and their thoughts fly to this for comfort, 'We shall reign on earth.'

Ver. 11.—In the 11th verse comes in the other company of angels, and their song; who—

1. For their *number*, are 'ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands.' So likewise, Dan. vii. 10, where the same throne and kingdom of Christ is prophesied of, there is the same number of his guard of angels mentioned: 'A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened.' Observe from hence, that God hath another world of rational creatures which we see not. And what a story then will the latter day produce! And what need we fear when there are so many for us, as Elisha said to his servant, 2 Kings vi. 16, for they are all our guardians too?

2. For their *station*; they are behind the elders, yet 'round about the throne,' having all in a ring as it were. These are the guard of the 'queen of heaven,' 'the Lamb's wife,' the church. So, Ps. xxxiv. 7, 'The angels of the Lord encompass round about them that fear him.' And, Heb. i. 14, it is said, 'They are sent out to minister' for the good of the saints.

Ver. 12.—The song follows in the next verse: 'Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power,' &c. Here observe—

1. That Christ, though he were worthy by inheritance, yet he was worthy by purchase also; so the words 'that was slain' do imply.

2. As he hath seven horns and seven eyes, so he hath a seven-fold praise.

3. To express their strong desires to give him sufficient praises, and such as were due unto him, they heap up many good things, of which they pronounce him worthy.

4. None is worthy to be the king of all the world but only Jesus Christ. And indeed it were too much for any creature. The angels themselves were top-heavy of their glory, which made them reel out of heaven; but Christ hath the Godhead to poise him. No beast is naturally a king of beasts but

the lion, says the philosopher; neither is any worthy to be king of all creatures but this lion of the tribe of Judah.

The things they attribute to him are—

1. *Power*; that is, authority over all. So says Christ, John xvii. 2, 'To me all power is given.'

2. *Riches*; that is, possession of all creatures. 'All things are Christ's, and so ours,' 1 Cor. iii. 21. Riches of glory, knowledge, all are his.

3. *Strength*, joined to his authority. He is able to work anything; not as other kings, who though they have authority, have yet no more personal strength than other men; but Christ hath seven horns too.

4. *Wisdom*; and this as large as his power and dominions. He knows all that God means to do; and sees all with his own eyes, not with other men's, as other kings do.

5. *Honour*; that respects what all creatures bring in to him. They all adore, and bow the knee to him, Phil. ii. 10.

6. *Glory*; both in his personal excellencies, and also what his Father gives him. He sits at God's right hand, and governs with him; and in his person is the brightness of his Father's glory; and especially shall be made manifest when he shall come to judge the world.

7. *Blessing*; which respects that glory which, for his special goodness to them, his saints do give him. Others, yea, even the devils, do give honour to Christ, but not blessing. That the saints only give; for that respects in God the communication of goodness. They only bless him whom he blesseth first. Take notice therefore, that Christ hath all desirable excellencies in him; power, riches, wisdom, strength, honour, glory, and blessing.

Ver. 13, *And every creature*.—Every creature in its kind shall worship Christ, Phil. ii. 10, 11. Every creature comes in here, because when Christ's kingdom is set up, they shall be renewed, Rom. viii. 21, and be delivered 'into a glorious liberty.'

The church of men began the song, and these continue it; for it is the mercy to them is the matter of their song, and the instauration of their king. And therefore we are the more to be stirred up to do it, in that we see even all the creatures do it, whom it doth not so much concern.

Ver. 14, *And the four beasts said, Amen*.—And with them the elders join. Observe that the officers do both begin and end.

Amen.—It seems to be an ordinance that this word should be used in the close; and that first by the officers, and then by the people. A precedent for the practice of this you have likewise in 1 Cor. xiv. 16, 'Else when thou shalt bless with the Spirit, how shall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned say *Amen* at thy giving of thanks, seeing he understandeth not what thou sayest?'

CHAPTER III.

The scheme and division of the whole prophecy, from the beginning of the 6th chapter.

THE *stage* being set, chap. iv., and the *prologue* acted, chap. v., the *prophecy* itself begins, in several scenes and visions, chap. vi. But ere I can proceed to tell you what the six first seals of the 6th chapter, or any vision else, doth concern, I must necessarily give you the argument and the division of the whole book; which will afford a better prospect, and a more delectable view, than that of the glory of all the kingdoms of this world, although that was made once in the twinkling of an eye; for what can be more pleasant than to have an insight, though but a general one, into what is God's design and project upon the world, in which the church is seated, and the condition of the church itself, in the world, since Christ's ascension? Now this you have as artificially, and in as many scenes in this book presented, as ever was story in any poem.

Now for a general insight into this prophecy, which may serve both as a compass and a chart to us, in sailing over this sea, that we may know still where we are, I premise these general propositions or assertions concerning the whole prophecy:—

Prop. I.—That this ensuing prophecy, from the beginning of chap. vi. to the end of the book, contains two prophecies, distinct each from other. That book mentioned chap. v. is brought in to represent this prophecy of the Revelation, as was shewed, to be given to the church, and executed by Christ, the Lamb and Lion of Judah.

Now in that book two things are distinctly to be considered, as given with that book:—

1. The seals on the back-side of the book.

2. The contents of the book itself. Now—

1. As the book contains matter of prophecy, so do the very seals also. And accordingly the visions of those seals do take up the 6th, 7th, 8th, and 9th chapters. Both books and seals are mysterious, and do contain matter of prophecy. The very back-side and cover of this book of God is prophetic. This book is all composed of prophecies; and the use of the seals is not simply to shew that the matter of this book was difficult to be known, as in Scripture phrase a sealed book imports; but, besides, they serve to contain a matter of vision to be delivered.

2. Add to this, that answerably, ver. 2. of chap. v., in revealing and delivering this prophecy, two difficulties are distinctly mentioned:—

(1.) The loosing of the seals. (2.) The opening of the book.

Now if the seals only did import the difficulty of this book, it would not have been made a new difficulty to *open* the book. But it is expressly made a distinct difficulty to open the book after the seals are loosened. This

therefore was, because to loosen the seals, was to deliver one prophecy; and to open the book when these seals were loosened, was to deliver another.

3. Accordingly, in the 6th chapter, when the Lamb opens the first seal, a vision is seen, and therein a prophecy delivered; so when the second is opened, there is mentioned another; and when the third, a third vision; and so on in that chapter. And the seventh seal produceth seven angels with seven trumpets; six of which are recounted from chap. viii. to chap. x., and the seventh trumpet is in the end of the 11th chapter.

In the second place, when these seals are, the one of them after the other, taken off, and the prophecy and visions of those seals seen and ended, then an angel comes with a 'little book'—alone, without seals—'open,' chap. x. 2, as containing a new prophecy for John. Now when that this first of the seals was past, then accordingly John was bidden to eat it, ver. 9, 10, to be enabled for a new prophecy. So, ver. 11, it is expressly said, 'Thou must prophesy again before many tongues and kings.' And because a new prophecy was upon the eating of that book to begin, hence, ver. 8, it is said, 'The same voice which he had heard before did speak from heaven again.' Now that voice, or speech, he had heard but twice before, and it was both times when a new prophecy was given; once when the Revelation first began, and the epistles to the seven churches, chap. i. 10. And then another time, when this general prophecy begins, chap. iv. 1, which is distinct from that prophecy of the seven epistles in the three first chapters, which is peculiar to the seven churches. And now again, chap. x. 8, as beginning a new and third prophecy.

Obs.—In that the seals themselves do thus contain a prophecy, observe, That in God's book nothing is without a meaning. Christ said, 'Not a tittle of it shall pass;' let it not therefore pass us. The very cover here is prophetic; much more does every word written in it contain matter of instruction. Search the Scriptures narrowly, and slight not a tittle of them, though you understand them not. There is enough in what you understand, to admire; and in what you understand not, to adore; as judging it the word of the great God, every syllable of which has its weight and value.

Prop. II.—That both these prophecies, both seal and book-prophecy, do run over the same whole course of times, from Christ's ascension unto his kingdom; containing in them several events and occurrences successively, from that time to this of his kingdom, with which this book ends: namely, the seal-prophecy, from chap. vi. to chap. xiii., doth act over one story of all times, to the end of time; and then the book-prophecy, from chap. xii., beginning at the same time again, doth act over another story of all the same times, unto the end. So that the same whole race of time is run over in both, but with several and distinct occurrences; even as the two books of the Kings and Chronicles do contain the stories of the same course of time from David unto the captivity. But the book of the Kings handles most the affairs of the kings of Israel; and that of the Chronicles more eminently holds forth the story of the kings of Judah.

Now to demonstrate this apart; first of the seal-prophecy, and then of the book-prophecy:—

1. For the seal-prophecy; lay but these three things together, (whereof the two first were never denied by any,) and the point in hand will necessarily follow:—

(1.) That in the 6th chapter the six seals do begin; with a prophecy, either from John's time or from Christ's. To prove this, besides those evidences which, when we come to interpret them, will more evidently

appear, as that the first seal begins with Christ's going forth in preaching the gospel, so to lay the first foundation of his kingdom; which going forth refers to those primitive times. As also that in the fifth seal, you have the first mention of the bloody persecution of the saints, professing the gospel, in the same primitive times; which appears by this, that they are told that when the rest of their brethren, by the succeeding persecutions, should be killed, they then should have vengeance upon their enemies for their blood spilt; which argues these in the 6th chapter to be those first persecutions. Besides these evidences, I say, it appears more generally, because the prophecy itself does but here begin, all in the former chapters being but a prologue and a preparation. And it begins with John's time at least; for, chap. i. 1, he says, he was to shew to Christ's servants things which should shortly come to pass: the things contained in this prophecy entering into an accomplishment presently upon John's writing them, and divulging them to the churches.

(2.) The second thing, which also none ever denied, is, that these seals and trumpets, which do in order succeed one another, do contain a continued prophecy of events following one another in a succession of ages downward. To this purpose you may observe the phrase used, chap. x. 7, 'In the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound,' which imports that these several trumpets do, as scenes in a comedy, share among them the several ages and times succeeding one another. And in like manner the seals have their days, even as the rest of the trumpets have their days proper, and peculiarly given to them. And look how in order they are placed, one before the other, as first, second, and third, &c., so do the several times or ages precede or succeed one the other: so as the days of the first seal are the first age, and things done in that age after John, and so on the second seal, &c.

(3.) Add to the two former this consideration, that the seventh trumpet, in the 11th chapter, doth end all time, and so becomes a period to one distinct prophecy of all time. This appears from chap. x. After the seals were passed over and seen with their effects, and the six trumpets had sounded in the 8th and 9th chapters foregoing, the angel swears, ver. 6, 7 of that 10th chapter, that 'time should be no longer;' but 'in the days of the seventh trumpet,' all should be finished. And therefore, chap. xi., from ver. 15,—where the seventh trumpet is brought in sounding in its order, when his day and turn comes to sound,—must needs be esteemed the end of that prophecy: for it brings you to the end of all times; that is, of the times which God thought fit to allot this world, and his enemies in the world, to rule and reign. First, the monarchs and great men of the world are to have their time here, and then Christ's time, and the time of his saints, is to begin; as, ver. 15, 'The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ,' &c.; and, ver. 18, 'The time of the dead is come, that they should be judged.' When this world's hour-glass is run out, then that of another world is to be turned up to run, when there shall be a new heaven and a new earth. So that, from the first seal to the seventh trumpet, is run over all the time that the monarchies and kingdoms of this world, whilst they should be in the hands of Christ's enemies, should continue and last. For that is the time which, towards the end, under the sixth trumpet, the angel that came down under that sixth trumpet swears 'should be no longer.' I shall set down the words of his oath: in the 6th and 7th verses of that 10th chapter, he 'swaereth by him that liveth for ever and ever,'—that is, by God,—'who created the heaven, the earth, and

the sea,' and the things that are in all these his three dominions, 'that there should be time no longer: but in the days of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets.'

Which whole voice, or words, of the sixth angel do import, (1.) That much of that whole time had now been passed and run out already in the former visions of the seals and trumpets, from the first until now. And, (2.) That now the time allotted by God was brought well-nigh to the very last sands of it. And that the church might have some warning, and be able to make some guess, and compute when this time of the world's monarchy, or kingdoms of the world, should have an end; and so, when the time of the Gentiles should be fulfilled and be no longer; this angel doth, towards the expiration of that whole time, give us, in the 11th chapter, the true computation of that time, during which the last monarchy—you know there are four—on earth should endure, as that which might serve us to compute the period of the whole, and the beginning of Christ's visible kingdom, even the days of the beast, or Pope, who is the last part, with his ten kingdoms of Europe, treading down the church, or holy city; which beast, and his kingdoms supporting him as their head, and whose time, from his first beginning to the near approach of that seventh trumpet, which shall begin to sound not long after, or but a little before his very end, is forty and two months, or, which is all one, one thousand two hundred and threescore days; that is, so many years. And with him all other rule and dominion on earth shall end; and Christ shall take the kingdom, when he shall have destroyed Antichrist through the brightness of his coming, which will grow brighter as his coming is nearer. And withal, this angel gives a signal of occurrences which should immediately forerun the period of this time of his ruin, whereby the church might with some nearness discern his approaching ruin; which he does, in that 11th chapter, by presenting the face of that church, which shall be before the downfall of that kingdom, and the last persecution of the church by the beast, foregoing his ruin, that so the church might have both warning, and not think it strange at the fiery trial which at last was to come upon them; as also to be comforted, for it should be the last; and soon after it, the ending of all time, together with that of the world's kingdoms.

2. The second part of the foresaid general proposition, viz., That there is a new prophecy that runs over the same whole race of time, from the beginning to the end of the world's monarchies, unto Christ's kingdom, beginning at chap. xii., and so on to the end of the book.

Now then, the prophecy of the seals, which runs over the whole time of the world's monarchies, being thus ended, chap. xi., there begins another prophecy at chap. xii., which runs over the same whole race and period of times, though with other occurrences. And this is the other part of this general proposition, which I demonstrate thus, as I did the former:—

First, The 12th chapter begins a new prophecy, not only because that the other having ended all time, this must needs begin again anew; but further, the vision of the woman and the dragon in the 12th chapter must needs be of things foregoing the rise of Antichrist,—the beast in chap. xiii.,—and therefore concerneth the primitive times, which were the times before Antichrist. This is proved thus. The dragon mentioned chap. xii., endeavouring to devour the woman, is cast down from heaven; after which, striving to drown her with a flood, he is prevented; and then John, standing, as the best copies read it, upon the sand of the sea, spies this new beast arising, and the dragon gives his throne and power unto him, chap. xiii. All this, therefore, which

is in the 12th chapter, must necessarily contain a story of things done before the rising of Antichrist, and so by consequence must belong to the primitive times, as the particular interpretation will make more clear.

Secondly, Add to this, that unto this beast, from his first rising in the 13th chapter, there is allowed him to continue forty-two months, or 1260 years, which is the very same period of time upon the expiring of which the seventh trumpet begins, which, as you heard, had ended all time before, chap. xi. 15; and then the 14th chapter, which follows, contains the state of the church during the times of the beast, in their separation from him and opposition of him. And then, chap. xv. and chap. xvi. contain seven vials to ruin this beast; whereof the last doth end all time again, even as the seventh trumpet had done. And this is proved—

1. In that, as when the seventh trumpet should sound, the angel sware 'time should be no longer:' so when the seventh vial is poured out, chap. xvi. 17, a voice says, 'It is done;' that is, time is at an end, all is finished.

2. It is said, chap. xv. 1, that these vials contain the last plagues, in which the wrath of God is fulfilled, and therefore must necessarily make an end of all Christ's enemies, and so of their rule; and together with them, of all their time. And—

3. The same things are said to be done in the pouring out the seventh vial, which is the last of plagues, that are presented to be done at the sounding of the seventh trumpet, which is the last of woes. Thus at the sounding of the seventh trumpet, chap. xi. 10, there are said to be 'lightnings, voices, thunderings, earthquakes, and a great hail;' and so likewise upon the pouring forth of the last vial, chap. xvi. 18, there were 'voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake, such as never were on earth before; and so great an hail, that every stone weighed a talent.'

Obj.—But you will say, If there be an end of all when Christ's kingdom comes, then what do the 17th, 18th, and 19th chapters contain, and to what time will you refer them, seeing the description of the kingdom of Christ begins but at the 20th chapter, and so on?

Ans.—The answer, in general, is, that they contain a larger explication or vision of some eminent things that fall out under the time of some of these vials. And therefore the 17th chapter begins thus: 'One of the seven angels which had the seven vials talked with me, and shewed me,' &c., as implying that what follows belonged to their times.

But more particularly—

1. The 17th chapter contains an interpretation of what was spoken concerning the beast in chap. xiii., and shews who that beast is. And as in the prophecy of Daniel the manner of the Holy Ghost was to interpret the visions there made, so here. And of the whore carried by the beast, he says plainly, by way of explication, ver. 18, it is 'that great city that reigneth over the kings of the earth,' namely, Rome. And it was necessary that the Holy Ghost should give an interpretation of some things in this book; and of this especially, as being that which gives light to all the rest, which therefore fitly comes in after all.

2. The 18th chapter, and the 19th, to the 11th verse, doth contain a more poetical description of the ruining of that city, the seat of this last monarchy; and therefore is but a more copious explication of the fifth vial, which, chap. xvi. 10, is said to be poured out upon the seat of the beast; together with a triumphing song of the church's concerning those times, sung at the whore's funeral, and for the approaching marriage of the Lamb. And this, chap. xix. to ver. 11.

3. From thence to the 20th chapter, is a more full description of that last war of the beast, and all the kings of the earth, and their overthrow by Christ: which is therefore all one with the last vial, and the preparation thereunto, as none that shall read from the 13th verse of the 16th chapter unto the end, and compare it with chap. xix. from ver. 11 to the end, will be able to deny. For so it pleased the Holy Ghost, towards the latter end of this prophecy, to give a more full explanation of the two more eminent vials, and the times of them, after he had first, for method's sake, briefly set them together, with the rest, in their order: as in like manner, after he had compendiously set together in one chapter, chap. xx., the reign of Christ during a thousand years, and the universal judgment that follows, he yet spends the 21st chapter in a more copious and magnificent description of the state of the new Jerusalem, and that kingdom of Christ during those thousand years.

Obj.—But then you will say, Unto what will you refer the 11th chapter, from ver. 1 to ver. 15, which is placed, as it were, between both prophecies?

Ans.—I answer, as before, all that discourse delivered by word of Christ's mouth, between the seal and the book-prophecy, doth belong unto both; as containing an exact chronology of that last period of the time of the world's monarchies. By means of which we may easily compute how much that whole time is that both the prophecies do run over, as shall be shewed in the interpretation of that chapter. And withal, there is a signal given of such eminent occurrences befalling the church, as should be most proper and suitable signs of the dawning of Christ's kingdom shortly after to follow; and so of the ending of the time of both prophecies. That as the old Jerusalem, before it was destroyed, had signs given of its destruction imminent; so hath the new Jerusalem also, before it is reared.

Now that these passages in the 11th chapter do belong thus unto both prophecies, appears—

1. In that he speaks of matters contained, and afterwards mentioned in the book-prophecy, chap. xiii., xvi.: as likewise of matters mentioned in the seal-prophecy; namely, of the ending of the sound of the sixth trumpet; which is declared in chap. xi. 14, and called 'the passing away of the second woe.' And—

2. The angel therein mentions how and when the expirations of the times of both prophecies do meet in the sixth trumpet of the seal-prophecy, ending about the time of the date of the beast in the book-prophecy. And thus to insert a chronological table, as it were, between both prophecies, serving them both, and knitting together the times of both in one period; how agreeable is it to the way of historians, who when they run over much time and several matters, use to affix a table of times unto that their history; and so doth our historical prophet John in that 11th chapter.

Prop. III.—The third general proposition, or head, shall be an inquiry into what is the matter or argument prophesied of in this whole book; as also, more particularly, what are the differing subjects of these two several prophecies, the *Seal* and *Book-Prophecy*.

I shall unfold and clear this by several steps and degrees in these propositions following:—

1. It is certain that the subject of both prophecies is the fates and destinies of the kingdoms of the world which should be after Christ's ascension, until he take the kingdom to himself. Therefore at the end or conclusion of the seal and trumpet-prophecy, there is an acclamation that the kingdoms of the world were then become Jesus Christ's, chap. xi. 15, as

having all that while before been under other monarchs' hands, and of which the former part of the prophecy had spoken all along. And therefore he says, 'Time shall be no longer;' that is, for the kingdoms of the world, (that is, not for their worldly kingdoms,) unto which he opposeth that of Christ's. And therefore the book-prophecy also, which begins chap. xii., when it came to be first given, chap. x. 11, hath this prologue or preface unto it, 'Thou must prophesy again before kings and nations,' &c.: *before kings*, that is, about kings, as the style of the prophet is; and that word *again* implies his having prophesied about them before, in the seal-prophecy, although other occurrences in them, and also his being to do it again in this other prophecy following, in new occurrences that concerned the church.

2. The second proposition is, That the whole prophecy concerns only such kingdoms or monarchies of the Gentiles as had to do with the church of Christ. For—

(1.) At the beginning of both prophecies, the church is made the stage or scene upon which all is acted; and so the prophecies extend to no other kingdoms than where the church hath been. And this you may observe throughout both of them; as in the fifth seal, chap. vi., you have blessed martyrs then calling for vengeance for their blood; and under the trumpets, which are miseries upon kingdoms, there are men sealed, as being servants of God, scattered and mingled amongst those nations upon whom those trumpets blow. And the like may be observed in the following chapter. So that they extend but to such kingdoms or monarchies in the world where the church in all ages still was; therefore, not to the West Indians, nor Tartarians, nor Chinese, nor East Indians, &c., where the church hath not been, or not to any considerable purpose; not any of these kingdoms doth this prophecy concern. This likewise agrees with God's manner in the prophets, who prophesied of such kingdoms only as had to deal with his church, thereby to shew Christ's power in ruling kingdoms for his church's good.

(2.) This book being written for the comfort of his church, and all the judgments therein mentioned coming out of the throne of the temple, which is the church, and likewise upon the prayers of the church; it contains therefore the fates of such kingdoms as the church should have to do withal. Now, if so, then—

3. The third step, or proposition, is this, That the Roman monarchy, or empire, with the territories both in the east and west sea, which were under its jurisdiction, (which empire when John wrote was in its height and flourish, and with which the church had most to do, and in the jurisdiction of which the church had always been chiefly, and in a manner only seated,) must needs be, in the several revolutions and changes of it, the main subject of this book of the Revelations, together with the state of the church under it. Now this empire, and the dominions of it, was extended well-nigh as far for circuit as the dominions under the Turk in the east, and the ten European kingdoms in the west. All which, in John's time, were wholly and solely under the emperor of Rome. And in this empire, and throughout all the territories of it, did God place his church and gospel; and throughout all which the Christian profession doth remain unto this day, even in the east as well as in the west, though darkly and corruptly, and in a manner here only. This empire therefore, with its dominions, is in the New Testament called the *world*, even *all the world*, for the greatness of it; and because indeed this was the world which God had set up to act his great works upon. Thus, Luke ii. 1, 2, the whole world is said to have been taxed by Augustus; and, Acts xi. 28, there is foretold a famine that

should rage throughout all the world, in the time of Claudius Cæsar. And this world was the line, as the Apostle's phrase is, beyond whose reach the apostles' preaching never stretched to any considerable purpose. This was their chief auditory, as appears by Matt. xxiv. 14, where, before the destruction of Jerusalem, foretold ver. 15, 16, as a sign forerunning it, it is said the 'gospel should be preached to all the world;' that is, over all the dominions of the Roman empire, as it was by the apostles before the ruining of it. Now that this empire, and the territories under it, together with the church in it, should be the main subject of this book, there are these reasons for it:—

(1.) Because, as hath been said, it is the chief, and in a manner only seat of the church; which was, and still is, extended so far, and no further. And by the power of this empire, and the several successions of it, hath the church been mainly oppressed in all ages. If therefore this book-prophecy be of the church, then surely of the church under this empire; and if of the judgments upon any kingdoms for their oppression of the church, then surely upon this, for the church's sake. And if the judgments which are in this book, set out under seals, and trumpets, and vials, do come for the church's sake, and be made to fall upon her chief enemies, then they must eminently light upon this grand enemy, for such it hath been; and so, this prophecy must note out the judgments and wars that ruined the empire for its persecuting the saints, who, chap. vi. 10, do cry out for vengeance; and the trumpets are the hearing of their prayers, chap. viii. 3.

(2.) The Roman empire, and the successions of it east and west, was that fourth and great monarchy that should oppress the earth, now only left, when Christ ascended. Now, in the prophecies of the Old Testament, their main subject was the great monarchy then in being, or presently to come. So in Daniel, two or three chapters are chiefly taken up with the successions of the Grecian monarchy, and then of the Roman. And Daniel foretold that this Roman should be the most terrible of all the rest. And therefore surely God, in this prophecy of the New Testament, doth, according to his manner in the Old, lay out the fates of that fourth monarchy now only left; as he had done of those others that were gone and past ere Christ ascended.

(3.) This must needs be so, especially seeing the scope of this book is the instalment of Christ into his kingdom, and so to shew how, in the meantime, he puts down all rule that keeps it from him, and takes it to himself; so erecting a fifth monarchy, succeeding the other four. Now then, this Roman monarchy, in the several successions of it in the east and west, being the chiefest rule and power that was left on earth for Christ to put down, and which his own kingdom was immediately to succeed, it is therefore fitly made the subject of this book, to shew how he puts down the rule of it, and preserves his church under it. And so it answers yet more fully unto the like scope of Daniel's prophecy; who being to prophesy of the kingdom of Christ, chap. vii. 9, God doth first, on purpose, give him a vision of the four monarchies that were to precede that of Christ; and especially insist on the fourth, namely this of Rome, ver. 7, as being that which Christ, after his ascension, was to encounter with and put down, ere himself take the kingdom. And then he shews Daniel how Christ will ruin it, ver. 11, and then take the kingdom to himself. So that this Revelation, which is the prophecy of the New Testament, doth more largely and particularly set forth that which Daniel in the Old Testament, according to the dispensation then, saw more generally; even the ruin of the fourth monarchy, which Christ's monarchy succeeds.

(4.) That this should be the subject of this prophecy, suits also with the

chief prophecies delivered by other of the apostles in the New Testament, which were reduced to three heads:—

[1.] Foretelling the ruin of the Roman empire, which, 2 Thess. ii., Paul calls a taking out of the way him that lets.

[2.] The discovery of the Pope, (who is the last head of that last fourth monarchy,) and his ruin.

[3.] The kingdom of Christ to succeed.

These three things were ordinarily preached by the apostles, as appears plainly by 2 Thess. ii. 2–9, where Paul, having spoken of these three things, says, ver. 5, 'Remember you not, that, when I was with you, I told you these things?' So that the apostles did certainly tell the churches of these three things, which surely, therefore, are the main subject of this prophecy also, but they are more largely delivered unto John. Wherefore this Revelation may answerably be divided into these three parts:—

First, The story of the Roman empire, and the taking of it out of the way, which is the subject of the 6th, 7th, 8th, and 9th chapters of this book.

Secondly, The discovery of the man of sin, and his ruin, chap. xiii. 14–19.

Thirdly, Christ's coming and kingdom, chap. xx., xxi.

4. Now then, the fourth and last consideration shall be spent in an inquiry after the difference of the subjects of these two prophecies, the seal and book-prophecy. For in this Roman empire, and the several successions and revolutions of it, there are these two things to be considered in the story thereof:—

(1.) The empire, or political body, and the state thereof.

(2.) The church under it, and the state and condition thereof.

And therefore some writers have written the ecclesiastical story, or story of the church in all ages, apart by itself. Others have writ the story of the empire, and its several revolutions. As among us here in England, (to give you this instance only for an illustration,) the *Book of Martyrs* is chiefly a story of church affairs, and the conflicts of it with Antichrist, in England; but *Speed's Chronicle* is chiefly a story of the affairs civil falling out in that kingdom, in the several invasions, wars, conquests, and intestine broils of it. Now the like method hath the Holy Ghost been pleased to observe in this prophetic story of this empire, and the church spread through the territories and dominions of it. These two prophecies before mentioned, namely the seal and book-prophecy, do share these two between them. The one does apart contain, more particularly, the several wars, events, and revolutions of the empire itself; and that is the seal-prophecy. And the other, which is the book-prophecy, contains the several conditions and states of the church of Christ in all ages. Now this difference of the subjects of those two prophecies doth appear in the several characters, and in the very place and situation of the visions themselves.

First, The differing shows or faces of the visions in these representations do argue this difference: for in the first prophecy, you read of seven seals, and four horses, chap. vi., and then of trumpets, chap. viii. and ix., noting sometimes sealed judgments and devastations by plagues, famines, and wars; of which latter, trumpets are in all nations the signal and symbols, and in Scriptures used to signify wars; and so do note out the several judgments by conquests, and devastations by war, brought upon the civil state of the empire. But in the book-prophecy, the chief actors are women; fit emblems of the church. Thus, chap. xii., it speaks of a *woman with child*, ready to be delivered; and, chap. xiv., of *virgins*, free from her fornications; then of a *whore*, representing the false church, chap. xvii. and xviii.; and then, chap.

xix., of a *bride*, preparing and prepared, personating the state of the church, when Christ shall come to fetch her, and bed her everlastingly in his Father's house and kingdom. Thus artificial is the Holy Ghost in handling things of differing nature apart.

Secondly, answerably, the differing situation and place which these two prophecies had do shew this. The seals which contain the prophecies of the empire were on the *back-side*, as containing matters *extra ecclesiam*, without the church; but the book itself contains things *within*, even as the church is said to be within, 1 Cor. v. 12, 'For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? do not ye judge them that are within?' Whereas those that are not of the church are said to be without, Rev. xxii. 15, 'For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.' And so the prophecy thereof is cast to be, as it were, *without* the book, even upon the seals of it; as denoting that the seal-prophecy treats of things outward, and of the temporal state of the church: whereas the book-prophecy treats of spiritual things within the church. And as in the general division this appears, so it will appear in the interpretation of all particulars throughout this book; for John puts things of a sort together, as the best historians use to do. Only take this caution along with you: that neither in the one nor the other of these prophecies, the things of the empire or the church are so handled apart as that nothing at all of the church affairs were handled in the seal-prophecy, or that nothing of the affairs of the empire were mentioned in the book-prophecy. But it is so to be understood as that eminently the ecclesiastical story is contained in the one, and the imperial story in the other. For as in the books of Kings and Chronicles, though the first does more eminently and setly contain the story of the kings of Israel, yet so as matters of Judah are withal intermingled; and again, in the story of Judah, Israel's affairs are interwoven; even so is it here. Some things appertaining to the church are scatteredly mentioned in the prophecy concerning the empire; and some things touching the empire are diffused through the prophecy of the church, or the book-prophecy.

Now briefly then to sum up all this book:—

It is a tragi-comical vision of the occurrences of the world, and of the church in the world, through all times and ages; whereof this may truly be the title, 'The story of Christ's kingdom, and the removal of the several difficulties of his coming to it.'

Chap. iv.—The stage for this is set up in chap. iv., where there is a representation of the universal church in all ages, set forth according to the exact pattern of a church visible and instituted; into which all saints on earth should be cast.

Chap. v.—Then enters the prologue, chap. v., in which is set forth Christ's taking upon him the kingdom and government, by taking the sealed book; as thereby shewing he undertaketh to be God's commissioner, to execute the decrees contained in this book, and to give the vision of it unto John. At which instalment of him into his kingdom, there is a song of praise sung to the Lamb, by the four-and-twenty elders and four beasts, who are the chorus in this show, with a triumphing assurance and expectation of what will be the happy conclusion of all; even our reigning on earth with him, say they there.

Now the scene or place where all was to be acted, which these visions here hold forth, is the Roman empire, and the several dominions of it in the east and west, called *οικουμένη*, the whole world.

Then begins the story itself at chap. vi.; the general argument of which is: That whereas Christ's government was to be executed and seen, *first*, in putting down all opposite rule and power that stand in his way, as St Paul speaks, 1 Cor. xv. 24, 25, 'Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority and power: for he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet;' and, *secondly*, in a visible taking the kingdom to himself and his saints, which makes the fifth monarchy: accordingly here the story of this book—

1. Shews how Christ doth put down all the opposite rule, and power, and dominion, whatsoever, in the fourth and last foregoing monarchy of the Romans, in the several successions and revolutions of it, one after another, till that he hath worn them all out that were ordained to stand up in it. And these many difficulties of his coming to and obtaining his kingdom do exceedingly serve to make the story of it appear the more glorious. Then—

2. It closeth and endeth in a glorious visible kingdom which Christ sets up on earth, and peaceably possesseth together with his saints, as the catastrophe of all.

More particularly the story is this, according to the several contents of each chapter:—

Christ when he ascended up to heaven, found the Roman monarchy, whose room he was to possess, stretched both over east and west, even over all those parts of the world where he was to seat his church and kingdom; and all this wholly in the hands, and under the dominion and power of one monarch or emperor; under whose government all that were subjected were altogether heathenish and idolatrous, and wholly brought under the power of Satan, who was set up therein as the 'god of this world.'

Hereupon, Christ, the designed king, first sets upon the conquest of Satan's dominion and worship in it; and by the preaching of the gospel, overturns that vast empire as heathenish, throws down Satan from his throne and height of glory in it, and brings it into subjection and acknowledgment of himself as king; and turns both it and its emperors to Christianity, within the space of three hundred years. This is the sum and mind of the 6th chapter of the seal-prophecy, and likewise of the 12th chapter of the book-prophecy.

But this empire, though wholly turned Christian in outward profession, yet having persecuted his church whilst idolatrous, and also after it was Christian, when Arian, therefore at the prayers of the martyrs slain, mentioned chap. vi. 9, and in vengeance of their blood, he further proceeds to ruin the civil imperial power of the empire itself, by the trumpets in the 8th and 9th chapters. And the empire then becoming divided into two parts, the eastern and western empire, as they were commonly called, first he ruins the imperial western state and power in Europe, by the four first trumpets, the wars of the *Goths*, by four several steps, in the 8th chapter; and then the imperial eastern state, which stood after the other, and this by two degrees—first, by the *Saracens*, then by the *Turks*, (and these two are the fifth and sixth trumpets,) which two possess all that eastern part unto this day. And this is the contents of the 9th chapter only. Before these trumpets bring these evils upon the empire, he seals up a company of a hundred and forty-four thousand Christians in the eastern part, as chap. vii. 2, to be preserved and continued in the true profession of his name, under these two sorest and longest (and there called the *woe, woe*) trumpets, which were to fall upon the eastern part of the empire, in which these servants of his there sealed were to be; as appears by chap. vii. 4. And this their sealing is the sum of the seventh chapter.

Now then, that old Roman empire, as under those emperors, being thus in both parts of it removed; yet still, as that eastern part of it is left possessed by the Turks, chap. ix., so this western part of it, in Europe, being by the Goths broken into ten kingdoms, they all consented to give their power to the *beast*, the Pope, chap. xiii., who so becomes a successor to the western emperors, and possesseth their seat and power, though under another title, and so heals that wound given to the Roman monarchy, and restores it. And this *beast* the 13th chapter describes, and gives the vision of his rise, power, and time of his reign, which the 17th chapter doth expound and interpret.

Under whose antichristian tyranny, as great as that of the Turks themselves towards Christians, Christ yet preserveth another like company, of 'one hundred forty and four thousand virgins,' who are in like manner sealed, Christians, in the west, (as, under the tyranny of the Turks and Saracens, he had done the like in the east, chap. vii.) himself so keeping possession still, by preserving his church under both these parts of the empire, as being his inheritance. And this company of a hundred and forty-four thousand Christians, opposite to the whore, are there called virgins; and their separation from her, and opposition to her, is recorded in chap. xiv.

But now these two, the Pope and Turk, both enemies to Christ, thus succeeding in the empire and sharing the two parts of it between them, we see that Jesus Christ is still as far off from his kingdom designed him, which is to be set up in these territories, as he was before; for Mohammedanism, under the Turk, tyranniseth in the one, and idolatry, under the Pope, over-spreads the other, even as heathenism had done over the whole empire at first. And so Christ hath a new business of it yet, to come unto his kingdom, and as difficult as ever.

Therefore he hath seven *vials*, which contain the last plagues, (for he means to make this the last act of this long tragi-comedy,) to despatch the Pope and the Turk, and wholly root them out, even as the seals had done heathenism, and the trumpets had done the civil power of the empire; and the plagues of these vials are the contents of the 15th and 16th chapters.

The first five vials do dissolve, and by degrees ruin the Pope's power in the west; then the sixth vial breaks the power of the Turk in the east, so making way for the Jews, (whom he means to bring into the fellowship of his kingdom in their own land,) there called 'the kings of the east.'

But by these six vials their power and kingdom being not wholly ruined, both the Turkish and Popish party do together join, using their utmost forces (and together with them all opposite kings of the whole world) against the Christians, both of the east and west, who, when the Jews are come in and converted, do make up a mighty party in the world; unto the help of whom, against those and all opposite power whatsoever, Christ himself comes and makes but one work of it, with his own hand from heaven destroying them. And so it is done, as the voice of the last vial is, in the 16th chapter.

The 17th chapter is an interpretation concerning the *beast*, shewing who he is, and where his seat is.

The 18th chapter sings a funeral song of triumph for the whore's ruin, which is the fifth vial; after which comes in Christ's kingdom, the New Jerusalem, and the preparations to it; which new kingdom of his shall be made up—

1. Of eastern Christians, who endured the bondage of the two woe-trumpets, the Saracens and the Turks, yet continuing to profess his name. And

therefore unto those hundred and forty-four thousand in the 7th chapter is said to succeed an innumerable company, with 'palms in their hands,' who have the very same promises of the New Jerusalem made to them that are mentioned in the 21st chapter, which shews their interest therein. And—

2. It is made up of western Christians, whose hundred and forty-four thousand, in chap. xiv., do arise to an innumerable company also; who therefore, after the rejection of the whore, chap. xix. 1-9, are brought in singing in like triumphant manner, decking themselves for the marriage in fine linen. But—

3. And especially, it is also to be made up of Jews dispersed both east and west, and over all the world; and from them hath this kingdom the name of the New Jerusalem. With whom—

4. Come in, as attendants of their joy, other Gentiles too, who never had received Christ before. The 'glory of the Gentiles' is said to be brought into it.

And so both east and west, Jew and Gentile, and the fulness of both, do come in, and become one fold under one shepherd for a thousand years, and one kingdom under this 'Root of David,' their king, King Jesus the conqueror, even as it first was under one heathen idolatrous emperor, when Christ had first set to conquer it. And so that prophecy of this his kingdom, in Isa. lix. 19, is fulfilled, where, after the final destruction of all Christ's enemies, foretold ver. 18, he says, 'They shall fear his name, from the east unto the west, and the Redeemer shall come unto Sion;' which words Paul interprets of the Jews' final call, and this restoration of the world with them, Rom. xi. 26.

Even so, Lord Jesus, come quickly!

CHAPTER IV.

Of the first six seals in the 6th chapter.

HAVING thus given a scheme and division of the whole prophecy, and a general argument of the story of it, briefly set together in one view, I will now run over each chapter apart; yet I shall largely insist only on the 6th chapter, as being taken off by other occasions from commenting so copiously, with observations, upon the rest, which I shall pass over with a more slight glance of interpretation, as hastening to the Second Part, which I more especially aim at; which, although it arise not to a full and copious commentary, shall, notwithstanding, serve to hold forth that to be the true portrait of the Holy Ghost's mind in this story, which in the general argument foregoing I have given it out to be.

The *seal-prophecy* concerns the state of the empire from John's time downward. Which state, as all story will represent unto you, is to be considered, either—

1. Whilst heathenish, when false gods were worshipped, as Jupiter, Mars, &c., and the professors of Christian religion were persecuted and massacred; during all which time the empire stood whole, undivided, and entire, under the government of one emperor, under whom both east and west were subjected, and this for the space of three hundred years after Christ. Or else—

2. When turned Christian, as by Constantine it was; from whose time the whole empire more generally was subjected to the outward profession of Christ; but withal, it began to be divided and broken into two parts: which rent was afterwards established by Theodosius, the eastern part of Europe (whereof Constantine made Byzantium, from him called Constantinople, the seat) being allotted to one emperor, which eastern part the Turk now possesseth; and the western part, which had Rome for the seat of it, unto another, which western part the Pope for many hundred years hath entirely had under him; so that the one was called the eastern, and the other the western empire. And according to this division, the seal-prophecy divides itself into two parts:—

First, The first six seals, chap. vi.

Secondly, The first six trumpets, which the seventh seal brings forth in the 8th and 9th chapters; from the woe of which trumpets the servants of God are sealed, chap. vii.

Here, in the 6th chapter, the first prophecy begins, and that with the primitive times; of which these two things are evidences:—

1. That in the first seal is the 'going forth'—the preaching of the gospel—'conquering, and to conquer;' for as then, and in that manner, it had begun. This was the foundation of all God's after-proceedings, the first corner-stone of Christ's obtaining and setting up his kingdom.

2. That the fifth seal mentions the martyrdom of saints, crying out for vengeance; which being the first mention of any such martyrdom in this

book, must needs refer to those famous first persecutions under heathenish Rome, which was followed by the Arian a little after; as ver. 11.

These six seals are several steps and degrees, setting forth the moving causes and means of God's plaguing and ruining the empire of Rome as heathenish. Christ being to put down all adverse power, he finds not only this empire to stand in his way, but Gentilism, the worship of false gods, and of Satan, under those idols of Jupiter, Saturn, Mars, &c. First therefore he encounters Satan's worship, heathenism, which had all the power of that empire to back it; and then in the trumpets he encounters the empire itself: he 'went forth conquering, and to conquer,' and that but by degrees. The first judgments on that empire left the empire standing. Therefore, the martyrs, after those punishments foregone, in the second, third, and fourth seal, do yet (seal fifth) cry for vengeance on the empire itself.

They are called *seals*—

1. In a general relation to this whole prophecy; it being—

(1.) A book of decrees to be executed by Christ, and these are the seals of them.

(2.) This book being not to be opened till the time of the end, as Daniel foretold, is sealed up till just before the end of all; as there it is prophesied, Dan. xii. 4, 'But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.' Towards this end of all you have (mark this) the same angel in Dan. xii. coming in the 10th chapter of this Revelation, with a book in his hand open; which as it was to give a new prophecy, so to shew that when all the seals were off, (that is, when these judgments were all executed on the world,) then the book should be understood; and accordingly, not till all these seals were passed, was the Revelation understood.

2. More particularly they are called *seals*, because—

(1.) They are judgments decreed by God, that should certainly come upon that empire. Now what is decreed inevitably is said to be *sealed*. So the salvation of the elect is said to be, 2 Tim. ii. 19, 'The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth who are his.' So also judgments decreed are said to be *sealed*, Deut. xxxii. 34, 'Is not this laid up in store with me, and sealed up among my treasures?' even to punish them; for so it follows, 'to me belongeth vengeance,' &c. Thus, Job xiv. 17, 'My transgression,' says he, 'is sealed up in a bag;' that is, God had before appointed surely to punish it.

(2.) They are said to be sealed, in that they are judgments hidden, stealing in upon the world ere they were aware of them, and which they knew not the meaning of. And accordingly we find, by the Apologies of Tertullian, Cyprian, Arnobius, and others, that the heathenish Romans, observing such strange, unheard-of famines, civil wars, and plagues of pestilence, typified out here by the red, black, and pale horses, did exceedingly wonder at the reason of them, and laid it on the new sect of the Christians, as with whom their gods were angry for contemning their worship; for it was never so with them before, and therefore they attributed it to that cause. These judgments were sealed, and Christ here opens the cause of them, the contempt of the gospel.

(3.) They are sealed judgments, for pledges and assurance of all that follow. That is the use of seals, to give assurance; for that end is the seal of the Spirit. And so here, there being other things in this prophecy foretold, as the ruin of the empire itself, the rising of Antichrist and of the Turk, the ruin of them both by the seven vials, and then Christ's kingdom; that all

these things should certainly come to pass in their time, God first sent these judgments as seals: that as we read in story the truth of these to be evidently fulfilled, so we may assure ourselves of the accomplishing all the other.

Obs.—Observe from this general, a ground of confirming your faith about all these things prophesied of by God; in that the fulfilling of one is a seal, assuring that the other shall be fulfilled. That heathenism is ruined, and no adorers of those pagan gods left, as this chapter shews, which was more firmly rooted, being of four thousand years' continuance, than ever Popery was, is a seal to us that Popery shall be ruined. You see many things past and fulfilled; the beast of Rome (the Pope), then, when John wrote this, not risen, is now up in your days; which may confirm your faith that he shall as certainly be ruined: for the same prophecy foretells his fall, chap. xviii., as his rise, chap. xiii., and that after this there is a glorious kingdom to come, of which all these are seals. You find in the 11th chapter, before the end, the temple measured anew, and the outward court of carnal worshippers and worship cast out; and you see it now in your days fulfilled; yea, yourselves fulfil it. You may therefore as certainly expect that which follows in the same chapter, and prepare for it. Thus Zechariah begins his prophecy, so to assure them of the truth of it: Did you ever know prophecy fail? 'My words,' says he, Zech. i. 6, 'did they not take hold of,' or arrest, 'your fathers?' by the judgments threatened; and 'like as the Lord thought to do unto us, so hath he dealt with us;' therefore believe the rest.

Now the four first seals are represented unto us under the vision of four horses, in allusion to the visions in Zechariah, chap. i. and vi. Christ in the 1st chapter of that book, ver. 8, is presented riding on a red horse; and behind him stood other horses, red, speckled, and white; and, ver. 10, they are interpreted to be angels, who walk to and fro through the earth; and, chap. vi. 5, to be four winds, or spirits, that go forth from standing before the Lord of the earth. So the good angels, Heb. i. 14, are called ministering spirits, sent forth, &c. Thus, Ps. civ. 3, 4, compared with Heb. i. 7, 14, and Ezek. i., where they are called winds, as in that of Zech. vi. 5. So in like manner are the evil angels sent forth to do mischief, as 1 Kings xxii. 21, and Job i. 7. The angels are the executioners of all God's great designs; and therefore whatsoever is done in this book by men is still said to be done by angels. So, chap. viii. 2, seven angels with seven trumpets, &c.

Here the vision is of horses going forth in like manner with commission from God. And this allusion to those horses, who there were angels, shews either that these executions, under these seals, by whomsoever visibly executed, were yet performed under the conduct of Christ the first horse, presented here, as also in that of Zech. i., as an angel, accompanied with other angels his followers, who are those other horses; or else, however, to shew, that as those angels upon horses in Zechariah went their circuit over the earth, so that here were commissions sealed to these executioners, to traverse and compass the earth, as angels use to do. God begins here to war with the world, and sends out four horsemen to give the first onset. That this vision is presented under horses is but for variety's sake.

The Revelation takes all the eminent visions of the Old Testament, and makes use of them. The elegancies of all the types in the prophets serve but to set forth and adorn the visions of this book; as if you should make up one beautiful picture out of all beauties, by taking whatever is elegant and excellent in any one. The vision of the throne, chap. iv., is borrowed from Isaiah and Ezekiel; that of the book sealed, from Daniel; this of horses

here, from Zechariah; and so that of the olive-trees, and candlesticks, chap. xi., from Zech. iv., &c.

Observe from hence—

Obs. 1.—The perfection of this book. It is a posy of all flowers, a vision composed out of all visions; as Solomon's Song was a song of songs. All the types in Moses' law, and all the stories and visions of the prophets, are borrowed to adorn it.

Obs. 2.—That the occurrences under the new testament, and the story of the church under it, have all the perfections of all kinds that were under the old. For in the new testament the old is more eminently acted over, in all passages of providence. Was there a temple? Here is one more glorious; this second exceeds the first. Was there an Egypt, a Sodom, a Babylon? Here also is one far worse than all those were. So Rome is called in this book, chap. xi. and xviii. Was there a restoring of the temple, decayed in the captivity of Babylon? Here is the like, and that at twice, and by degrees, as then. Had they a Jerusalem? The Revelation hath a better, a New Jerusalem. Did the bondman of old persecute the free? Even so it is now: Gal. iv. 24, 29, 'Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit; even so it is now.' We have all the same things befall us that befell them, and that more eminently; as Paul said, 'Are they apostles? I much more.' Had they persecutors? We much more, and those worse. Had they Pharisees, that sinned against the Holy Ghost and crucified Christ? So hath the new testament, such as shall, after this great conviction wrought by the gospel, prove like a generation of Pharisees, scorched with the heat of hell-fire, as in the fourth vial, and that shall kill the 'witnesses,' chap. xi. The allusion is to these times. The apostle hath said it in one word, and given the reason of it, 1 Cor. x. 11, 'All these things happened unto them for types:' so also did all their visions, being written for 'our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come;' you may read it, 'perfection of the world is come:' we have the perfection of everything under the old testament, both good and bad.

This may serve to give a general light into the stories and visions of this prophecy. As for the several visions themselves:—

The first horse is a *white* one, and his rider crowned, &c. This rider is Christ himself, 'going forth,' in the preaching of the gospel, 'conquering, and to conquer;' alluding unto Ps. xlv. 4–6, where Christ, having a kingdom to possess,—as ver. 6, 'Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever,' speaking of Christ, as appears by Heb. i. 8, 'But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom,'—he is set out in his going forth to conquer it; for he must win and wear it. And he is described as here, 'In thy majesty prosper thou, ride thou,' or ride thou prosperously, that is, go forth conquering; and that being accoutred with bow and arrows, as ver. 5, 'Thy arrows are sharp in the hearts of the king's enemies,' that is, his own enemies, who is king.

Now answerably this book also tells us that Christ was to have a kingdom; and here you have his first setting out to conquer it. The first foundation of his kingdom laid was the preaching of the gospel in the Roman empire by the apostles, which was now begun; therefore he is said to go forth conquering already. And he goes first forth; for all the other horsemen do but attend him; he is the general of these horses. Thus likewise, in Zech. i., he is described with other horses with him. And he goes forth

first on a *white* horse; which, as it was a sign of triumph, that he was to conquer,—for so in triumph their chariots were drawn with white horses,—so especially of meekness and candour, offering at first conditions of peace in the gospel, unto the empire of Rome, and to all nations, if they would submit to him as their king. God had given him the nations for his inheritance, and he goes forth peaceably to challenge it; with conditions also, that the world should yet hold their crowns of him, only turn Christians they must, and do homage to him as their king. This the colour of *white* denotes; for here it is opposed to the colour of the red horse that followed, which colour betokened blood. Thus Tamerlane, before he denounced war, first hung out a white flag, in token of peace offered. Therefore, in Ps. xlv. 4, Christ is bidden to 'ride on, because of the word of meekness;' and the progress of the gospel is compared to that of a horse and his rider, for it had its progress over the earth, from one country to another, by commission: 'Their sound went out to all the earth,' Rom. x. 18; 'Come to Macedonia, and help us,' Acts xvi. 9. His weapons to conquer, if men yield not, are here but arrows: but, chap. xix., when his conquest is to be finished, you have him with a sword. In Ps. xlv., he is described with both. The threatenings of the gospel are arrows, striking secretly and dartingly into men's hearts, and wounding them mortally; *hæret lethalis arundo*.

He is crowned; for God, when Christ first ascended, made him a king. 'We see Jesus, crowned with glory and honour; though yet we see not all things put under him,' Heb. ii. 8, 9: yet we see him crowned, for all must be subject to him.

He goes forth conquering; for whether men obey or not, Christ still conquers. Paul speaks like a conqueror, 2 Cor. ii. 14, 'God always causeth us to triumph in Christ.' For if men turn, there is a triumph of grace pardoning, and so subduing traitors; and if not, it is a savour of death, like a box of venomous ointment, which poisons by the smell.

Now if you ask, how the preaching of the gospel can be a step of ruin, and a sealed judgment, it being in itself so great a blessing?—the answer is, that it was truly a step unto the ruin of heathenism in the empire, which was the first opposite that Christ encountered. When Christ first sent his disciples forth, speaking of the event of it, he says, 'I saw Satan fall from heaven like lightning.' The devil was struck dumb in his oracles when Christ began to publish his. And so Christ already conquered, in part; but ere he had done, he threw Satan out of heaven, as the sixth and last seal shews. So that though the gospel was a blessing to the world, yet it was a curse to Gentilism; as the first vial, by converting many people's hearts from Popery, is called a vial on the earth.

Observe from hence—

Obs. 1.—The mercifulness and meekness of Christ. He goes not forth first on a red horse, but on a white, and makes offer of peace; but if men turn not, he hath other horses to do that work of destroying them. He loves unbloody conquests. Who therefore would stand out against such a Saviour?

Obs. 2.—The strangeness of Christ's course to get his kingdom; even by no other means at first but preaching the word. He takes no weapons but a bow, the tongues of men, to dart arrows into the hearts of them that resist. It was a strange, unlikely course to set twelve men scattered, and fishermen, to conquer the world, the Roman empire; as if twelve men should be sent into Turkey to conquer the Great Turk, and throw down Mohammedanism: 'Not by power, nor by might, but by my Spirit,' Zech. iv. 6.

Obs. 3.—Observe, That where Christ begins to conquer, he will go on to perfect his conquest. Fear not the cause of God in England; there is a battle to be fought: Christ in his angels growing more and more holy, and fuller of light; and Satan in his growing worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived. Christ comes up with fresh supplies of new light, with his bow and arrows bears up as hard as they. And it is certain that Christ will not be foiled. The primitive Christians, although their light grew dimmer and dimmer, yet they conquered heathenism. These now must needs conquer much more.

After the going forth of this white horse, there follow three others, as light horsemen, attending this their general. So, Zech. i. 8, he saw 'a man upon a red horse, and behind him were other horses, red, speckled, and white.' Now that man was Christ, ver. 8, who hath always other horsemen his attendants to fulfil his will, as here he hath. Christ there was upon a red horse, for so he appeared, as being to revenge himself on the enemies of his church; but here he is on a white horse, as being to send forth the gospel. But those other horses that do here follow after him are indeed judgments that follow for the contempt of that gospel, and which plagued the empire successively. Their colour is suitable to the plague they brought; therefore the second horse is red, a colour betokening blood, Isa. lxiii. 2. And answerably, this horse is *war*, for his commission is 'to take peace from the earth,'—that is, the Roman empire, the subject of this seal-prophecy. And civil war it is, as those words note out, that 'men should kill one another;' not persecution of the saints, as some take it, but mutual bloodshed, as that phrase imports. All which was for their contempt of the gospel. For—

1. If they take peace from the saints, it is a suitable plague that God should take peace from the earth.

2. If they will not embrace the gospel of peace, it is suitable that God should take away their peace. And—

3. If they will kill the saints, is it not a proportioned judgment that God should turn their swords into their own bowels?

And this power is said to be 'given him.' It proceeded from a commission from God; and so was a 'sword given him.' God puts the sword into an enemy's hand, and gives it its commission. As magistrates do bear God's sword, so soldiers; who therefore, in the prophets, are often called God's sword. Now, how after the preaching of the gospel in the apostles' time, such wars fell upon the empire in the west is most evident in story; nor are there greater civil wars mentioned than in the Roman stories. John wrote his Revelation just before Trajan's time, in the reign of Domitian, about the year of Christ 94, and died in 104, ten years after. Now in Trajan's time, in whose sixth year John died, these wars began. And so then, when the apostles were all dead, and had preached the gospel to the world, the Jews rise, and with armies raged through all the parts of the empire; and so devastated and depopulated Lybia of her inhabitants, that Hadrian was afterwards forced to send thither new colonies. About Cyrene they destroyed 22,000; in Egypt also, and in Cyprus, 24,000; and in Mesopotamia likewise a great number. And Hadrian afterwards succeeding in the empire, destroyed 58,000 of them. Then after Trajan's time, the Parthians revolt, and the empire was lessened, having in his time had the largest extent. And in Antoninus's time, anno 140, all the northern nations came down upon the east, and upon all Illyricum; yet they, as a land-flood, were dried up; so that the empire stood entire. And that these wars might

be the more eminently taken notice of, as following upon the apostles' deaths, as they had none before, so for forty-four years after this there was a universal peace, and wars ceased through the empire.

The third horse is *famine*; his colour, answerably, *black*, for famine makes men's countenances such. So, Lam. iv. 6, 7, 'Her Nazarites, that were purer than snow, and more ruddy than rubies, their visage is blacker than a coal;' and this by reason of famine, as appears by ver. 9. His rider hath scales in his hand, to shew that he sells corn by weight, not by measure;—as, Lev. xxvi. 26, 'When I have broken the staff of your bread, women shall deliver you your bread by weight;' and a small quantity of corn, even so much as serves a man in bread for a day, for so the chænix was, was sold for a penny, which amounts to 7½d.;—yet with commission not to hurt the oil and the wine. Now because historians are silent concerning any notable famine and universal, that fell out in the next age after these wars in the Roman empire, therefore Mr Mede carries it to the justness of those emperors, signified by the balances, which in Severus and others was eminent; especially in laws against thieves, and in public provision for corn. But this was heterogeneous to the rest, which are all steps to the ruining or plaguing of the heathenish empire. And for the Holy Ghost to take notice of a moral virtue, and to insert it thus among the midst of his judgments, I cannot be induced to believe it. But this scarcity being not of oil and wine, but of corn only, might well be slipt over by historians; when yet the Christians of that age, as Tertullian and others, do mention a famine of corn as a judgment on the empire for their contempt of Christ, and their persecuting of the saints. I have searched diligently for such footsteps in them of that age, 200 years after Christ and upwards, as might confirm the truth of this.

And, first, I find, that in Commodus's time, anno 190, there was a commotion made for bread, within the city of Rome, by the poorer sort. Thus says Herodian, *fames Romanos afflixit*, the Romans were afflicted by reason of famine and scarcity: when Cleander, Commodus's great favourite, detained the corn from the common people, he being keeper of the storehouse of it; upon which they mutiny, requiring him to be put to death; and proceeding further in their rage, they throw down houses, oppose the soldiers, stone the captains, &c., so that Commodus was enforced to cut off his favourite's head, and set it upon a pole, and to destroy his children also, so to pacify the people. Yea, in those very words which Mr Mede quotes for Severus's justice, and care about oil, &c., there is an intimation of the exhaustion of the corn of the public storehouse through that famine. The words are these, *Rei frumentariæ quam minimam reperiebat; ita consuluit*, &c. So likewise there is such an intimation in that other place which he quotes for Alexander Severus's care, anno 118, which only was occasioned by Heliogabalus's having overthrown the public stock of corn; *frumenta evertisset*.

Then, secondly, for the Christian writers of these times: Tertullian, who lived in anno 203, doth more confirm this; for in his Apology for the Christians, he brings in this calumny as usual among the heathens, that they laid the cause of all their miseries upon the Christians. His words are these: *Si cælum stetit*, &c.,—if it rained not, if Nilus overflowed not Egypt, (which was the granary of the empire,) from whence arose a famine, or if the pestilence devoured them, &c.,—*statim*, says he, they cried, *Christianos ad leones*: Away with these Christians to the lions! I observe, he instanceth most in famine, and the causes of it, as being that which then they

were most punished with. And he, in his Apology, pleading for Christians, how they fasted in times of judgments, he instanceth in that of famine only, saying, 'If famine be threatened by want of rain, so that their *annona*,' or provision of corn, as De la Cerda reads it, 'were in danger to be spent, that then they Christians fast, whilst other Romans pour themselves out to all licentiousness.' It is observable that he still instanceth in the judgment of famine. And in his Apology to Scapula, the African president, he, shewing that no city that persecuted the Christians did go unpunished, instanceth how lately, under Hilarian's presidentship, his predecessor, the Christians begging a floor of corn, a voice was heard from under-ground, saying, *Aræ non sunt*. And indeed they were not, for they had no harvest nor corn the next year to thresh in them, it being spoiled through a great wet in the time of harvest, as he there says. And you, says he, condemning a Christian to the beasts, *statim hæc vexatio subsecuta est*; which Baronius understands of that wet year before spoken of, which brought ruin to the corn.

But Origen speaks more clearly to this, who, presently after, (about 226 years after Christ,) writing upon Matt. xxiv., and taking occasion to answer the same calumny objected so generally against the Christians by the heathens,—namely, that because of the multitude of Christians among them, they had been vexed with wars, famine, and pestilence,—although he reckons up all those three plagues as objected, yet to make it good that the heathens did so object, he especially instanceth in famine: *Frequenter enim*, says he, *famis causa Christianos cultores culparunt Gentiles*;—'For the heathens oftentimes laid the fault of their being afflicted by famine upon those of the Christian religion.' Though they did so because of other plagues also, yet they often laid their famines in the dish of the Christians; which evidently argues this punishment to have been very frequent in those times, as being taken notice of by the heathens themselves, and also by Origen, to have been the eminent punishment of that age, which made up the third seal.

Now then, the fourth seal produceth a fourth horse, and that a *pale* one, for his rider is death; *mors pallida*, pale death, as they use to call it. And this horse brings death upon the fourth part of the empire, called the earth, and his work was to kill with all sorts of death, both plague, and famine, and wars, and wild beasts; all God's plagues let loose at once. Before, civil wars came alone, and famine came alone; but now, for their impenitency, he lets loose all four judgments mentioned in Ezek. xiv. 21. God now brings forth all his 'treasures of wrath.' Pestilence is here, ver. 8, called death, as it is likewise by the Chaldee paraphrase and the Greek; and by the fathers it is called mortality, as by us the sickness. Now, from the year 240 after Christ, it is wonderful to read what a stage of misery and blood the empire was made, by reason of all these plagues raging at once. Civil wars so raged, that, in the space of thirty-three years, there were ten emperors killed. Under Gallus and Volusianus, anno 250, the barbarous nations came down upon the empire and harrowed it; and among them the Scythians, from whose rage no place under the Roman jurisdiction was exempt, but almost all towns were by them depopulated. And this was followed by an extreme famine. When we had a breathing time from them, then came the greatest plague of pestilence, worse than all the former, says Dionysius Alexandrinus, who lived in those times; the greatest plague, says Lypsius, that ever was read of in any age, a plague of fifteen years' continuance. And to add the last hand for the making the misery of those times complete, God let loose thirty tyrants at once, who, as so many wild beasts, preyed upon and made havoc of the empire.

Now to come to some observations:—

Obs. 1.—Take notice, that after the going forth of the white horse, then go forth these other three. The gospel is always followed by terrible judgments upon the world for the contempt of it. You know what Peter says, ‘The time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God;’ but it will not rest there, as he says. The time of the gospel’s preaching was a time of judgment, which began with the church, but after that fell most heavy upon the empire, and upon the heathens in it. So that as you look for storms in autumn and frosts in winter, so expect judgments where the gospel has been preached; for the quarrel of the covenant must be avenged and vindicated. If men despise it, God cannot hold his hands.

Use.—Wonder not, therefore, if God go over all the churches in judgments, as he hath done by Germany, Bohemia, &c. They had the gospel first, and so the cup of tribulation first; but God will visit the rest in their order, and, it may be, that of Holland last, because they have had the gospel but a little while.

Obs. 2.—Observe, That God useth to rise higher and higher in his judgments. He began with civil wars; and they not working, he sent famine, which is worse; and then war, as Lam. iv. 9; and then he came upon them with the pestilence and all the other three at once: which agrees with that in Lev. xxvi. 24, ‘If you repent not, I will punish you seven times worse.’ So in the trumpets, the three last are the woe-trumpets. And so in the vials too, God will rise higher and higher, as here he does.

Obs. 3.—Observe, That all plagues have their commission from God; they go forth only when Christ openeth a seal. Of the second it is said, ‘Power was given him, and a sword.’ And so to the third a commission of restraint was given, not to hurt the oil and wine. And to the fourth, only to kill the fourth part. They are therefore compared to horses sent forth, that are guided by riders; God’s providence to direct them, and have their way chalked out, as the Egyptian plagues had. Ps. lxxviii. 50, it is called ‘a path made for his anger,’ chalked out where it should go, and into what houses. So, Jer. xv. 2, ‘Those that are for the sword, to the sword; and those that are for the famine, to the famine,’ &c. Now in all these circuits of God’s judgments, let us wait for his turning towards us in mercy. ‘In the way of thy judgments have we waited for thee.’

Obj.—And whereas it may be objected, that these are plagues that were ever common in the world, and in all times as well as these,—for answer, these considerations made these plagues then more eminently to be set down:—

1. They were as eminent in the Roman empire in those first ages as in any other afterwards.

2. Though the empire had such plagues in after-times also, yet these were all the plagues which it had whilst heathenish, and so were proper punishments of their Gentilism, and contempt of the message of the white horse, and so intended by God, and therefore brought in here as such. Neither did these at all ruin the empire, which stood unbroken, but simply punished it for its idolatry. But such plagues as fell out after these had other effects accompanying them, even the ruin of the imperial government, by dividing it, lessening it, and the like; which these did not. But—

3. And more especially, the Holy Ghost doth mention these plagues here, although the like were in other ages, as punishments attending upon the gospel, because this was the very observation and objection that the heathens of those times made: that since the Christian religion began in the empire, wars, pestilence, and famine raged more than ever they did in former times;

and so laid it upon the Christians as the cause, in that they, contemning the gods, provoked them to send these plagues. This we find to be the main complaint and calumny which the Christian writers of those times writ Apologies to wipe off; as appears in Tertullian, Cyprian, Arnobius, &c., whose Apologies I purposely read, and found these judgments to be most frequently taken notice of by the heathens themselves, and this calumny by the fore-mentioned authors answered. Yea, Cyprian, in his Apology, says, that to wipe off this calumny was the sole motive and occasion that put him upon writing. ‘I held my peace,’ says he, ‘till they laid all these plagues upon us, as the cause of all.’ Now, how properly, therefore, did the Lord Christ single out those eminent plagues following the gospel, and present them under these seals, as the most notable occurrent punishments of those times, rather than any other!

And how fitly are they called seals, seeing they were so hidden that the heathens were utterly mistaken in the causes of them! For they being punishments of their persecuting the saints, they turned the matter clean contrary, and imputed it to the anger of the gods for the Christians’ contemning their heathenish religion. But though they were hidden sealed plagues, in respect of the causes of them, to the heathens, yet the four beasts did then instruct John, who personates the church, and so the church in him, concerning the true cause of them; and therefore every seal hath a voice of one or other of the beasts, saying, ‘Come up and see.’ For the officers or ministers of churches instructed them how that all these plagues were from the gospel, and the contempt of it, and their persecuting the professors of it. This you may read in the Apologies of Tertullian, Arnobius, and Cyprian, whose Apology I will instance in for all the rest; who, as he lived under the fourth seal, in the rage of these four plagues, so he speaks in the very language of the fourth seal. He writes against one Demetrianus, who had long barked at Christian profession. And, says he, I forbore till he laid to our charge that all these miseries on the empire we Christians were the cause of: *Cum dicas plurimos conqueri, quod bella crebrius surgant, quod lues, et fames sevant, ultra tacere non oportet;*—‘When I hear you say that many complain of us as the causes why those wars so often arise, and why the pestilence and famine rage so, I can be no longer silent, but must needs give you an answer;’ and he plainly declares, from the Lord of hosts, that their idolatries and persecutions of the Christians were the cause, and that these punishments *non eveniebant casu*, came not by chance, but were the vengeance of God, who hath said that ‘vengeance is his,’ and that he will judge the cause of his people. And he withal tells them, that if they repent not through these plagues, hell would then follow. *Manet postmodum,* says he, *carcer æternus, jugis flamma, et poena perpetua;*—‘There remains, after all this, an eternal prison, a continual flame, and an everlasting punishment.’ He speaks in the very language of this fourth seal, not knowing it, nor referring to it, for he lived under it.

Thus doth Tertullian also in his Apology, wherein he attributes the cause of their famine and other plagues unto their persecuting the Christians. And this is the mystery of the four beasts calling upon John to ‘come and see,’ and behold the mind and meaning of these judgments on the world; the officers of churches in their sermons so instructed them.

Obs.—The only observation I shall raise from this instruction of the four beasts is this: That during the first four seals, which indeed bring us to two hundred and sixty years after Christ, the officers of churches remained according to the institution in the purer churches; but afterwards you hear

not of them, corruptions coming in upon all the churches, and perverting their right institution and end. You meet not with any more mention of them till the vials begin, chap. xv., which was in the first separation from Popery; and then you read not that all four, but only one of the beasts gave those vials. But after a second measuring the temple before Rome's ruin, as chap. xi., you read of four beasts, chap. xix., in their right order again, praising God.

The fifth seal is that great and bloody persecution which followed after all these plagues in the time of Dioclesian, about the year 300, which was, of all the ten persecutions foregoing it, the greatest, and therefore is put in for all the rest. Under it, there suffered one hundred and forty-four thousand in one province of the empire; how many, therefore, in the rest? Now this last is here mentioned instead of all the rest—

1. Because indeed those other plagues, for the contempt of the gospel, did but enrage the heathens the more; for they thought that all this came upon them for their suffering the Christians to live.

2. This, being the last and greatest, is brought in as crying for vengeance in the name of all the foregoing martyrs; for so their cry intimates, 'How long, Lord, wilt thou not avenge our blood?'

The vision is—

1. Of souls severed from their bodies, even of men slain, or of martyrs.

2. These men are presented as new sacrificed, and with their throats cut, lying bleeding at the foot of the altar, alluding to the sacrifices, for martyrdom is no other than a sacrifice. 2 Tim. iv. 6, 'For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand;' and Phil. ii. 17, 'Yea, and if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy and rejoice with you all.' And whereas many understand this altar to be heaven, that comes in afterward, when white robes are given them. It is an allusion to the altar of burnt-offerings whereon their bodies were offered; but, chap. viii., their prayers are offered up upon the altar of incense.

3. They are presented as crying for vengeance for their blood. Mark it, it is not simply the blood that cries, as it is said of Abel's blood, but the souls themselves that cry, and that for vengeance and utter ruin on the empire. À Lapide makes it *liberationem*, so the Hebrew word signifies; and so *vindicare* is to *free*, as praying for the liberty of the church below. But these cries are in the behalf of their own blood already shed, and for that there was no such liberty to be sued for.

The satisfaction to their cry is double:—

1. A reason why vengeance is delayed; they had brethren to be made perfect as they were.

2. In the meantime they are received to glory.

1. For the reason; it consists in this, that the empire was yet a while to stand in power, because they had other brethren to be perfected as well as they, after a little season. So that it refers not to the persecutions of Antichrist, which were a thousand years after, but to those of Arianism, when, under those emperors, as cruel persecutions, for the time, were raised some thirty years after this as ever before; and then the trumpets sound, and they ruin the empire itself through their prayers, as chap. viii.

2. For their glory; it is expressed by *white robes* given them. Which is—

(1.) A sign or badge of heavenly glory; so, chap. iii. 4, 'They shall walk with me in white.' So Christ, when he gave a shine of the glory of his kingdom, he caused his garments to look as white as any fuller could make them.

(2.) It denotes joy. In triumphs, they were wont to wear white robes, as a token of gladness; 'Let thy garments be always white.'

(3.) Robes were worn only by noble personages. *Mulier stolata* was differentiated from *togata*, as calling for a more special honour. Thus Mordecai was apparelled in the royal robes, Esth. vi. 11.

This giving them white robes is an allusion to the bringing the priests first into the temple when their thirty years were expired; they clothed them in white.

Obs. 1.—In that this persecution was the last and greatest of all, take notice that it is God's manner to bring sorest trials just before deliverance. So to David at Ziklag, a few hours before he was proclaimed king. In chap. xi. there is a persecution and war of Antichrist yet to come, for the space of three years and a half, when for ever the witnesses shall cast off their sackcloth. I fear it, for it is the last.

Obs. 2.—That though great punishments had befallen the empire by those three horses, yet this is not vengeance enough for martyrs' blood, which nothing will slack but the ruin of that kingdom and state which shed it. This punishment, therefore, is brought in after all the other. So Manasseh's bloodshed nothing would pacify but the captivity and ruin of that state.

Obs. 3.—That in a business wherein many ages have an interest, the saints in the last age foregoing do put up their prayers in the strength of all prayers and cries of blood preceding. So do these theirs in the name of all foregoing martyrs; 'How long,' &c. That as in a generation of wicked men the last of them do inherit the sins and punishments of all their forefathers, so do a generation of godly men go forth against their persecutors in the strength of all their forefathers' prayers and bloodshed. How comfortably, therefore, may we pray against Rome and Spain, and the abettors of them, the bishops, who all have even wallowed in the blood of the saints, and against whom we have the prayers of all ages to join their forces to ours for the more sure prevailing; and we may justly cry in the strength of them, 'How long,' &c. I have seen many cords so linked together upon a pulley, and with such an artifice, that a child might draw up a mighty weight, for he pulled in the strength of all the cords. So here, though we be weak, yet praying in the strength of all the saints' prayers, and of their blood, we must needs be heard. It is but a little resting till our brethren, (it may be ourselves,) the witnesses, are killed; and then down goes Rome, and the hierarchy with it. In this respect, it is good living in the last ages of the world, for we drive a trade with all our forefathers' stock.

Obs. 4.—That the power of persecutors stands no longer than till they have finished the great work of persecuting the saints. The empire stood so long as it did mainly for this end, and therefore this reason is here given. Thus, Hab. i. 12, 'Thou hast ordained them for judgment' on themselves, 'and established them for correction' of thine. We think much that they should have so great power; why, they have it to this end, to persecute.

Obs. 5.—That the souls themselves are here said to cry, and not their blood only. A wicked man being murdered, his blood calls for vengeance; but not only the blood of a godly man, but his soul also calls and cries for vengeance; which cry must therefore needs come up with much clamour in the ears of the Lord of hosts. Think you that he will not avenge his elect? Yes, he will do it speedily. And from hence raise up your thoughts higher, that if Abel's blood hath a force in its cry, and his soul, that still lives, a greater force; then how much more hath Christ's blood, and how much more yet hath Christ himself, who liveth to make intercession for us! Thus

the Scripture riseth in expressing the efficacy of the intercession of Jesus Christ for us.

Obs. 6.—That the souls in heaven, following their interests on earth, they prosecute the revenging of their blood. There is the same reason for other interests; as for friends, for children, for businesses, and the like; which having prayed for on earth, they still do prosecute them in heaven.

Obs. 7.—That the souls in paradise know the reason of God's dispensations and his counsels, which are satisfactory to them. God here opens his utmost reason why the empire was as yet to stand; and that was, to kill a few more martyrs. They are guided by a spirit of prophecy, as Christ is, they being prophets as well as priests.

Obs. 8.—That in all dispensations, if we knew what reason God hath for them, we should rest. So the souls do in this standing of the empire. Let our faith apprehend that God hath a reason for what he does, otherwise we should have no persecutions.

Obs. 9.—That saints that were not yet born are called their *brethren*, as being such in God's election. This persecution came not till forty years after. So Christ calls all his people brethren, God having given them unto him before all worlds. He knows perfectly who are his, and their number in all ages; and chose not qualifications, but persons. So says Christ, 'I have sheep which are not of this fold.' Labour we therefore to love the Jews, as those who are to be called; and the saints departed, as those who are our brethren.

Obs. 10.—That martyrdom is a perfection; it is said, 'till they are fulfilled,' *εληξώσονται*. So Christ calls his suffering: 'I will watch to-day and to-morrow, and then,' says he, 'I shall be perfected.' If thou hast all holiness, and wastest this *coronis*, thou art not so perfect as martyrs for Christ are.

Obs. 11.—That saints departed do presently enter into bliss. They sleep not, but have white robes given them, as the priests had when they were first brought into the temple. These have the like when they are brought, as priests, into the inner temple of heaven. And their robes of glory are new ones, which they had not before; for they are given them anew. Glory clothes them, till they and their bodies meet again: and these are called robes, as reaching from head to foot; they are all over happy and glorious.

Obs. 12.—They reckon us fellow-servants and brethren, though we be sinful; and do hold a communion with us. Let us do the like towards our weak brethren, and esteem them such notwithstanding their infirmities, and although we be holier. There is a greater distance between us and these saints in heaven, in respect of purity, than can be supposed between us and the meanest saint here below.

Obs. 13.—That the cause for which they are reckoned martyrs is 'for the word of God,' and their testimony to it. So that if it be for any truth in the word, though never so small, it is accepted as if it were the greatest.

Obs. 14.—God may defer to answer prayers for the present. He doth so to saints in heaven; he puts them upon staying a while; much more, therefore, may he deal so with us. And yet God in the meantime recompenseth this demur some other way. As he gave these white robes of glory, so will he give thee other blessings that are better, in which thou mayest rest satisfied and content.

The sixth seal follows, from ver. 12 to the end of the chapter. Now as the former seals contained several punishments upon the heathenish Roman state, so this sixth expresseth the final accomplishment of God's wrath upon the heathenish religion in it, in throwing it down; and upon heathenish

worshippers, and upholders of Gentilism, in confounding them; and is therefore called, 'the great day of the Lamb's wrath.' Now, because it is thus called, and some phrases are used concerning it that are used of the immediate forerunners of the day of judgment, as Matt. xxiv. 9, when before the Son of man's coming the sun is said to be darkened, &c., therefore some interpreters have understood it of the great day of judgment only; and so you may have heard it often quoted by such as by piecemeals take up interpretations of this book, not having framed them to the series of the whole.

But, first, the great day of judgment it cannot be; the series of this prophecy will not admit that exposition. Which is argued—

1. From what goes before it; for John having but now spoken of the primitive times in the five former seals, and brought us but to three hundred years after Christ, in the tenth and last persecution, now to make a leap over the thirteen hundred years since passed, and after those primitive persecutions to bring in the day of judgment, were too great a stride, too wide a *chasma* and gulph in this orderly story.

2. From the series of things after this; for there is a seventh seal yet to be opened, and that to produce seven trumpets, which are new and fresh succeeding punishments upon that empire. And it is certain that there are no such punishments to come after the great day of judgment.

And as for the phrases here sounding so like those used of that day, it is certain that there is never a phrase here used but is frequently and ordinarily used to express great mutations and overturnings in kingdoms, and great calamities brought upon men in those kingdoms by God, long before the day of judgment. As—

1. That it is called the 'great day, in which who can stand?' ver. 17; and that the sun and moon are said to be darkened, &c.; you shall find the same expressions used, Joel ii. 10, to set forth the great overturning the Jewish state by the armies of the Chaldeans in the captivity. Their armies the prophet describes, ver. 2, 3, 8, and their sacking Jerusalem, ver. 9; and the confusion and calamities brought upon that state he expresseth by the same metaphors that are here used: ver. 10, 'The earth shall quake before them; the heavens shall tremble: the sun and the moon shall be dark, and the stars shall withdraw their shining.' And, ver. 11, because these were God's executioners of his vengeance, therefore he is described as their general, making a speech to them: 'The Lord shall utter his voice before his army; his camp is very great.' Therefore that time is called, as here, 'the great and terrible day of the Lord;' and 'who can abide it?' as here, 'who can stand?' Thus, Isa. xxxiv., where the prophet plainly describes the overthrow of Edom, as appears by ver. 5, though he calls all the world to consider her example as a warning to them, as ver. 1; that he would go on to do the like to them, as ver. 2; yet thus he describes it, just as here, ver. 4, 'All the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll: and all the host—or stars—of heaven shall fall down as from a fig-tree.' And yet all this foretells but the sword upon Edom, overturning that state, as appears by ver. 5, 8. It is the day of the Lord's vengeance for their persecuting of Sion, just as here.

2. And those other phrases also, of 'hiding themselves in caves and rocks of the mountains,' and 'calling upon the hills to cover them;' they are but expressions of such shames, and miseries, and calamities, as the vengeance of God in such great changes doth work. Thus, Isa. ii. 19, when God comes to punish Israel for their idols, and to send forth the light of the gospel unto them, the idolaters, as confounded, are said to go into 'the holes of the

rocks, and into the caves of the earth, for fear of the Lord, and the glory of his majesty.' And when the ten tribes were carried captive by Ashur, their calamities were expressed by this, Hos. x. 8, 'They shall say to the mountains, Cover us; and to the rocks, Fall upon us.' So that Christ, the giver of this vision, and opener of this seal, hath but borrowed the similitudes and expressions used by the prophets in several places, to set forth the like change, calamity, and confusion that befell the heathenish state of the Roman empire. But then—

Secondly, Because these places of the prophets alluded unto do speak of the overthrow of kingdoms by wars, therefore Mr Forbes would have this seal to be that utter overturning of the western empire of Rome, by the Goths and Vandals, which began four hundred years after Christ; and so to note out the ruin of the empire itself, and not of heathenism in it. And but for these reasons following, I should have thought so also: as—

1. That the first seal beginning but with the conquest of heathenism in the empire, (for Christ in the preaching the gospel did at first seek outwardly to overcome or plague nothing else,) here in this seal must be the accomplishment of that victory or full conquest gotten, described, and set forth; and so the same thing made the subject of the complete conquest described here, that is made the subject of the first onset in the first seal, ver. 2, 3; and that was the heathenish religion of the empire, and the upholders of it. And so Christ's first step, or degree of conquest in order to his kingdom, is completely in this chapter presented, with his first full victory over the first enemy whom he encountered in the world, even Satan, and his false worship; to shew that what Christ began with he makes an end of. And so this book still shews how he makes a clear and full despatch of such enemies first, as first he encounters. He encountered heathenism first by the gospel, then by plagues; but now, as one grown angry, he completes the victory by power and might, and by a violent concussion and shaking of that state. And having despatched this enemy, and so made clear work as he goes, as wise conquerors use to do, then he falls upon the empire itself, in the trumpets. And that is the reason why this last act of this tragedy is represented under such metaphors as the great day of judgment is set out by; even for this, that it imports a full and a complete victory, and a final overthrow of that which he had encountered. That as the day of judgment is a final conquest of all enemies by the Lion of Judah, so is this a like final conquest by the Lamb of this first enemy whom he did set himself to conquer, even Satan and his false worship set up by that Roman monarchy.

2. The trumpets that come after are reserved for the ruin of the empire, as a distinct thing from heathenism in it; and the vials for the overthrow of Popery and the faction of Mohammed. And—

3. Thus the parts of this prophecy are found to run on similarly, and things alike are put together in distinct visions. Here are three sorts of enemies, and so of plagues to ruin them, in this prophecy:—

(1.) The six seals; which are the beginnings of sorrows to the world; and they fall upon Satan's false worship, which stood in Christ's way.

(2.) The six trumpets; which fell upon the empire itself, for having persecuted and prosecuted the church.

(3.) The vials; which fall on the Pope and his idolatry, and on the Mohammedan faction, the Turks, his last enemies. These, therefore, are called the last plagues, chap. xvi.

4. And for a fourth reason, observe, that the 12th chapter, which begins

and contains the story of the church in the first primitive times, as this doth of the heathenish empire, doth wonderfully agree with this chapter here, containing the like space of time, and describing the same conquest and victory over Satan (the dragon) in the Roman empire (in heaven): only with this difference, that here the calamities and confusion that befell the kings or emperors, and the chieftains of heathenish worshippers, that did seek to uphold that religion still, are set out; whereas there, only Satan's confusion in being thrown down is described, which was very suitable, that being the story of the church, this of the empire more eminently.

So then, two things are distinctly set out unto us under these phrases and metaphors:—

First, By the darkening the sun, moon, and stars, according to the analogy of the prophets, is expressed the deposing of those heathenish emperors and governors in that state, considered as they did strive to keep up heathenism, with whom Satan and his worship also fell. So as though the state stood still, yet those governors and the heathenism of the state were removed and destroyed, and thrown down from their heaven, the superior government of that state; which was done by Christ's sending madness and diseases upon Dioclesian and Maximinian, heathenish emperors; inasmuch as they, out of a sense of the Lamb's wrath, gave over their government, whilst they were in the meridian of their glory, to the wonderment of the world. And afterwards Maxentius and Maximin, heathen emperors also, were overcome by Licinius, whilst he favoured the Christians, and was colleague with Constantine. By which Constantine it was afterwards more completely furthered and carried on; for when the foresaid Licinius made a revolt unto heathenism, Constantine subdued him and his chieftains, (for heathenism went not down without blows,) and turned that whole state Christian, when he had deposed heathenish persecutors.

Now, such a deposing of governors in a state, and overthrowing their armies, is in the prophets expressed by darkening the sun, moon, and stars, as well as the overthrowing the state itself. So, Isa. xiii. 10, the deposing the Babylonian monarch and his nobles by the Medes is set forth by the 'darkening the sun,' their king; 'the moon,' their queen; 'the stars,' their nobles. And in another place it is said, 'How art thou fallen, O Lucifer, thou son of the morning!' speaking of the bright star the king of Babel, who, Isa. xiv. 13, said he would 'ascend to heaven, and exalt his throne above the stars.' In the dialect and phrase of speech used in the eastern countries, (as among the Arabians and Jews, &c.,) to throw down any one's excellency, is expressed by casting down his heaven to the earth. And so it may be said, that which also some interpreters would have, that that which after follows expresseth but the same thing which was at first metaphorically uttered under the prophet's allusions of sun, moon, and stars: all which John afterwards literally expoundeth, ver. 15, when he says, 'and the kings of the earth;' that is, those Roman emperors, the *suns* of this firmament, were stepped off from their glory; and their stars, the heathenish nobles that adhered to them, were deposed; their mountains removed, that is, their chieftains and strong men, as such are called, Isa. ii. 14; so that the one is but an exposition of the other. And thus only the miserable overthrow of the heathenish worshippers is here described, as became the seal-prophecy; even as the putting down of Satan and his worship is expressed in the book-prophecy.

And that which may strengthen this interpretation is, that the rest of the prophecy being to proceed with the like metaphors, of plagues upon the sun,

moon, stars, earth, trees, &c., (for in such language and metaphors are the contents of the trumpets and vials expressed;) he, therefore, here gives one literal explanation of them in this, which is his first mention of such, which one may serve for all; that so, by the analogy of the Holy Ghost's own exposition here, the rest might be interpreted, who makes kings to be as the sun, and nobles as the stars, &c. To this purpose, you must know that in Scripture descriptions and expressions, (the prophets using to point things out by similitude,) every kingdom, state, or body of men is compared and assimilated to a world, in which what is superior and highest is called the *heavens*; and therein, the highest the *sun*, the next the *moon*, and next to them the *stars*, &c.; and what is of lower rank is called the *earth*, *sea*, *rivers*, and *trees*, &c. And therefore punishments on states and kingdoms in this book are expressed by casting them down from their heavens, and by miseries falling upon the rivers, the sea, &c., whereby such things are understood as answering in states amongst men in nearest resemblance unto the sea, earth, &c., in the great world. And this is the key, as of this vision, so of the trumpets and the vials that follow. And sometimes the Scripture expresseth the alterations of kingdoms themselves, and of all places of rank and of government, by this darkening the heavens, the sun, &c. So Hag. ii. 21, 22, 'Speak to Zerubbabel, governor of Judah, saying, I will shake the heavens and the earth; and I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms, and I will destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the heathen; and I will overthrow the chariots, and those that ride in them; and the horses and their riders shall come down, every one by the sword of his brother.' And sometimes only the deposing of persons from those places and dignities, the places standing still. Now, in the trumpets, the casting down the sun, stars, &c., is spoken of in the abstract, even the altering the very state, (together with deposing the persons,) power, and dignity of the empire. But here it is to be understood of deposing the persons only, in the concrete, who had that power, but were put down from it. And so it imports the throwing down the chieftains of heathen emperors, and the deposing them from their places, not yet meddling with the places themselves in the empire.

The second thing that these expressions hold forth is not simply the overthrowing of kingdoms and states, or of governors, &c., and so to be understood of political mutations only; but they are used to set forth a change and mutation of worship and of religion in a state. For as bodies politic are compared to a world, as was said, so religious bodies and states, considered in respect to their worship or religion, are thus compared also. So Jesus Christ is said to have his world, Ps. viii. 3, 'Thy heavens, thy moon and stars,' &c., where the sun is not mentioned, because Christ himself, who is the 'Sun of righteousness,' is the sun therein. Now, Heb. ii. 5, 6, that psalm is interpreted of Christ's world, the world to come, as it is called, ver. 5; both this of the gospel, in opposition to Adam's world, and Christ's kingdom hereafter.

Moreover, for the present, the state of Christ's worship and worshippers under the gospel, and his ordinances, are compared to a world wherein are heavens, and moon, and stars. Thus, Ps. xix. 1, 'The heavens declare the glory of God;' which is interpreted of the preaching of the gospel, Rom. x. 18, 'But I say, Have they not heard? Yes verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world.' The apostles and their doctrine are the heavens, the lights in this heaven of Christ, to declare his glory to the world; and therefore the words of the 4th verse of that 19th Psalm are there in the 10th to the Romans applied to their preaching. And

you know ministers are called stars in the first chapter of this book of the Revelation. So likewise churches are called heavenly lights shining in the world, Phil. ii. 15; *φωστῆρες*, light-bearers, the same word that is given by the Septuagint to the stars, Gen. i. 14. And it appears by that place that they irradiate the world; not a house, as a candle or torch does, but the world, as stars do. And the apostles' ministry is compared to twelve stars, which the primitive church was crowned with, Rev. xii. 1. And so, Heb. xii. 27, it is one part of the meaning of shaking the heavens; that is, the ordinances of the gospel, which are called the heavens.

That frame of worship which Christ hath erected and instituted to be under the gospel, is interpreted to be meant by the heavens,—for as they are the ordinances of day and night, so are these of the church,—as oppositely, the legal worship is there called the earth. Yea, the temple-worship, with the priests and elders of that religion, are so called. Therefore, Dan. viii. 9, 10, Antiochus's causing that worship to cease, and putting down those priests, is expressed to us by his prevailing over the host of heaven, and his casting down some of the host and stars unto the ground. Yea, ver. 11, he is said to magnify himself against the prince of that host; that is, against God and Christ, the sun in this firmament, as the sun is prince of the stars. Now then, as Christ thus hath his world, so Antichrist also hath his heavens, and sun, and earth, &c., which are to be interpreted spiritually as well as politically. And thus Satan's heathenish religion and worship in the Roman empire is in like manner here expressed unto us. The false gods of the heathens are called in Scripture the 'host of heaven,' as Deut. xvii. 3, not only because some of them worshipped the sun and stars immediately, but also because the Romans and Grecians did entitle the stars by the names of their gods, or men famous among them whom they worshipped; and so they worshipped both at once under one and the same name. The sun they entituled Apollo, and the other planets by the names of other gods and goddesses, as Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Venus; and the moon they called Phoebe, or the great goddess Diana; all which had once been men and women among them, though now, being dead, they were worshipped for gods and goddesses. So that they worshipped the host of heaven under the names of men; though really and indeed, under both these, they worshipped Satan and his devils, though not immediately, yet interpretatively. Thus speaks the Apostle, 1 Cor. x. 20, 'The things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils.'

Now then, this advancement of Satan, under the names and titles of the host of heaven, was truly his heaven, wherein the devils, by that religion, were set up as the gods of this world, as 2 Cor. iv. 4. And answerably the throwing down of Satan's worship and religion is expressed by a change of the heavens, even as Christ expresseth the throwing down the heathenish worship by the apostles' preaching to be its 'falling from heaven like lightning;' which Christ speaks of their casting out devils then, when sent out to preach, as a certain omen which his faith had beforehand, that Satan, in like manner, with all his worship, should be thrown down by the preaching the gospel in the empire. And so accordingly, chap. xii., Satan and his angels are said to be cast down from heaven, when he and they were acknowledged for gods no longer.

Now, the alteration of this heathenish worship and change of this religion in the empire is the shaking the heavens and earth here meant. The word for *earthquake* is not to be confined only to the earth, (in English we have no word large enough,) for it imports the concussion or throwing down by a commotion of that heathenish world, the heavens and earth, and all of that

religion, even of all that had a station in that accursed frame. Thus, Hag. ii. 6, 7, you have the like allusion for the alteration of the Jewish worship into the gospel worship; and then, that alteration yet to come, of this gospel worship, when the kingdom of Christ shall be set up. The one is expressed by shaking the earth; the other, the heavens. And that shaking is interpreted, Heb. xii. 27, to be 'removing away of the things shaken.'

And so the throwing down Satan and his devils from being worshipped any longer under the names of the host of heaven, and those appellatives given the stars, and titles to men departed, whereof he received all the real honour, may fitly be here understood to be the darkening the sun and moon, and the falling of these stars from heaven. As Christ is the sun in his heaven, so Satan, the prince of devils, the prince of this host of heaven, as Daniel's phrase is, was the sun in this firmament. And the lesser devils, with him worshipped under the title of the lesser gods, and of the stars, are the stars here which fall from heaven. And as the moon is Christ's church, and the queen in his heaven, so the college of priests, (who were then in Rome, as the Pope and cardinals are now,) that were the instruments of his worship, they were the moon in his heaven. And so his consecrated places, his islands and mountains, the high places of his worship, were removed out of their place; that is, diverted from that use which they were once put to in that idolatrous worship.

So then this mutation of the heathenish religion, from Constantine's time downward, during the space of one hundred years, for so long was it ere heathenism could be utterly extirpated and wholly abolished for ever rising again, is here set forth unto us by two things, here distinctly and apart laid down:—

First, The overthrowing the worship and religion itself, expressed by those metaphors before mentioned. As—

1. By the eclipsing of the sun and moon: 'The sun became black, and the moon as blood;' that is, the glory of these their chief false gods, and the priests of them, was darkened.

2. By 'the falling of the stars, as figs not fully ripe;' that is, by a violent wind; shewing that men's hearts were not loosened of themselves to a dislike of that religion, nor brought so freely off from it at the first. They would have stuck on still, had not the wind of power and authority shook them down.

3. By the vanishing of the whole heaven of this worship, as 'a scroll folded up.' The manner of the Jews was to write on parchment, which, from being folded or rolled up, they called *volumen*, a volume; and with us parchment is from thence called vellum to this day.

Which metaphor imports—

(1.) That as when a scroll is folded up, not a letter of it is to be seen, but immediately upon the rolling up all do disappear; so these gods vanished, not any of their worship retains the same name now that was then used. There is not a tittle of those gods left; they have had no worshippers these thousand years.

(2.) As a book or scroll folded up is not used, so neither is this religion.

In the second place, this mutation is represented unto us in the confusion that befell the upholders of that ethnic worship, the Atlases of these heavens, that endeavoured to support them, and opposed Constantine and other emperors in the discarding of this, and bringing in the Christian religion. The devil goes not out of a man possessed, nor out of our hearts, without blows, nor till a stronger than he comes. So neither did he leave that station of

his in the empire easily and without resistance, but egged on kings, namely, some emperors and generals, and the common sort of people with them, to join together for the upholding of the old religion and worship of his. These the Lamb encounters, and in his wrath confounds. Now, it is observable how John useth some of the very names which were given the Romans in their several ranks; for here are three several ranks mentioned:—(1.) Highest governors, as kings. (2.) The middle sort of men, as the rich and strong. (3.) The inferior multitude of false worshippers, as bondmen and free.

1. Kings; that is, emperors, for which the Greek tongue had no word but βασιλεῖς, which, therefore, the apostles used for emperor; so Peter, 1 Pet. ii. 13, and Paul, 1 Tim. ii. 2. Then χιλιαρχοί, captains of thousands. The Roman legions, over whom these were captains, consisted of seven thousand.

2. Rich men and mighty men, who made up the middle sort of men.

3. Bondmen and free, who made up the lower and inferior rank of men. These were usual distinctions of men's ranks among the Romans.

Now their confusion is expressed—

1. By their shameful overthrow; they fly for shame, and hide themselves in dens, a phrase expressing shameful confusion and disappointment.

2. Their despair of help, intimated in that phrase, 'They shall say to the mountains, Fall upon us,' &c. So Luke xxiii. 30, and Hos. x. 8, where when common calamities came upon the ten tribes, and upon the state of Jerusalem, their being at their wits' end, in respect of getting rid out of them, is expressed by their calling to the mountains to cover them, and the hills to fall upon them, as wishing for death rather than the present miseries. Not that they should use these very words, but that their state should be such as should make them wish some such thing, or anything, rather than that misery then brought upon them. Those of other nations who are reduced to some extreme and miserable exigent, are wont to express their grievance by wishing the earth to swallow them; but this particular phrase is peculiar to the Jews, who had a rocky country, full of caves, to which they for refuge were wont to fly,—and therefore it is usual in Scripture to say, 'Enter into thy rock, and hide thyself,' as Isa. ii. 10,—and being in those caves, their fear and despair did oft-times put them upon wishing that those rocks would fall on them, and make an end of them.

3. The phrases import that all this is done with a sense and conviction in the hearts of these enemies of Christ, that it was by the power of Christ, whom they called accursed, and derided; and that he was indeed the king of the world, and conqueror of them. For they that are thus confounded do within themselves call to the rocks to cover them from 'the face of the Lamb,' with whose anger their consciences were struck, in those victories got over them, and miseries brought upon them. And therefore it is here brought in as their speech, to bid the rocks cover them from the face of the Lamb, for the great day of the Lamb's wrath is come, 'and who shall be able to stand,' or 'to abide it?' as Joel ii. 11.

Now the story of those times, when the heathenish religion was altered in the empire, presents such a face of things as this seal doth. For Dioclesian and Maximinian, the greatest persecutors that ever the church had, in the height and ruff of their imperial glory and rage, did give over their authority and empire, and retired themselves, whereof no historian could give the reason, but imputed it to madness; but indeed they did it so, as it were, to hide themselves from the face of the Lamb. To these succeeded Galerius, and Maximin, and Constantius, the father of Constantine. Maximin, persecuting the Christians, was smitten with a strange disease, and being ever

and anon convinced that Christ was king, he recalled his edicts for the persecution of them; and yet, like Pharaoh, he afterwards put them forth again, till at length he died miserably, acknowledging Christ's wrath. Then was Maxentius set up by the Romans, a defender of the heathenish cause. But being overcome by Licinius, he threw away his imperial robes, fled, and lay hid for the safeguard of his life, and acknowledged Christ by a decree; but his flesh was eaten of worms. Then Licinius opposing Constantine, joined in the empire with him, was overcome by him, and he and his complices condemned, at the place of execution acknowledging Christ to be God. What afterward befell Julian, who attempted to set up that heathen religion again,—as how, being shot in his wars against Persia, he took his blood, and flinging it into the air, cried out, *Vicisti O Galilee*,—you cannot be ignorant of.

Obs. 1.—Learn, when you see any notable overthrow given the enemies of Christ, to raise up your hearts to thoughts of the day of judgment. We find, as here, so elsewhere, notable judgments on God's enemies set forth and described under the language of that day. It is frequent in Scripture, as Psalm xviii. and elsewhere. They may mutually help to strengthen our faith in each other; a particular judgment, in that of the great day, that it will also come; and that great day doth also assure us, that Christ will here be avenged on his enemies. Christ hath many great days that forerun that great day; and wicked men, and wicked causes, have days of judgment here.

Obs. 2.—How easy it is for the Lamb to make an alteration of religion in a kingdom, causing the new one which he brings in to prevail. Thus in a few years he turned the whole empire Christian, even when heathenism was rooted in all men's hearts, and when Satan had a throne fixed in appearance to continue; then, by his power possessing himself of the emperor's heart, he, as the phrase is, 1 Kings ii. 15, 'turned the kingdom about;' and this, when men's hearts of themselves were not turned, but were as figs not fully ripe, yet shaken off by this wind. And he folded up the heavens as a scroll; not one constellation or star of all those false gods, that then shone so bright in all men's eyes, having shined in the world these many hundred years. And Christ hath promised to do the like against Popery. Which state, as it is the image of that empire and religion, so it shall bear the likeness of its punishment. What a mighty change was wrought in the hearts of kings and princes upon the first Reformation! And God will work the like upon the second Reformation, before Romé is destroyed, and will put it into their hearts to ruin her utterly.

Obs. 3.—Christ thinks it not enough for him to confound his enemies, but he will make them also to acknowledge his truth. Thus he did by Nebuchadnezzar, by Antiochus, and by those persecutors; and thus he will do by all the proud of the earth. He will not only confound the false church and synagogue of Satan; but he will make them come and acknowledge that God hath loved the Philadelphian, Rev. iii. 9. How often in the prophets is this made the fruit of their punishment! and by this it is expressed, 'They shall know that I am the Lord.' It is ill standing out with Christ in anything. Christ will have, not only every knee to bow, but every tongue to confess his name. Learn we therefore not to stand out against convictions of any kind. The Lamb will in the end have, not only a real victory in men's punishments, but he will have men render it more complete by their confessions and acknowledgments.

Obs. 4.—How in dispensing punishments, Christ meets with persecutors

in their kind: they caused poor Christians to fly into caves and dens, and to worship the Lamb in corners, as the Apologies of those times shew; now Christ comes forth and appears openly, and drives them into corners, wherein to hide their heads.

Obs. 5.—What a glorious and long time Satan, the god of this world, and his devils with him, had of it, when they were counted as the only true gods, and were worshipped for such by the whole world during the space of three hundred years. They who are reserved in chains for hell were then counted 'the Immortal Gods,' possessors of heaven; and had their seat, in all men's opinions, above the stars, having all the world for their devout and zealous worshippers. What, therefore, is it to have a great name, or the best name, the name of a saint, for a while here? The devils had not only the names and titles, but the honours of gods, and that for some thousands of years; for whom, notwithstanding, the lowest place in hell is designed.

Obs. 6.—You will not wonder at the prosperity of wicked men, that they carry it so long in the world, if you consider but how long the devil carried it, without encountering any stop in his way; as having all nations for his inheritance. God was worshipped but in one poor corner of the earth; but the devil possessed the heavens, and was as the sun in the firmament, and his priests as the moon and stars, as if they had been perpetual ordinances. Think not much at the continuance of Popery for twelve hundred years. Heathenism stood far longer, and Christ will make more quick work in the last days than in those past.

Obs. 7.—That Christ, though he be a lamb, yet he can, and will be angry. Men have all such sweet thoughts of Christ, as if he had no anger in him; but 'when his anger is kindled but a little, then blessed are all they that put their trust in him.'

Obs. 8.—That God punisheth idolaters and their idols together. Here both the heathenish emperors and their religion and gods are together removed. Thus, Isa. ii. 17–19, 'And the loftiness of man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be made low: and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day. And the idols he shall utterly abolish. And they shall go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his majesty, when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth.' Which place is parallel to this here, and a prophecy of the kingdom of Christ. Thus God punished Egypt, as appears by Num. xxxiii. 4, where it is said, 'upon their gods also he executed judgments.' The like you have in Jer. xliii. 11–13. So also was Babylon and her gods punished, as Jer. l. 2, 'Declare ye among the nations, and publish, and set up a standard; publish, and conceal not: say, Babylon is taken, Bel is confounded, Merodach is broken in pieces; her idols are confounded, her images are broken in pieces.' And thus God also did, when he began to ruin Popery, the spiritual Egypt and Babylon. He punished monks, pulling down monasteries and their idols together; his anger was against them, as well as against their persons. And so superstitious ceremonies and will-worship will down together.

Obs. 9.—How fearful and terrible will the day of judgment be, when Christ shall come as the lion of the tribe of Judah, if now, when he reigns as a lamb, carrying things meekly, and with much patience, he brings such confounding judgments! All vengeance here is but the vengeance of a lamb, in comparison of the rending of a lion that is to come. For, as I take it, he is set forth as a lamb in respect to his governing and dispensations until the day of judgment; but then he will come as the lion of Judah, and shew

himself so much more terrible than, as a lion is more terrible than a lamb. All terrors of conscience which men suffer here, which yet make them call for the hills to cover them, are but the wrath of the lamb in comparison of those roarings of the lion at the great day. Oh, consider this you that forget God, lest he come and tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver you!

I shall now proceed no further by way of a large commenting, or raising any more observations, until I come to the *Second Part*.

CHAPTER V.

The six first trumpets.

Now the six first trumpets contain several steps and degrees of ruining the imperial government of the empire itself when turned Christian, by several wars and incursions of barbarous nations upon it, whereof trumpets are suitably made the denouncers; and this in revenge of so much Christian blood as was spilt when the empire was heathenish: even as the captivity of Babylon did break the Jewish state for shedding innocent blood in the time of Manasseh, at which time that state was idolatrous, though he and all Judah did afterwards turn to the true worship of God again. And according to the division of the empire, east and west, accordingly was God's method in the ruining:—

First, Of the western parts of it, by the Goths and Vandals, who utterly shattered the government of the occidental emperors, and broke it into ten kingdoms; over which the Pope succeeded.

Then, *secondly*, after that, overturning the oriental part:—

1. By the Saracens; of whom Mohammed was the head, who wrung one great part of the eastern empire, in Arabia, Egypt, and Assyria, out of the emperor's hands, and subjected those dominions unto Mohammedanism. And then—

2. By the Turks, professing Mohammedanism also; who conquered and subdued, not only what the Saracens before them had done, but also that other part of the eastern empire remaining still Christian, namely, in Natolia and in Greece, over which the Greek emperors, successors of the Roman, till then continued, but were now wholly subjected, together with Constantinople itself, the seat of their empire, unto the Turks, who thus alone possess the whole eastern empire unto this day.

And according to this method of ruining the empire, the trumpets are answerably divided by the Holy Ghost.

The four first trumpets, which are made the lesser evils and miseries, are the wars of the Goths and Vandals, in four several incursions, chap. viii.; but the two latter, the fifth and sixth trumpets, which are made the *woe-trumpets*, chap. viii. 13, chap. ix. 12, chap. xi. 14, and so are distinguished from the former, are those infinite calamities and inbondagements which were brought upon the eastern part of the empire by the Saracens' wars and conquests, who are the fifth trumpet, and by the Turks, who are the sixth trumpet; both longer for continuance, and greater for extremity, than the four first, and that by far.

Now to give a little general light into these trumpets, as I have done into the seals. The trumpets are the vengeance upon the empire itself, for the blood of the saints therein shed; which therefore was promised unto the martyrs under the fifth seal, chap. vi. 11, whose prayers are here, chap. viii.

5, offered up by Christ, the time being come for the vengeance promised, and so the trumpets sound.

SECTION I.

The exposition of the 8th chapter.—The four first trumpets signifying the ruin of the western empire.

The four first trumpets are chiefly upon the western empire extended all over Europe; which was performed by four steps or degrees.

The first falling on the earth, ver. 7; the second on the sea, ver. 8; the third on the rivers, ver. 10; the fourth on the sun, moon, and stars, ver. 12.

You must remember, as before was said, that kingdoms and empires are represented in Scripture by a world that hath heaven, earth, sea, &c., as Jer. iv. 23. Wherein—

1. The earth, and grass, and trees thereon, are the lower sort of people, both the richer and poorer; as, Zech. xi. 2, 'Howl, fir-tree; for the cedar is fallen; because all the mighty are spoiled: howl, O ye oaks of Bashan; for the forest of the vintage is come down.'

2. The sea is the extent of the jurisdiction of an empire or kingdom over several dominions. Therefore Rome is said to sit on many waters, and to arise out of the sea, which is but the collection of many waters; that is, many nations. The like phrase to which is used of the Babylonish monarchy over many kingdoms; they are called 'her sea,' Jer. li. 36, 44, compared: 'Therefore thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will plead thy cause, and take vengeance for thee; and I will dry up her sea, and make her springs dry.' 'And I will punish Bel in Babylon, and I will bring forth out of his mouth that which he hath swallowed up: and the nations shall not flow together any more unto him; yea, the wall of Babylon shall fall.' And the many nations under the Assyrian monarchy are so called, Ezek. xxxi. 4, 'The waters made him great, the deep set him up on high with her rivers running round about his plants, and sent out her little rivers unto all the trees of the field.'

3. The rivers are the several cities, and magistrates over them, who have a lesser kind of jurisdiction over those cities or provinces.

4. By the sun, moon, and the other stars in this world, are meant the superior magistrates, and the glory of them, as Isa. xlii. 10, 'For the stars of heaven, and the constellations thereof, shall not give their light: the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine.' Jer. xv. 9, 'She that hath borne seven languisheth; she hath given up the ghost; her sun is gone down while it is yet day; she hath been ashamed and confounded: and the residue of them will I deliver to the sword before their enemies, saith the Lord.'

Now these four trumpets contain four several degrees of calamities by wars that befell the western empire, and the city of Rome, the head of that empire, by the incursions of the Goths and Vandals, from the year of Christ 400 to the year 540. Of which—

The *first* harrowed the earth, the people of that empire, as wars at first used to light most heavy upon them. It proceeded to no further harm than the burning up of the trees and grass; as, Rev. viii. 7, 'The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth; and the third part of the trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up.'

The *second* fell on the sea; for the Goths did break off from the imperial

yoke those nations that were subject to it, and gave them opportunity to set up ten kingdoms, which remain in Europe to this day, beginning in France, anno 413; and by 450, all the ten were up, as the chronicles shew. And this rending of the kingdoms from it, with the burning of that great mountain, the sacking of Rome itself, which, as Babylon of old, Jer. li. 25, is called a 'destroying mountain,' as overshadowing all cities; and her sacking by Cyrus is there called the 'burning of the mountain;' so this spoiling and sacking of Rome by Alaricus, king of the Goths, anno 410, is called the 'burning of the mountain,' chap. viii. 8: 'And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea; and the third part of the sea became blood.'

The *third* trumpet produceth the fall of that bright star which is called 'a great star burning as a lamp,' that is, a blazing star, or comet; which was the utter extinguishing and putting down of emperors, anno 476, who ceased in Augustulus, whose fall is expressed like that of the king of Babel's, Isa. xiv. 12, 'How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, or morning-star, 'son of the morning!' Which prince, upon his fall, hath his name given him, *Wormwood*, for that he was a prince of bitterness and sorrows. And together with him, many provincial cities and magistrates (which are called *rivers* and *fountains*) had their dignity taken from them; and this is the third trumpet, ver. 10, 11, 'And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters; and the name of the star is called *Wormwood*: and the third part of the waters became wormwood; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter.'

Rome now being in the hands of the Goths, was the seat of those kings that won it, who yet conserved in it the senators, consuls, and supreme magistrates, in their ancient glory. But then comes the *fourth* trumpet: ver. 12, 'And the fourth angel sounded, and the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars; so as the third part of them was darkened, and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise.' And this totally deprives this city of Rome of her ancient form of government, under consuls, senators, &c., with the glory and majesty of which it had shined many hundred years, before ever the imperial power was placed over it; and therefore that government is here called the *sun*, &c., because of the glory and majesty of that state, under which it had won to itself the monarchy of the world; which ancient government had still continued under the emperors, but was now wholly and utterly subverted; and this was done in the last war, anno 542. Here was the glory of the western empire and Rome utterly extinguished, but that the Pope (whom you shall find in the 13th chapter, when we come to the book-prophecy) obtains a power there, though upon another title than these emperors had, over these ten kingdoms, and builds up another Rome upon the ruins of the old, and so possesseth the seat of the former beast, the empire. But because the title he pretends is the title of the church, although a false one, therefore his story comes not in in this seal-prophecy, but in the church-prophecies, chap. xiii.

But these four trumpets that fall upon the west are but lesser evils in respect of those that are to fall upon the eastern part, which during all these alterations in the west stands entire and whole, professing the Christian faith. The other two trumpets, which are their portion, chap. ix., do, for continuance and extremity of calamities, infinitely exceed the other; and therefore they have this preface to them, chap. viii. 13, 'Woe, woe, woe, to

the inhabitants of the earth by reason of the voices of the other trumpets, that are yet to sound!' for so God ordered it, as his manner is, that that eastern part, standing longest, should be reserved unto the sorer punishment.

SECTION II.

The exposition of the 9th chapter.—The fifth and sixth trumpets betoken the ruin of the eastern empire, which was first broken by the Saracens, and at last utterly destroyed by the Turks, A.D. 1453.

Here the *fifth* trumpet sounds, which produceth the falling of a star from heaven, which opens the bottomless pit, and lets out smoke as out of a furnace, which darkens the sun and air, and lets out an innumerable company of locusts, whose cruel description you have, ver. 7–10, 'And the shapes of the locusts were like unto horses prepared unto battle; and on their heads were as it were crowns of gold, and their faces were as the faces of men. And they had hair as the hair of women, and their teeth were as the teeth of lions. And they had breastplates, as it were breastplates of iron; and the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle. And they had tails like unto scorpions, and there were stings in their tails: and their power was to hurt men five months;' who torment men so that they shall seek death, but shall not find it. Such shall be the calamities of those times. By all which is set out the bringing in of Mohammedanism, the greatest imposture that ever the world knew, which darkens the sun and air by putting out the light of Christian profession. And this was done by Mohammed, who is that star that fell from the profession of Christianity, and opened hell to bring forth that damned religion of his, making himself the prophet of God; unto whom an innumerable company of Arabians, his countrymen,—who are here called locusts for their multitudes, as the Midianites and Amalekites are also called, Judges vii. 12,—did cleave, and set him up as king: ver. 11, 'And they had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon.' Wringing from out of the hands of the eastern empire Arabia, Egypt, Assyria, Armenia, and much of Asia the Less, and extending their dominion further over Persia, East India, and a great part of Africa and Spain, they became almost as great an empire as that of Rome had been, although this dominion of Mohammed extended another way, yet withal possessing the one half of the eastern empire. Only these are bidden by God not to 'hurt the servants of God sealed in their foreheads,' ver. 4, for God had some true believers in that part of the eastern empire who yet remained Christian; and among them God had some also whom you read to have been beforehand sealed, chap. vii. 3, 'saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads,' ere that any trumpets blew. Such was God's care to prevent all hurt unto them, of which I shall afterwards particularly speak. And this kingdom began to be set up anno 630, and continued many hundred years.

Then succeeds the *sixth* trumpet, which is the second woe-trumpet, and ordained to bring calamities on the other part of the eastern empire, which was left standing still under the successors of the Roman monarchy, and professing the Christian religion in Asia the Less, and in Greece, known commonly in historians by the name of the empire of Greece; to ruin which, God had ready prepared four angels, with four several armies of horsemen, which amounted to 200,000,000, as chap. ix. 14–16, 'saying to the sixth angel

which had the trumpet, Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates. And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men. And the number of the army of the horsemen were two hundred thousand thousand: and I heard the number of them;' which armies, with the angels their leaders, being a long while restrained, lay hovering about the borders of the river Euphrates. Whom the angel of this trumpet lets loose by the command of God, like so many furies, to fall upon the last part of this eastern empire remaining, and also to conquer those other dominions which the Saracens, under the fifth trumpet, had before overrun. Now, according to all the characters and footprints which we find in the Turkish stories, no prophecy doth or can more punctually describe any nation or event than this doth the Turks, and their irruption upon the eastern empire; who, when they came first out of their native country, about the year 1040 after Christ, did seat themselves first by the river Euphrates, and were divided into four several governments or kingdoms, known commonly in historians by these four names—first Iconian, seated at Iconium; the second at Aleppo; the third at Damascus; and the fourth at Bagdat, or Babylon, bordering on the river Euphrates. Who having lain hovering thereabouts for the space of two hundred years, did, about the year of Christ 1300, overrun all Natolia, or Asia the Less, and joining all into one kingdom under Ottoman, the forefather of the present Great Turk, did not cease till they had won Constantinople itself and all Greece, the empire of which they put down, which was now the only relic of the ancient Roman empire, and this in the year 1453, which is a hundred and eighty-six years since;* who possess that whole eastern empire unto this day; for the number of the Turk, which is an hour, a day, a month, and a year, is not yet fulfilled or expired, being by computation three hundred and ninety-six years from his first breaking out. The raising of the Turkish empire by Ottoman in Asia the Less, was A.D. 1300.†

SECTION III.

The exposition of the 7th chapter.—Why reserved till after that of the 8th and 9th.—Who are intended by the hundred and forty-four thousand persons that were sealed in their foreheads.

Having given you the meaning of the six trumpets, chap. viii. ix., I must now return to shew you the meaning of those twelve thousand out of every tribe, in all a hundred and forty-four thousand, which you read of chap. vii., and to tell you who they are that were there beforehand sealed. For though God, to shew his care, is said to seal them before these trumpets blew, yet I could not tell you who they were so fitly until after you should have heard upon what parts of the world these trumpets chiefly blew.

The persons sealed are, ver. 3, called 'servants of God,' so that they are true believers; they are also called Jews, not that they were so by birth, both for that the company they grow up into, and of whom these are the predecessors, are said to be 'out of all nations, kindreds, and tongues,' ver. 9, and therefore are of the Gentiles; as also because the Jews have generally been hardened all along the times of this prophecy, to this day. But the Revelation, speaking in the language of the Old Testament and the types thereof, calls true believers Jews, and the Israel of God: Gal. vi. 16, 'And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and

* This being writ 1639.

† Laonicus Chalcocond. de Rebus Turcicis, lib. i.

upon the Israel of God ;' and false and idolatrous Christians it calls Gentiles, as chap. xi. 2, 'But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months.' 'Who say they are Jews, and are not,'—that is, profess themselves Christians, and are not,—'but do lie,' chap. iii. 9.

These are numbered up by thousands, in allusion to 'the thousands of Israel,' as the phrase commonly is in Moses's writings,—Israel's seventy-two persons brought into Egypt being now multiplied by thousands,—as Num. x. xxxi. And these are said to be *sealed*, in allusion to that sealing of the mourners before the captivity of Babylon, Ezek. ix.: so these, before the miseries and captivity of these trumpets, as those that were to be preserved under them in all ages. God preserving by a kind of miracle, (for it is no other to consider it,) in the midst of all this Mohammedan tyranny, both under Turks and Saracens, in the eastern part of the world, thousands of true believers, even a hundred and forty-four thousand; as he did, under the tyranny of Ahab, preserve seven thousand that did not bow the knee to Baal; and as he did the like number of a hundred and forty-four thousand under the like antichristian tyranny in the west, as in chap. xiv. in the book-prophecy will appear. Only there, chap. xiv., they are more roundly in the general summed up together, to the number of a hundred and forty-four thousand; whereas here they are only reckoned by twelve several particular parcels, twelve thousand out of the twelve tribes: whether to shew their more scattered and divided condition, happily alluding to the twelve tribes, then, when the apostles wrote, scattered (as James speaks, chap. i. 1) in those eastern parts; or if not so, yet to the twelve tribes, as living apart in several quarters of the land of Judea, and not as assembled at Jerusalem in the temple.

So likewise these dwelling scatteredly in several nations, which were to be overcome by the trumpets, not assembled in public worship or churches, such as were acceptable to God, but remaining single; they are numbered by a set number, to shew that they shall be few. For this defining of their number is in opposition to the 'innumerable company' that are to grow out of them, as ver. 9, 'After this, I saw a great multitude, which none could number;' and their number being multiplied by twelve, as their root, and a thousand, hence it is a long number, extending in length much further than in breadth;* to shew that he speaks not of Christians as in one age arising to this number, but through many ages continuing. And they are multiplied by twelve to shew their breed and kind to be from the apostles, and of the apostolic faith, which, chap. xxi. 14, is made the mystery of this number, 'And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.' And they are presented in one uniform state during all that time, even unto the New Jerusalem; of which, because these and their successors are to be made partakers, therefore it is that those promises of the New Jerusalem, and the representation of it, come in from the 9th to the end, to shew their partaking therein, as the reward of the great tribulation they come out of: ver. 14, 15, 'And I said unto

* The idea involved in this conceit seems to be founded upon the twofold meaning of the term square, as denoting both a *figure* whose breadth is equal to its length, and the *number* which results from the multiplication of a number by itself. As one hundred and forty-four is a square number, and may be regarded as representing a square figure; so one hundred and forty-four thousand may be regarded as representing a rectangle, whose sides are twelve and twelve thousand respectively.—ED.

him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of the great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.'

Now these seem to be a differing company from that hundred and forty-four thousand in the 14th chapter: for those there do not remain till the New Jerusalem, in that dark and loose condition, upon Mount Sion, but long before do break forth into a separation from Antichrist, and set up glorious temples, filled visibly with the presence of God, as smoke, out of which come the vials; but these continue in one uniform condition, still alike, until the very approach of the New Jerusalem, and do then come newly out from under a sore and long bondage, here called 'great tribulation,' and are presented as more scattered and divided, as being more spread over the face of the earth, singly here and there, and therefore reckoned up by several tribes; whereas those there are summed up together only in their total number. They are alike, being but a few both of them, and in like times of darkness and desolation; yet with this difference, that the one continues to the very New Jerusalem, but the other long before grows up to a glorious light, and then outgrows that number.

Now, who these hundred and forty-four thousand are, out of whom, as being the predecessors of them, do come that 'innumerable company,' that shall, together with the Jews, possess the New Jerusalem, is made the inquiry of John, and is one of the wonders of this book; which therefore one of the twenty-four elders would have John especially to mark and observe, as a strange thing, beyond the expectation and imagination of men, that God should ever take those, so numerable a company, into so great a privilege, as to be made denizens of the New Jerusalem, and have their names found there. This you may observe by the question which the elder asketh John, to provoke and stir up his observation, ver. 13, 'What are these? and whence come they?' Thence! where, when you are told, you will scarce believe that God should intend this so great a privilege unto such, even the poor Christian elect believers, dispersedly scattered over the eastern parts of the world, the now Turkish dominions, which were anciently called the eastern empire, and the churches therein, called the Grecian churches. And for this I take the Holy Ghost's own designation, and as it were his pointing with the finger at them, to be my guide and warrant for this interpretation; as also the characters of, and notes of difference of, the hundred and forty-four thousand here and in chap. xiv.

1. It is evident their sealing here is for their preservation from hurt—as ver. 3, 'saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads'—from the four winds that were to be let loose, mentioned ver. 1, 'And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree;' by which are meant the cruel blasts of devastating and depopulating wars of fierce and cruel nations, dashing against each other, as winds use to do. Thus the wars that scattered Elam, or Persia, in Jeremiah's prophecy, are expressed, Jer. xlix. 36, 'And upon Elam will I bring the four winds from the four quarters of heaven, and will scatter them toward all those winds; and there shall be no nation whither the outcasts of Elam shall not come.' Now these wars, or winds, are all one with the blasts of the ensuing trumpets, chap. viii. 9; for to prevent the hurt of these servants

of God under these trumpets is it that these are thus beforehand sealed. Only, what is there particularly expressed by trumpets, is here in general expressed by the four winds.

Now then, according to reason, look, which of these ensuing six trumpets are the sorest, and bring most hurt and danger to the servants of God, the sealing of them must most respect the times and plagues of those trumpets. Now, according to the note of aggravation which the Holy Ghost himself hath put upon the fifth and sixth trumpets, that they are the *væ-tubæ*, the woe-trumpets; so, chap. viii. 13, 'And I beheld, and heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabitants of the earth by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to sound!' in respect of which the four first are but mild and gentle. And then, according to the former interpretation given, these two woe-trumpets being the overrunnings of the Saracen and Mohammedan nations, the greatest plague in respect of outward war and bondage that ever befell the Christian world. Which trumpets were to be, and have been, for time, five times double the continuance of the other four trumpets; for it is already one thousand years since they began, and the other four took up but two hundred years; and for extremity of bondage, there hath been no comparison between those four first trumpets and these two latter.

The wars of the Goths, indeed, did rather relieve the servants of God against the flood of Arian persecution,—as, chap. xii. 16, 'And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth,'—although it did break and harrow the empire. Hence, therefore, surely the hurt aimed at by God, which these hundred and forty-four thousand were in danger of, must needs in reason be from these two trumpets especially, and therefore must chiefly respect the elect Christians in the eastern parts, where these trumpets sounded; for the Christians in the west were in no danger of them. It must, therefore, respect these tribes seated among them. Add to this, that even the winds of some of those four first trumpets also reached unto great devastations of some of these eastern parts. And the first breaking forth of those Goths and barbarous nations was upon Thrace, Macedon, Thessaly, and Greece, ruining all the cities therein, except Athens and Thebes; and then after five years' harrowing the east, they fell upon the west, but first began in the east. So then, the two first, and longest, and sorest being upon the eastern Christians, and they beginning and ending thus also with them; in reason, the sealing of them must principally and eminently be intended, according to the proportion that the trumpets fell upon them, which was tenfold to what they did upon the western.

2. And as in reason it must be so, so the Holy Ghost hath declared that the preservation from the hurt of those Mohammedan invasions was the aim of this sealing thus beforehand; so great was God's care; and that therefore these servants of God, the hundred and forty-four thousand sealed here, are indeed the Christians of the east, who were only in danger to be hurt in their souls by apostasy, through the tyranny of these trumpets. You may read in the 9th chapter, ver. 4, that when these Saracen locusts, under their ringleader Mohammed, were first let loose, and had their commission, that then comes in this clause of exception, that 'they should hurt only those men that were not sealed.' In that therefore then, and not till then, and there only, the mention of this privilege of their being sealed comes in, it manifestly argues that the main and primary intention of the sealing of

this company had its place and accomplishment in persons that were under the blasts of these locusts. The Holy Ghost hath set this as a hand in the margin, to point at them; and to shew, that although in the vision their sealing comes in beforehand, chap. vii., yet here especially it receives its intended aim and fulfilling in the real execution of it: as if he had said, Now comes in the mystery of the sealing of those hundred and forty four thousand, chap. vii., in these two trumpets, the fifth and sixth. Neither can it be objected, that even the Christians in the west were preserved from the hurt of these incursions, in that these Mohammedans were restrained from breaking in upon these ten kingdoms, and that so they might be meant; for—

(1.) The mystery of sealing notes the singling out and marking of some here and there, from the crowd of others, designed to ruin, by God's special hand of providence; even as the door-posts of the Israelites were marked, as a man marks his sheep when he puts them in among other droves. And so the mourners going into captivity with the rest were marked. But so not the servants of God in the west only, but all the kingdoms of the west should have been said to be sealed; which is contrary to the mystery of sealing here intended. And therefore it must mean God's scattered ones, under the blasts of those trumpet; scattered, like the twelve tribes, James i. 1, here and there in those countries, but their souls preserved faithful unto Christ, maugre all the Mohammedan seducements or bondage they were then subjected unto. And—

(2.) They are said, when they partake of the New Jerusalem, ver. 14, 15, to 'come out of great tribulation;' and therefore it must be meant of such as were not wholly kept free from Mohammedan incursions, but were under them, and in great tribulation by reason of them. For, as Forbes well observes, that great tribulation, chap. vii. 14, must needs be the danger of those locusts, chap. ix. 4, from the hurt of which, so as not to damn their souls, though afflict them they might, they should be preserved; although he indeed interprets both this tribulation, and the hurt done by the locusts, to be that antichristian persecution in the west; but it is rather that tyranny of Mohammedans in the east.

Add to all this the many characters in the text that carry it to these eastern Christians, affording probable reasons that they should be intended: as—

First, That the angel who seals them is said to ascend *from the east*, ver. 2, or from the rising of the sun, as it is in the original, as coming up like the sun when it riseth, in the eastern part of the horizon, or of the world. And his standing there to seal these Christians manifestly thereby draweth our eyes to the eastern parts of the world, as the place where these sealed ones are to be found.

And, *secondly*, that they are presented as a few that may be numbered, and as making up but a few in many ages, as was said, and living in that condition, even to the very times of the New Jerusalem, under great tribulation, and scattered apart like to the twelve tribes; and that from the primitive times, in this uniform condition of paucity, and tribulation, and darkness; which, as was observed, those hundred and forty-four thousand in chap. xiv. are not, but do arise up to a greater light and victory, before the time of the New Jerusalem under the vials. Now how doth this agree with those poor, forlorn eastern Christians, whose churches have remained corrupt and dark, and overwhelmed with superstition and ignorance under all these times, and so but a few among them holy, and have been under these Moham-

medan tribulations a thousand years, the one half of them, and the other half two hundred years, and continue still to do so under the Turks, without any ease from misery, or restoring to light and beauty? And yet Christ hath had a company among them, though scattered and divided; for so they are parted into several sects and companies, as the Grecian and Armenian Christians, &c. And therefore God hath preserved among them the knowledge and profession of Christ, and of much more truth than is in the Romish church, in the dark times of it, to be found; which God sanctifies to some of them. And in that, according to all the best interpreters, this Turkish tyranny and tribulation is to continue, even till the New Jerusalem, —for the Turk is to be overthrown, to make way for the Jews, the kings of the east, under the sixth vial, and to be destroyed by the seventh,—how doth this accord also with this, that the state of these eastern saints is represented here to consist of so few, and those to be under great tribulation until the time of the New Jerusalem, as that which should prove their first deliverance; and when they come into the New Jerusalem, to be as it were but new come out of that great tribulation?

And the wonder that is made at this God's gracious dealings with a people so of all Christians forgotten, and not accounted of,—that ever they should be taken into this New Jerusalem,—doth further confirm it. For that the western churches, that have borne the heat of antichristian persecution, and overcome Antichrist, and shall in the end perfect their victory, and have set up temples, increasing more and more in light and glory, even until the New Jerusalem; that these should be made partakers of the New Jerusalem is no wonder, no strange thing; for they growing up unto it, it were strange if it should prove otherwise. And therefore, chap. xix. 1, &c., we find them, after the ruin of the whore, preparing themselves yet more for the marriage of the Lamb. But that these forlorn Grecians should be taken into it, among whom we scarce imagine any believers at all to be, this might well be made one of the greatest wonders of God's richest grace and mercy, and hath as much affected my heart to consider, since the time God led me into the thoughts of it, as anything through the whole book; that, as the prophet saith, this Ephraim should be his pleasant child, who would have thought? But this is just like God, whose ways are unsearchable, and his works past finding out. And therefore one of the elders says here unto John, ver. 13, as provoking him to observe this passage, as much as anything in this book, 'What are these? and whence come they?' And John says unto him, 'Thou knowest;' and he said, 'These are they who come out of great tribulation,' and indeed the greatest tribulation that ever the servants of God were under.

And there are these probable likelihoods for this also, even according to the course of God's ways and dealings, for God to choose such a people from under so great tribulation, and who are of all the lowest; and therefore, or for this cause, as it is ver. 14, to make them partakers of so great a privilege, this is just like God, who loves to do acts of mercy which may justly set all the world a-wondering. And they having borne the heat of the day, and continued in the profession of Christ as well as we, reason is, they should be recompensed, and have their penny also. And they being seated in those very dominions where the Turk is seated, who is to be overthrown by or for the Jews, to make way for them to get possession of their own land, which lieth in those eastern countries, and in the midst of those nations, who are therefore called 'kings of the east,' chap. xvi. 12; how probable is it therefore that upon the ruin of the Turks they shall be thus

delivered, and that if any Gentiles be partakers of the Jews' privilege, those Christian Gentiles should, who have been oppressed by this their common enemy, and who dwell and inhabit in countries near and about the land of the Jews: especially if their land shall be made, as is thought by some, the chief seat of that fifth monarchy. Then surely, these nations that are nearest them are like most to partake the benefit and light of it; which also the prophets have foretold, that the Gentiles, yea, and these Gentiles, should walk in.

Lastly, If mention be not made of the Grecian churches here in this place, then there is none, or scarce any, according to the course of the best interpreters, in all this book. The book-prophecy is wholly taken up with the state of the western churches opposing Antichrist, chap. xiv.—xix., as being they whom God means chiefly to use for the ruining of that great Antichrist, among whom therefore he hath continued the knowledge of Christ, and the face of churches in the greatest power and purity; and therefore the Revelation speaks most of them. But yet, there having been a continuance of the profession of the Christian name in those Grecian and Armenian churches, even from the primitive times, and at this day their number amounting to as many as the professors in Europe do, notwithstanding Mohammedan incursions; can we think that God hath passed them over in silence in this book? Surely no. Seeing therefore that the book-prophecy is taken up with the western oppositions to the great Antichrist of the west, hence, most fitly, in this seal-prophecy, wherein the Mohammedan oppressors bear so great a part, does come in the representation of the state of those eastern Christians under Mohammed, Christ so keeping possession, both in the east and west. And the event hath been according to the prophecy. True believers have been, and yet are continued among them, even as our eyes may read in all stories of those eastern parts, and our ears have heard the report of to this day: whose *Confession of Faith* you may read, being printed in English, anno 1629, set forth by Cyril, the present patriarch of Constantinople; and you may, with joy, find it in all fundamental points as our own Confession is. See also *Field of the Church*, book iii., chap. 1–3, 5.

SECTION IV.

A short view of the 10th and 11th chapters.—The ends for which the mighty angel (i.e. Christ) descended from heaven.—The seal-prophecy being closed, a new prophecy is given, which begins at the 12th chapter.

Thus the seal-prophecy, under the visions of these seals and trumpets, having run over the story of all times, which concern the ruin of the Roman empire downward, from Christ's time even to our days,—for the miseries of the sixth trumpet still continue, and shall last till near the time of the seventh trumpet, which is to bring in the kingdom of Christ, chap. xi. 14, 15, with whose sounding this first seal-prophecy, as do all kingdoms and times, ends,—Jesus Christ therefore, in the likeness of a mighty angel, comes down from heaven; and that to a double end:—

First, To give the world and the church warning by an oath, that now time should be no longer, but till this woe of the sixth trumpet—that is, the Turks' dominion—should expire and pass away; as his speeches in the 10th chapter, ver. 6, 7, and in the 11th chapter, ver. 14, 15, compared together, do shew: 'And swear by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are; and the earth, and the things that therein are; and the sea, and the things which are therein, that there should be time

no longer. But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets.' 'The second woe is past; and, behold, the third woe cometh quickly. And the seventh angel sounded, and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.'

And, *secondly*, to give withal a new prophecy, this seal-prophecy being thus ended. Wherefore he now comes with the book *open* in his hand, which, chap. v., John saw *sealed*, the seals being now taken off, and the visions of them already past; which book contains another distinct prophecy to be given anew unto John, which therefore he is bidden to eat, as Ezekiel of old was, and he should be enabled to receive and write a new prophecy, as appears chap. x. 9, 11, 'And I went unto the angel, and said unto him, Give me the little book. And he said unto me, Take it, and eat it up; and it shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey.' 'And he said unto me, Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings.' Which new entire prophecy begins chap. xii., after this angel had further, by word of mouth, a while discoursed what should be the state and face of his purest churches in the western part, ver. 1, 2, in those last days, to which this seal-prophecy had brought John; namely, the times immediately, or not many years, before that seventh trumpet was to bring in his kingdom, and after that this angel had forewarned those churches of a great and sore conflict which they were to have with Antichrist towards the end of all; out of which they should rise again. And then comes the end of Antichrist, and of the Turk also. After he had given all this as a signal or warning to the church when the end should be,—all which he doth chap. xi. 1, and from ver. 7 to ver. 14,—then, I say, after that short digression made by this angel (Christ), who came principally to give John a new complete prophecy, doth that new book-prophecy begin in new visions, at the 12th chapter, which contains the fates that should befall the church in all ages from Christ's time, as the seal-prophecy had done those of the empire.

CHAPTER VI.

Of the book-prophecy, that begins at the 12th chapter.—An account of the general design of it.

THE state of the church, from Christ's time until the kingdom of Christ, may be divided into two:—1. The state of the church during the first four hundred years after Christ, usually called the *primitive times*. 2. The state of the church during the times of Antichrist, whom Jesus Christ is to destroy with the brightness of his coming.

1. The state of the church, during those first four hundred years, may be divided into its condition until the time of Constantine, the first Christian emperor; and the state of the church from his time, under the Arian emperors, and others Christian, until the rise of Antichrist, about a hundred years after the beginning of Constantine's reign. These were the two eminent various conditions of the church in those first four hundred years.

2. For the state of the church during the times of Antichrist, namely, the Pope, who succeeded the western emperor here in Europe,—for of the state of the church in the eastern part of the empire, especially under the Turks and Saracens, you formerly heard in the seal-prophecy, chap. vii., and therefore this book-prophecy speaks little of it, but, in a manner, only of the western church, which now indeed was made the more eminent stage, as for Antichrist, so for Christ to play his part upon;—this state of the church in the west, I say, was either—

(1.) That of the false pretended church, whereof Antichrist is and was the head; or—

(2.) The state of the true church under Antichrist, and during his time, whereof Jesus Christ is the head.

Now, answerably to this division are the ensuing chapters to be divided. The 12th chapter shews you the state of the church under the first four hundred years; and chap. xiii., xiv., &c., shew the state of the church afterwards, during Antichrist's times. These are the divisions of the state of the church from Christ's time hitherto.

And, first, this 12th chapter shews the face of the church in these primitive times, and that under those two forementioned eminent conditions:—

First, As under heathenish Rome until Constantine's time, when the empire turned Christian; from the 1st verse to the 13th, under the vision of a woman bringing forth a male child to rule all nations,—that is, a Christian emperor,—wherein she is opposed by a dragon, the devil, in the power of a heathenish emperor, endeavouring to devour her child.

The vision and appearance of this woman is such, and so glorious, as it fits no state of the church but that pure and glorious church of the primitive times. She is a woman, weak, yet glorious, as being clothed with the sun, (the righteousness of Christ;) crowned with a crown of twelve stars, (the twelve apostles;) her head, the first part of that church, having been honoured

with their preaching, and holding forth the light of their doctrine. She had the moon under her feet—she was above the world, and the rage of heathenish persecution, for ‘they loved not their lives unto the death;’ and, as a woman, all that while labouring in sore travail, under ten sore throes of persecution, yet labouring with God, day and night, in hopes and prayers in the end to bring forth and obtain Christian emperors, that should set Christ in the throne to rule with them, and throw down heathenism from the imperial throne, in which the devil ruled; the empire being all that while under the heathenish throne of Satan, and is therefore represented under a ‘dragon having seven heads and ten horns,’ which are ever in this book the character of the Roman empire. And it is now called the dragon, because Satan did openly and visibly act it. Now the throwing down the dragon from the throne, which was his heaven, and where he was worshipped as God, doth this woman in the end obtain, and prevails through the help of Michael (namely, Jesus Christ) and his angels, (the apostles and preachers of the gospel.)

And then, *secondly*, the state of the true church, when the Roman world was now turned Christian, for the first hundred years after Constantine; which church was also persecuted by Arian emperors, though Christians, and was like to have been ruined by the multitude of carnal professors; insomuch as she is presented as ‘hasting to fly into a wilderness,’—that is, into a hidden, retired condition,—and in her flight, hath a flood of Arian persecution sent after her, to drown her, but that the earth, the Goths and Vandals, whom you heard of under the first trumpet, came in accidentally, by God’s providence, and helped her, by breaking the Arian faction; which is the ‘swallowing up the flood.’ The Arians, though they professed Christ, yet they denied him to be God; into which heresy the whole empire fell, and persecuted the church for professing the contrary, as much as ever the heathen emperors had done. And this state of the church you have described from the 13th verse to the end of the 12th chapter.

CHAPTER VII.

The exposition of the 13th chapter, in which is set forth the state of the false church under Antichrist.—What his name, and the number of his name, denotes to us.—A short account of the time which some fix for his fall.

THE state of the church, and her conflicts with Satan the first four hundred years, being thus described, chap. xii., in the following chapters is set forth the state of the church from that time, during the times of Antichrist; all which time there was and is both his false antichristian church and the true church under him running along together. Now, the description of Antichrist (the Pope) and his false church, in his rise, power, greatness, and extent of his dominions, and of the company that should cleave to him, is set forth in the visions of the 13th chapter, which afterwards, in the 17th chapter, the Holy Ghost himself interprets and makes a comment on. And then the opposite company of the true church, who have the Lamb for their head, are described in the 14th chapter; and that in all those several states and conditions which during all that time they should run under, and this from the first rise of Antichrist until these very times wherein we live; with which, I take it, the visions of that 14th chapter do end.

First, for Antichrist and his church in the 13th chapter, and this set forth unto us under the vision of a twofold beast, which points at the Pope according to his double pretended claim of power and headship in the church; which is—

1. *Temporal*; which he claims over all kings and kingdoms, to depose and excommunicate them and their subjects at his pleasure. Unto which the ten kings and kingdoms of Europe, into which the western empire was now by the Goths reduced, did tacitly and with one consent submit themselves, and gave their power up, as you may read it interpreted, chap. xvii. 12–17. And so the Pope, together with the body of these ten kingdoms joining into one, whereof he becomes the head, is that first ‘beast with ten horns,’ described in this 13th chapter, ver. 1–11: which new beast is a true image of the former Roman monarchy in the 12th chapter; which being wounded and slain in the emperor’s being deposed, is healed and restored to life again in this beast; and so the Roman monarchy comes still to continue, though under another head, namely, the Pope.

2. Besides this temporal power which he receives from the kings of these ten kingdoms, who in that respect do together with him make up one beast, he and his clergy do claim a *spiritual* power of binding and loosing, of pardoning sins, and of cursing men to hell, which is peculiar to Christ alone. And in that respect he, and the body of his false clergy with him, do make up another beast, having two horns like a lamb, as exercising that spiritual power of Christ, for which they and he are properly called *Antichrist*; and this description you have of him from ver. 11 to the end of this 13th chap-

ter. He being head of two bodies, ecclesiastical and temporal, is described under two beasts. Now this spiritual beast, the Pope and his clergy, is he who by his lying doctrines did persuade the ten kings and their subjects to subject themselves in one body under him as their head, and is said to make the 'image of the first beast,'—namely, of that dragon mentioned in the 12th chapter,—that is, of the former heathenish empire, and the religion thereof; which is therefore said to live again. For—

(1.) Both these kingdoms becoming one under the Pope as their head, are in their very form of government the image of the empire under one emperor formerly; and so the Roman monarchy, in the joining of these ten kingdoms under one head, the Pope, may be said still to continue. But besides—

(2.) This new beast is called the image of the first beast, not simply in respect of like form of government and tyranny; but further, in a religious respect, in that the Pope and his clergy do mould the Christian religion, which now they profess, and the worship thereof, into a true likeness and conformity to the heathenish religion, which the empire before was framed unto. For all the Popish worship is but the translating of those ceremonies, wherewith those false gods, Jupiter, Apollo, &c., who were cast down under the sixth seal, were worshipped, into religious ceremonies in their worship, wherewith they worship Christ and his saints. So as, were any of the ancient heathen Romans now alive, and should come into their assemblies, and behold their priests in white, their processions, their sprinkling with holy water, their altars, tapers, images of saints departed, and their worship of them, their *Pontifex Maximus*, or great bishop and high priest, &c., they would cry out and say, This is just our old Roman heathenish religion; only Jupiter is turned into Christ, and the priests of the gods of old into Popish bishops; and our ancient gods, Mars, Janus, Æsculapius, &c., who were men departed, are changed for saints departed. So that the life of the old religion remains still, though there be a change of the gods worshipped. Thus, as Babel of old made an image, and put to death all that would not fall down before it, so hath mystical Babylon—for to that Babel and to that image is the allusion—set up an image of the old heathenish religion and worship, and upon the like penalty enjoins the adoration of this image, and a conformity in worship, to all the subjects of these ten kingdoms.

Now, the company that cleave unto this beast, and may more or less be esteemed the followers of him, are, as Mr Brightman hath well observed upon ver. 16, 17, distinguished into three ranks of men in several degrees, some more, some less, acknowledging or cleaving to him, and to this his image and worship. Some receive his mark or character; others his name only; others the number of his name: but so as those who will not receive or submit to one of these, more or less, during the time that is allotted him to reign, may not 'buy nor sell;' that is, cannot subsist or abide in these his allotted dominions. This 'receiving of a mark,' &c., is a similitude drawn from the old Roman custom, which was to print on the forehead of servants the names of their masters, and on the hands of soldiers the names of their emperors or generals. So these men that do belong unto this great lord, and that are of his faction, do accordingly, more or less, receive that whereby they may be known to be his.

1. Some receive his *character*, as all priests and religious persons do, whether they be Jesuits or others, who are this grand seigneur's janissaries, his sworn soldiers and Prætorian band. Their doctrine is, that a man

entered into holy orders doth, by his ordination, receive an indelible character, a secret invisible stamp or impress, which can never be rased out.

2. Others receive his *name*; and so, though not in orders under him, yet so cleave to him and his worship, as themselves openly profess that they are his, by suffering themselves to be called by his name, which is that whereby they own him. Thus as he is called *Papa*, the Pope, they profess themselves *Papists*, or to be of the Pope as their head. And as he is called *Pontifex*, they are called *Pontificii*. And even as Christ is called the 'high priest of our profession,' Heb. iii. 1, and so we accordingly called Christians from the profession of him; so the Pope being their pontifex, or high priest of their profession, they, to shew so much, do hold forth the profession of him, by taking his very name, and in all things fully subjecting themselves unto him as his sons. But now—

3. What should be meant by the *number of his name*? That Mr Brightman carries rightly to a company taking part with him, by a more remote kind of subjection; but he not knowing well whom to fasten it upon, brings in the poor Grecians, that are strangers unto him, and out of the dominion of any of his ten kingdoms; who, although they renounced all acknowledgment of the Pope for their head for many hundred years, yet were at last, through sleights, and the baseness of one of their emperors, together with the conquest that the Europeans made of Constantinople for a while, brought to yield a subjection thus far, as to acknowledge him for their head, and so were called Latins, or of the profession of the Latin church, (which name I find some to this day, that are Popish Christians among the Greeks, to be called by, by way of distinction from the other;) and so received, says he, the *number* of his name, *Δαριβος*, Latinus: the numeral letters whereof, in the Greek tongue, make six hundred and sixty-six, the number that follows in the last verse of this chapter. But this forced subjection of the Grecians, so remote, as it might be intended, for those more ancient times, yet withal I think that it is not only or principally meant:—

First, Because these Grecian Christians are not inhabitants within the jurisdiction of those ten kingdoms of Europe, the subjects whereof are mainly intended, as being those 'inhabiters of the earth' that should be the worshippers of this beast, and cleavers unto him, ver. 8, 14; and so of them, and among them, must be found this number of his name, as well as those that receive his name.

And, *secondly*, because the Christians in the west, who assist the pouring forth the vials, are as well said, some of them, to overcome the number of his name, as others of them do his image, or idolatrous worship, or his character of lying priests, or the beast himself; so chap. xv. 2. I take it, therefore, that this number of his name must be found in Europe, in some of these ten kingdoms where that company are that pour out the vials.

Now, take the times of Popery before the Reformation,—that is, before the time that Protestant kingdoms did first begin to cast off the Pope,—and there were none that were suffered to have such a remiss, no, nor any lesser kind of owning the beast, but must all, as they did, receive his mark, or his name, and be professed Papists, coming to mass, acknowledging the Pope, and worshipping his image; or they might not buy and sell, they might not live quietly as others did. Therefore these that receive the number of his name must be some generation of men risen up since, and that also within those kingdoms, some of them, that have renounced the Pope. For within

the Popish dominions, unto this day, either the Inquisition suffers none to profess less than the receiving his name at least; or in others, those that are of Papists the most moderate yet receive the name of the beast at least, and so more than the number of his name.

But this number of his name seems to be a company that proceed not so far as to receive his character, professing themselves to be priests of Rome; nor to receive his name, for they do not profess themselves to be Papists; and yet are of the number of his name—that is, do hold and bring in such doctrines and opinions, and such rites in worship, as shall make all men reckon, account, or number them among Papists in heart and affection. And so they are of the number of his name; that is, in account such. They behave themselves so as they are, and deserve to be, accounted and esteemed Papists, and to aim at Popery, in the judgment of all orthodox and reformed Protestants, and that justly. For although their profession deny it, yet when their actions, and their corrupting of doctrine and worship shall speak it to all men's consciences, they cannot but judge that the Pope, and the fear of him, is before their eyes, as David speaks of wicked men. And as those in Titus, that profess they know God, yet in their works deny him, are justly accounted atheists; so those that shall profess the reformed religion, yet in all their practices and underhand policies depress it, and advance the Popish party, are justly to be accounted Papists, and to have received the number of his name.

The phrase, 'number of a name,' is not only taken for a name consisting of numeral letters, and so not only for number arithmetical; but the word 'number' is in many languages put for the account, reckoning, or esteem that is commonly had of men: as in Latin we say, he is one *nullius numeri*, of no number or account; and so among the Grecians, *ἐν πολέμῳ ἐναριθμῖος* is used by Homer for one in great account in war, being numbered or esteemed a soldier.

So then, number of a name is a common esteem or account to be such or such a one; and so the number of the beast's name here is the common repute or esteem to be a Papist, procured through underhand advancing of the Popish cause. It being therefore spoken in a distinct and lower degree from receiving his name or his mark, which note out an open profession, doth yet necessarily import so much inclining and cleaving to him, though secretly, as shall deserve that account and repute to be so numbered, as being indeed, tacitly and in heart, as truly of his company as those that receive his name. Now if in opening the meaning of the Holy Ghost in the phrase here, this description shall seem to the life to picture out a generation of such kind of Popish persons as these in any, even the most famous of the reformed churches, certainly there will not want good ground for it. For though they, with an impudent forehead, renounce the Pope's character and the name of Papists, and will by no means be called 'priests of Baal,' though priests they affect to be called, but boast themselves to be of the Reformation, and opposites to the Papal faction; yet with as much impudence do they bring in an image of Popish worship and ceremonies, adding to some old limbs, never cast out, other substantial parts, of altars, crucifixes, second service and the like, so to make up a full likeness in the public service to that of the Popish church. They bring in the carcass first, which may afterwards be inspired with the same opinions. And all this, not as Popery, or with the annexion of Popish idolatrous opinions, but upon such grounds only as upon which Protestants themselves have continued some other ceremonies.

And as in worship, so in doctrine, they seek to bring in a presence in the sacrament of the Lord's supper, beyond that which is spiritual to faith, which yet is not Popish transubstantiation; a power in priests to forgive sins, beyond that which is declarative, yet not that which mass-priests arrogate; justification by works, yet not so grossly as in the way of Popish merit, but as a condition of the gospel as well as faith; and many the like to these: thus truly setting up an image of old Popery in a Protestant reformed way, even as Popery is an image of heathenish worship in a Christian way. Say these men what they will, that they hold not of the Pope, nor any way intend him, or the introducing of his religion into these churches, yet their actions do, and cannot but, make all men number them as such; and therefore we say, they have gained that esteem at home and abroad in all the churches. And it is no more than what the Holy Ghost prophesied of, who hath fitted them with a description so characteristical, as nothing is more like them than this of these here who are said to receive 'the number of his name.'

And they doing this in a way of apostasy from their former profession and religion in which they were trained up, and in a church so full of spiritual light, where God hath more witnesses than in all the rest of the churches, and with an intention and conspiracy in the end to make way for the beast,—this going before, as the twilight doth serve to usher in darkness,—therefore the Holy Ghost thought them worthy of this character in this prophecy, and of a discovery of them unto whom they do belong; especially seeing they would so professedly deny it. And though haply but in one of the ten kingdoms,—although the Lutherans elsewhere look very like this description also,—yet seeing they were to grow so potent a faction as to have power to hinder the 'buying and selling,' quiet living of others amongst them, who will not receive this worship and doctrine, which is a new refined Popery, and with it the number of his name; that is, those opinions and practices which do deserve that esteem; and further, because they were to be the Pope's last champions before his fall, whom those that are the true saints (of whom the greatest number in the last age before the Pope's ruin is in, or belonging to that one kingdom) are to encounter and overcome before the ruin of Rome; therefore the Holy Ghost thought not fit to leave such a company out of the beast's number and followers: and that also although they were to continue but a short time. For the doom of these men we have in another prophecy, as their description also, 2 Tim. iii. 1–10: the prophecy there being of a generation of men to arise in the last days,—the Papists' rising is attributed to the *latter days* in 1 Tim. iv., but the rise of these to the *last* of the last days,—who shall set themselves principally against the power and spirit of true worship, and set up a form or image instead of it, ver. 5; but their doom is, ver. 9, 'These shall proceed no further,' they shall have a stop; and their folly, and madness, and hypocrisy, to attempt to bring in Popery with denying it, and when it is going down, then to build this Babel again, shall appear to all men; and being discovered, will be their overthrow. But notwithstanding, they must 'proceed further' than as yet they have done, even to the 'killing of the witnesses' in that kingdom, or tenth part of the city, as chap. xi. will shew, when in its due order it shall be opened. And because these last champions of the beast, and healers of the wound given him, should come in the last days of all, they are therefore last named, and are said to be last overcome by the witnesses and pourers forth of the vials, as chap. xv. 2.

There is but one seeming objection or difficulty in this interpretation; and

that is, that in the next verse the number of the beast is made six hundred and sixty-six.

But the answer and solution is, that the 'number of his name' in this verse is one thing, and the 'number of the beast' in the last verse is another. It is not said that the number of *his name* is six hundred and sixty-six, but the number of *the beast*, which betokeneth another thing, as we shall presently see. Only the Holy Ghost, by a wise transition, passeth from the mention of one unto the other, as agreeing in phrase of speech, yet differing in sense; which is frequent in Scripture, and particularly in this book; as, chap. xxii. 17, 'The Spirit and the bride say, *Come,*' as speaking unto Christ to come to judgment quickly, as ver. 20; but in the following words, 'Let him that is athirst *come,*' there the word *come* is spoken of the coming of a soul unto Christ, by believing, as unto the waters of life. Even so the number of the beast, and the number of his name, are here mentioned, the one upon occasion of the other, because of the affinity of the phrase in speech, yet to a differing sense.

Now the number of the beast in the last verse is the time or term of his ending; which is spoken in reference to the time allotted him for his reigning, ver. 5, which is to be, as there, forty-two months; which counting thirty days to a month, according to the Egyptian account, which is the account of this spiritual Egypt, is twelve hundred and sixty years from his first rising, being the same space that the church hath to lie hid in the wilderness, chap. xii. 6; which though she began to hasten into from Constantine's time, yet she first began to enter into her desolate condition, wherein she still remains, but then when the Pope's power began to rise. And during the same space of twelve hundred and sixty years, the witnesses are said to prophesy in sackcloth, chap. xi. 3; that is, in a mourning and mean condition; for the eminent professors of the truth, and opposers of the beast, who with their prophecy do feed the church in the wilderness all that while, as chap. xii. 6, these are the two witnesses, chap. xi. 3.

Which dates of time, both of the witnesses' casting off their sackcloth, the woman's coming out of the wilderness, and the beast's dejection from his kingdom and seat, (Rome,) will all expire about the same time; which some think will be about the year 1650, or 1656,—which if not the Pope's ruin, yet the Jews' call, as they say it to be,—or, at the furthest, in 1666; to which latter some incline, as thinking it probable that it may be the meaning of that account mentioned in the last verse of this 13th chapter, which doth cast up the number of the beast; that is, the date and period of his time and power, which was given him to continue forty-two months, as ver. 5: which days shall then be numbered, that is, finished, as the phrase is of old Babylon's ending, Dan. v. 26, 'God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it;' and this his number the Holy Ghost hath computed to be in the year that, according to man's computation, shall be called six hundred and sixty six. And for the confirmation of this interpretation, the word *number* is often put to express time; the very definition which the philosopher makes of time is, *numerus motus secundum prius et posterius*; it is the *number of motion*. And therefore Johannes Viterbiensis, in his gloss upon this place, plainly renders it thus: *numerus est illius tempus*,—'this his number is his time.' Therefore some have made this number to design out the year of the beast's beginning, or confirmation in his kingdom, in the year after Christ 666. But number, when it is put to signify time, doth not so properly signify the beginning of it, as the ending of it, when the number is finished and made complete, and cast up, as I may so speak; for then his time is numbered, and the account of it summed, and not before. And therefore Daniel, whose

phrase, as whose visions, this vision in this 13th chapter exactly follows, useth this phrase to note out the ending of the time of a kingdom, and not the beginning; 'thy days are numbered.' And, which is strange, Irenæus himself, who was the first that interpreted this six hundred and sixty-six to contain the numeral letters of *Λατίνος*, as the name of this Latin kingdom, does withal seem to think that the end of the times of the beast should in a mystery be hiddenly contained, (*Adver. Hæreses*, lib. v., towards the end of the book :) *refert hunc numerum 666, ad sexies millenos annos mundi in quibus (ait) diabolica malitia consummabitur*. He mistakes indeed, referring it to the six thousandth year of the world, according to the old tradition of the Rabbins, commonly received among the fathers; but yet in this he agrees, that it should signify the time of the consummation and ending of the beast's reign and the devil's malice, as that which is to determine with the end of the world.

And I observe the Holy Ghost puts an especial wisdom on it, to reckon this number; which if it had lain in numeral letters only, had been no great point of wisdom to have such an emphasis put upon it; the like whereof is used but once more in this book, and that in chap. xvii. 9, when the beast, and the time of his rising with the ten kings, is set forth, as there, from the 9th to the 12th verse; and so now here, when his ending is spoken of: for this wisdom indeed lay in reckoning the time of his beginning with the ten kings, and so the time of his ending, by computing the whole time of his reign twelve hundred and sixty years.

The vulgar computation of years kept now in the world is, as we all know, from the year of Christ's birth, by an account from which we difference one year from another. And that is the style of the whole Christian world, to say, such a year of our Lord, reckoning from Christ. And this computation is called the 'number of a man,' for it is the ordinary vulgar way of reckoning years, and the measure of time used by men; and therefore so called, in that man doth use so to number the years. Even as the measure of the wall of the city, chap. xxi. 17, is said to be a hundred and forty-four cubits, 'according to the measure of a man,'—that is, the ordinary cubits in use with men, or taken from the proportion of the measure of man's stature: so here, say they, the beast's year of ending, when his number shall be complete, will be in the year which, according to man's computation of the years from Christ, shall be ordinarily termed 666. Now the number of the thousand is not mentioned, as in vulgar phrase among the Greeks and Hebrews it seldom was, neither among other nations is it ordinarily used to this day; we using to say, in '88, for 1588. And here especially it was needless; for if his number was to end in a year which, according to man's account, should be called 666, it could be no other, according to them, but that of 1666 after Christ; for the year 666 after Christ, which is past, it could not be, there being not two hundred of his years allowed him to continue, as then run out; and in the year 2666, to come, the years allotted him would have been well-nigh doubly run out, his years from his first rising to this his ending being to be but twelve hundred and sixty years.

Now then, according to this their account, so as to end his time in 1666, his time of rising must begin in the year 406 after Christ; and that the Pope's rise did about that time begin, we are not altogether without the Holy Ghost's warrant, who tells us, that the Roman empire, seated at Rome, over the west, must begin to be taken away, ere this man of sin could be revealed, or come up and appear in the world, 2 Thess. ii. 7, 8. And it was the western empire which was that which letted, whereof Rome itself was

the head and seat; and therefore the Holy Ghost affixeth this empire to the city of Rome as the seat of it, which he calleth *seven-headed*, in respect of her seven hills, and so meaneth not that eastern empire, whereof Constantinople was the seat. Now this western empire, whose seat was Rome, began then to be taken away, and the first foundation of its ruin laid, when the Goths and Vandals, of whom you heard under the trumpets, began to break that empire into these ten kingdoms; and the beginning of the first kingdom broken off from the empire was in the year 410, the emperor by covenant allowing the Goths to set up a kingdom in France. Then was Rome also first sacked and taken by those barbarous nations, and first lost her virginity; and Honorius the emperor, to recover Rome again, and restore it to her former flourishing estate, was forced to part with one piece of the empire, namely France, which was the first of all the ten kingdoms that were broken off. And in the year 412, he was forced to grant to the Huns to do the like. And anno 415, he was forced to grant the like to the Goths in Spain.* And by the year 456, all the ten were up who gave their power to the beast. And this punctually agrees with what the Holy Ghost says more expressly of the very hour of Antichrist's rising, chap. xvii. 12: that the ten kings should begin to receive power as kings, one hour with the beast, and the beast one hour with them; the Holy Ghost reckoning from the beginning of the first of these ten kingdoms the rising of the beast, because therein was laid the first foundation of his empire over these ten kingdoms, for they were to set him up. And, which is strange, Jerome, who lived in the times of this first incursion of these barbarous nations, and wrote so complainingly of it, who died about the year 420, when he saw Rome taken, and the Goths obtain pieces of the western empire, said, then in those times when it was a-doing, in his Epistle *ad Gerontium: Qui tenebat de medio fit, et non intelligimus antichristum appropinquare.* He seeing the empire begin to break, said, Antichrist must needs be at hand.

Some read *μετὰ τὸ ἄρξιν*, as importing the rise of these ten kingdoms, to be *after* the beast first risen: which, if meant of the time when these ten horns were completely grown up, is true; for in nature the horns grow up after the birth of the beast that beareth them. But whether it be *after* the beast, or *with* the beast, it was but *one hour after* the beast, or *one hour with* the beast; still implying, that both the rise of the one and of the other were near in time, and in the same age. And if the time be reckoned from the very first rise of that first kingdom in France, granted unto the Goths, anno 410, it will appear that it fell out together, or not an hour after the rise of that beast, from whose time the centurists and others have made the birth of the beast to have been, though his conception were before.

And indeed it so happened, through God's providence, who made all things concur in this one hour, that he who was as then Pope, namely Innocentius I.,—created Pope, as some say, anno 404, some 406,—began to usurp and challenge jurisdiction over all churches, (as I could out of many authorities shew, but you may see it in Simpson's *History of the Church*, in English, Book ii., 5th century,) and did set on foot that famous falsification of the canons of the Nicene Council, as pretending that they gave these bishops of Rome that power; for which there is an epistle of this Innocentius among the epistles of Augustine, (Epist. 91.) where he writing to Augustine, and the rest of the African bishops assembled, challengeth power over all, *ex patrum illorum institutis*, from the decrees of those fathers of Nice, which his successors afterwards prosecuted: so that a copy out of the

* See Sigonius de Imperio Occidentali, lib. x., xi.

authentic records of that council, held in the time of Constantine, was sent for, by which this falsification was detected. This man also began first to arrogate a power over princes; for he excommunicated the eastern emperor, Arcadius, who yet was out of his jurisdiction, for banishing Chrysostom, which no bishop of Rome before him had ever adventured to do, and this in the year 407, the copy of whose bull of excommunication is extant to this day, given at length in Baronius. In his time also, the Emperor Honorius granted the clergy an exemption from secular power and civil tribunals; so making them a distinct body for the Pope, their head. See here the first and second beast in this chapter rising both together: first in this Pope's proud usurping over churches and princes, and then in exempting his clergy, to make up and constitute that second beast, with him as their spiritual head; and the ten kingdoms which were to constitute the first beast, under the Pope as their head, then also beginning to arise.

And thus I have given an account of their opinion who fix the time of Antichrist's fall in 1666; together with the arguments which they urge to prove it.

CHAPTER VIII.

The exposition of the 14th chapter, wherein the state of the true church under Antichrist is described.

As in the 13th chapter you have the false antichristian church, whereof the Pope is the head, so in this 14th chapter begins the description of the true church during the time of Antichrist, whereof the Lamb is the head: which church is made up of that 'seed of the woman' mentioned chap. xii. 17; whom, during her lying hid in the wilderness, Satan through Antichrist's power did persecute. Now the several conditions of the church, during those times of Antichrist unto this day, may be reduced to three heads:—

1. The state of true believers in those darker times of Popery, when they were mingled with Papists, as making no open separation from them, and yet preserving themselves pure from much of their idolatrous worship and opinions; and this during the space of seven hundred years from the Pope's rising.

2. The state of the church when first a separation began to be made from the church of Rome, and the gospel to be preached, from the year 1100.

3. The state of the church under the Reformation since the times of Luther and Calvin, for these last hundred years.

Into these three several states the church of God doth eminently fall divided, to the view of any that are skilled in ecclesiastic stories. And these three states are lively deciphered in this chapter.

1. The state of that confused company under Antichrist's first times, ver. 1–6.

2. The church's first separation from the company of Antichrist, in three several degrees of it, ver. 6–14.

3. The state of the Reformation since Calvin's time, ver. 14 to the end.

First, The state of believers mingled among Antichrist's company, and not setting up churches distinct from those under him, though opposing the grossness of his idolatry, and keeping themselves pure from it. And these are set forth in characters suitable to that condition. They are a scattered company of a hundred and forty-four thousand, joining themselves to the Lamb Christ, having his Father's name written in their foreheads,—that is, professing the true God, in the sincere obedience and worship of him,—whilst the opposite company of Antichrist went 'wondering after the beast,' even a world of them, as chap. xiii. 3, and received his mark, ver. 17. These are set forth by the same number of a hundred and forty-four thousand that the Christians in the east, under the Mohammedan bondage and darkness, are, who were the fifth and sixth trumpets, their state and condition being much alike in this, as they are a company of persons singly to be numbered and scattered up and down, here and there, as they were, in the midst of the corruptions of those eastern churches, under the darkness and oppression of Mohammedanism. So in like manner, these are a company of true believers

scattered up and down under the growing superstitions and increasing darkness of Popish antichristianism; which, until the year of Christ 1100, did increase more and more upon the world. They stand upon Mount Sion, which was called the city of David; as not yet having a temple, or instituted churches distinct from Antichrist, erected and built, as in David's time Mount Sion had not. And though they sung a 'new song,'—the truth of the gospel which themselves believed,—yet so confusedly and indistinctly, as none could learn it, or understand that they differed from them. It was a new song, differing from what the Papists taught about Christ; yet they did not propagate it to many; there were few or none, it is said, that could learn it. And they are said to sing it secretly, before this representative chorus of the four beasts and the four-and-twenty elders,—as they are considered as a standing company, that do view all the visions of this book,—but themselves were not cast into such an order of worship, they not having churches or officers to begin the song, as in other times you may observe that it is said, the four beasts began, and the four-and-twenty elders sung that song. So that they had no distinct churches and assemblies, nor officers of their own who sung this song; their voices being sometimes as the voice of many waters confusedly murmuring against the superstitions daily arising in those times, and thundering aloud. First, against setting up of images, anno 707, both in France and Germany; and then, against transubstantiation: sometimes sweetly harping melodious strains of true devotion, which believers, and some writers of those times, as we in their writings find, were full of. Those kept themselves virgins from the gross idolatries of the whore, not defiling themselves with the rest of those women; by which are meant the daughters of the whore,—that is, those cities and kingdoms in which they lived,—which (as the daughters receiving themselves the fornications of Rome, the mother city) allured these also unto spiritual fornication with them. Thus during those times of gross idolatry, we read of those who professed their detestation of images, and that idol of transubstantiation.

The *second* state of the church is, that of the separation which believers made from antichristian churches, having a new and a further light broke forth among them; which we have described unto us by three degrees, rising higher and higher, presented under three several angels, from the 6th verse, and so on, according to the usual course of this book: the first of which flies in the midst of heaven, being to publish his message unto many nations, having the gospel to preach; that is, Jesus Christ, and justification by him, and the true worship of him: which in those times was counted a new gospel; therefore in opposition to that made calumny, the Holy Ghost here calls it the everlasting gospel. And this began to be done about the year 1100.

But because I mean to begin the *Second Part* of this my Exposition of this book with the story of the church's first separation from Popery, which here begins at the 6th verse of this chapter; therefore I reserve the particular exposition thereof unto that Second Part in its due place, and break off this *First Part* here, although in the middle of a chapter, yet at a right joint or period.

PART II.

BEING THE STORY OF THE CHURCH FROM THE TIMES OF THE FIRST
SEPARATION FROM THE BEAST, THE POPE, UNTIL
THE GLORIOUS KINGDOM OF CHRIST ;
AS IT IS LAID DOWN CHAP. XI, AND FROM CHAP. XIV. 6 UNTO THE
BEGINNING OF CHAP. XX.

THE PREFACE.

THE main thing I aimed at, both in my first studying this book, and also in this my exposition of it, was to search into such passages therein as did concern and fall upon the last days, especially the present times of the church ; and to inquire and find out under which of these constellations our own times do fall, and what is certainly yet to come. Now, what hitherto hath been expounded by me I found, by the general consent of the best expositors, though upon diverse grounds, to belong unto more ancient times, long since past. And hence it is that, in the exposition of those 6th, 8th, and 9th chapters, I have been the less inquisitive, therein especially following Mr Mede, whose scheme and division also of this whole prophecy into the *Seal-prophecy* and *Book-prophecy*, and making the one to contain the fates of the empire and the other of the church, I ever accounted a happy notion for the understanding of this book, and have therefore enlarged it ; although, in the exposition of the 7th chapter, I altogether differ from him, as also in some few things else. Now, those parts of this prophecy which belong to more elderly times being thus briefly run over and despatched, I have now selected and singled out all that I find, both in the seal-prophecy and in this book-prophecy, to have an eye to these present times, or to those yet to come, and have cast them apart by themselves, as being those things in this book which it concerns us more especially to search into. And to the end that I might begin at a right joint, without mangling the whole, I have chosen to begin from that state and time of the church's separation from Popery, and of the Reformation, which this book-prophecy begins at,—namely, chap. xiv. 6,—and so to give upon this, but especially what concerns the present age, a larger exposition than upon the former I have done : having written that *First Part*,

especially that brief exposition of the 6th, 7th, 8th, and 9th chapters, but to make way for the understanding of that which now follows ; it being impossible for any man to be confirmed in the true interpretation of any part without some general insight into the whole.

Now, in general, if you would know what belongs to these latter times in this prophecy :—

1. The seal-prophecy, from the 6th chapter to the 12th, running over all time from John's days unto the kingdom of Christ, and the passages thereof in the 10th and 11th chapters, (being the last under that first prophecy,) do therefore belong unto the last times, as hath been abundantly declared in that general scheme given in the First Part ; and, indeed, most of the things in the 11th chapter do belong to the times of the vials, chap. xvi., as will appear in the exposition of it. Then, again—

2. At the beginning of the 6th verse, chap. xiv., in the book-prophecy, begins the great restoration of the gospel from under Popery, and so the story of the last days, which is continued along in such things as shall befall the church unto the kingdom of Christ, which begins not until chap. xx. Hence, therefore, all these passages in those chapters mentioned out of both prophecies, being put together in their due place and order, do fitly fall in together, to make the story of the church complete, from the first separation from Popery unto Christ's kingdom ; and do indeed take in all that in this book of the Revelation is spoken of these times : which, therefore, I call a *Second Part* of the exposition of this book.

A particular scheme and division, presenting, in their due order and succession, all the contents of those chapters which do concern our times.

Because the right ordering and ranking of the particular visions of this book in both prophecies in their due times, either of succession after each other, or their synchronising or falling out together at the same time, is the chief key of interpretation ; therefore, as I gave a more general scheme and division of this whole book at the first, to make way for the exposition thereof, so I will now premise a particular scheme of these chapters mentioned, so to make way for the understanding of the exposition thereof also.

First therefore I will set together the materials therein contained, according to that right and due order, either of synchronising each with other, or due succession after each other ; that is, shew what times the several visions of those chapters do belong unto ; which of them are, in order of time, before the other, and which fall out at the same time with other. The full proof of which method, and my so ordering them, I shall in part reserve to the larger exposition itself, which follows ; only now take it briefly, for the better clearing the exposition.

Two representations of the church, from the separation to the New Jerusalem.

The church of Christ, from those times of separation unto the New Jerusalem, is presented, either—

I. In the various conditions which in itself it should run through, all the time until then, in several ages, both in respect of the progress of its separation further and further off from Rome, and so of its increase of light, purity, and reformation; as likewise in respect of persecutions and judgments upon it, and its restitution and deliverance again from under them. Or else—

II. It is presented in one uniform, entire, and general condition, suiting with all those times of it, first and last, both as within itself it partakes of like privileges all that time, and especially also in relation to the execution of plagues and punishments, poured out of the seven vials, on the enemy of the church, whom this true church is to be the instrument of ruining. And both these ways the Holy Ghost hath been pleased to represent the story of it.

*The church's uniform and alike condition entirely set forth together
in the 15th and 16th chapters.*

This same entire condition of it, during all this long time, as I take it, is set forth in the 15th and 16th chapters.

1. In the 15th chapter is set forth the common, uniform, and like state of the church all that while—

(1.) As within itself, ver. 2–5.

(2.) In the common and like description of the angels or powers out of the vials which come out of those churches, from ver. 6 to the end. Which representation of the church, and of these angels, all that whole time, is also made as the immediate sign, great and wonderful, or the forerunner, of the New Jerusalem, ver. 1, 2. There being after these vials, and this state of the church, a more glorious state of it to come; which, ver. 5, is called the opening the temple of the tabernacle, (so called by way of distinction from the temple of the seven angels,) as wherein the ark, Christ himself, is to be seen, as chap. xi. 19; which, until the vials are all poured out, stands veiled, as the holy of holies did. And so this present state of the church, which is the temple out of which the seven angels come forth, ver. 6, holdeth but the proportion and allusion of the inward court of the priests unto the holy of holies in the Jewish temple, in comparison unto that other church or temple to come after this, as ver. 5 speaks. And so the erection of it is made the sign or immediate forerunner of this holy of holies, as ver. 1, 5, compared, do evidently shew. And then—

2. In the 16th chapter, you have the execution and pouring out of these seven vials by the angels out of this church or inner temple, erected from the first separation from Antichrist, all along those times unto the New Jerusalem; which, in their several orders and successions, are in one view exhibited in that 16th chapter.

The various condition of the church scatteredly presented in three parts.

Now, although this common, uniform condition of the church all this time is set thus, in relation to the execution of those vials on the enemies, in one entire view, in the 15th and 16th chapters; yet that other various con-

dition of the church, as in respect to its own particular and diverse state in all those times, the Holy Ghost was pleased variously, and in several places of this prophecy, to describe and set forth, as best suiting to a special end and occasion, yet with such infallible characters of their times, of the vials they belong unto, and also unto what times of each vial, as cannot deceive us.

Thus, the *first* part of the story of the various condition of the church during the four first vials is set forth, chap. xiv., from the 6th verse to the end; at which 6th verse the separation of the true church from Antichrist beginning, there began also the first erection of true churches, or the temple, first made mention of in that chapter, when Waldus and his company first fell off from Rome. And the reason why this was first done, ere the vision of the vials was presented, was because it was meet to shew how the temple was first built and reared, ere the seven angels and their vials poured forth out of this temple should be mentioned. And therefore chap. xiv. shews that first part of the church's story in all its first comings forth from Antichrist, and laying the foundation of churches; but then it breaks off at the times of the fourth vial, for that so far precedes the reformation of the true church, as it respected a separation from Antichrist, and so runs along with such vials as should by degrees first prepare for his ruin, as the three or four first vials do.

But then the *next* state of the church, from the time of the fourth vial to the fifth vial, when Antichrist's time of forty-two months is to expire; that the 11th chapter, which comes in as a chronology to shew the end and expiring of those times of Antichrist, doth supply the story of it, ver. 1–14. And this story comes in there, rather than here in chap. xiv., because that was to be as an immediate signal of Antichrist's downfall; and so comes in most fitly there in that 11th chapter; that chapter being intended as an exact chronology or computation of the times of the beast's reign, to the end it might be discerned when his time should end: and so the immediate sign before it is therefore annexed, for the church's warning and comfort against the approaching of the time of his ending, and a fatal prevailing of Antichrist over them just before. And so the story of that 11th chapter doth indeed begin where that 14th chapter endeth, or about the same time. And as the 14th chapter presented us with the story of the reformation of the church from Antichrist and his false church, and so what befell the church during that time; so the 11th chapter begins with a new reformation of the reformed churches among themselves, and what should befall them upon that reformation—namely, the killing the witnesses between the fourth vial and the fifth, or, at the utmost, before the sixth vial.

And then the *third* part of the church's story, from after the fifth vial until the New Jerusalem,—which New Jerusalem begins chap. xx. of the book-prophecy, and chap. xi. 15 of the seal-prophecy,—the 19th chapter presents us with in its due place: for the 17th and 18th chapters being, the one but an explanation who was the beast, and where his seat was, that so the church might be able to discern this Antichrist; and the other being a funeral-song for the pouring out of the fifth vial, when the seat of the beast.

the whore, (the city described in the 17th chapter,) is ruined, when also Antichrist's kingdom, as it is most probable, doth end : therefore fitly, after both these digressions, comes in, in its due order, the state of the church from the time of that fifth vial, or the ruin of the city, unto the New Jerusalem. And therefore the 19th chapter thus begins, 'And after these things, I heard the voice of an innumerable company,' &c.,—that is, after the ruin of the city and whore described in chap. xvii., and ruined, chap. xviii.,—and so goes on to describe the state of the church then until the New Jerusalem.

Now to sum up all. As the story in the 14th chapter containeth the first reformation and separation of the church from Antichrist in several degrees, and the 11th chapter containeth a second reformation of the church within itself from profane mixture ; so this 19th chapter contains a third reformation personal, of the saints themselves in it, as then with might and main preparing and adorning themselves for the marriage of the Lamb, which then they shall evidently see approaching, now when the whore is cast off and burnt ; and there you may see them getting all the fine linen they can,—that is, of holiness and growth in grace, 'the righteousness of the saints,'—that so their Lord and Husband might greatly delight in their beauty, as you may see, ver. 7, 8. And this is the true general coherence and order of what yet remains to be interpreted.

The particular synchronism of the several visions and contents of all those chapters : and, first, of the 14th chapter, from ver. 6, with the 15th and 16th, to its 8th verse.

Now because, according to this division and general scheme given, the visions of the 15th and 16th chapters, namely, those of the vials, do run along the same whole course of time through diverse ages that the visions of the 14th chapter, from ver. 6, and also of the 11th chapter, to ver. 15, and of the 19th chapter also, do, (though the one in a uniform continued way, the other in a scattered successive representation of the church's condition, all along the same tract of time through many ages ;) therefore it will be expedient to shew which of these several parts of these two representations do synchronise and fall out together in the same age, and which of them do succeed each other.

I will therefore a little more particularly set together the several parts of these stories ; both of that of the seven vials, which are put together, chap. xv., xvi., and those other several pieces and scattered passages of those other chapters, in all their due times as they fell out together.

I. That same temple filled with smoke, chap. xv. 8, out of which come the seven angels, I conceive to have been begun to be set up in the times of the first separation from Antichrist, chap. xiv. 6. When also the everlasting gospel was begun distinctly to be preached, both by Waldus and his followers, who did erect true churches unto Christ, (as the history of the Waldenses shews,) when those harpers on the glassy sea, chap. xv., began more distinctly to sing the song of Moses and the Lamb ; that is, the doctrine both of the law and gospel, which the hundred and forty-four thousand, in the darker

times of Popery, had but muttered, and that so confusedly as none could learn it. For this, compare chap. xiv. 6, 7, with chap. xv. 3, 4. So that the doctrine of the gospel, and the erection of the temple out of which the vials do come, and the separation from Popery, do all begin together.

2. This erection of the temple, and preparation being thus made by the first angel, chap. xiv. 6, the first vial out of that temple, chap. xvi. 1, 2, began with the voice of the second angel, chap. xiv. 8. So that the first angel, chap. xiv. 6, sets up the temple, and the second angel brings forth the first vial. And therefore, accordingly, the voice of that angel, chap. xiv. 8, is, 'Babylon is fallen, Babylon is fallen ;' that is, now is the first foundation of her ruin laid, (as in opening the vials I shall afterward shew,) or, now do those vials begin which shall be her ruin.

The second vial, chap. xvi. 3, follows with the voice or cry of the third angel's preaching, chap. xiv. 9, then when the sea of Antichrist's doctrine was both proved and pronounced damnable by Luther's doctrine, and the waters which the whore sat on fell from her ; that is, those kingdoms and commonwealths which had subjected themselves unto her. For this, compare the year of Luther's preaching, recorded chap. xiv. 9–11, and that second vial, chap. xvi.

The third vial, chap. xvi. 4, hath been pouring out since that harvest began, chap. xiv. 14, since the summer weather and settled peace of the reformed churches, meant by rivers and fountains, as in the opening the meaning of that vial will appear.

The fourth vial, chap. xvi. 8, I take it, began about the time of the vintage, chap. xiv. 18, whereof this to me is an infallible character, that an angel who had power over fire is said to excite unto it. Now, chap. xvi. 8, the fourth angel, who poured out this fourth vial, is said to have 'power given him to scorch men with fire.' And so that description, chap. xiv. 18, is of the same angel, to shew that these two (the fourth vial and this vintage) fall in the same times : and so it is evidently evinced that the 14th chapter, and the times of it, reach but to the fourth vial.

The synchronism of the vision of the 11th chapter, in the age between the fourth and fifth vial ; and of the 17th and 18th chapters, with the times of the fifth vial ; and of the 19th, with the age after the fifth vial unto the New Jerusalem.

Come we next to the 11th chapter :—

Which, first, under the seal-prophecy, begins (now about the times of the fourth vial) before the expiration of the world's monarchy, Antichrist's times, and the church's oppression, and before the seventh trumpet, which blows, ver. 15. And it begins with the representing the temple of the reformation, the same which the 14th chapter had represented, (out of which the angel, with his sickle for the harvest, did come, chap. xiv. 15,) in which these reformers, who erected that temple in the 14th chapter, having committed this error, to lay an outward court unto it,—John there bearing the persons of the godly of this age,—are bidden to measure that temple

anew, as not fully conformed to the pattern, and to cast out the outward court. And so it contains a further reformation of the temple in that 14th chapter erected. And as in the vintage, chap. xiv., the Popish Gentiles had, as was said, trod down the grapes in Germany; so here, chap. xi. 1, the like outward court in other churches elsewhere is given unto these Gentiles to tread down, and so with that exploit to end their date of treading down the holy city for forty-two months, (or 1260 years,) with this their re-entry, which shall be their last upon the churches of the Reformation. And so you see the 11th chapter begins where the 14th chapter ends.

Then, *secondly*, ver. 5, 6 of that chapter, in the description of the witnesses, you furthermore expressly have the first four vials briefly summed up; and no more of them than the first four mentioned therein, to shew that these witnesses, in these latter times of their prophecy, are the same with those angels that pour out the vials, chap. xvi. And observe, that that mention of them comes in but by way of parenthesis in this speech of the angel unto John, that he might discern who they were, and know them again in this new book-prophecy; and all to this end, to shew what after these four vials, or from the time of the fourth and before the fifth, should befall them in the expiring of the 1260 years allotted them to prophesy in, in sackcloth, or in a mourning condition; which now should end with the beast's reign also, which ends with the fifth vial. And so, ver. 7, when they shall be about to finish their testimony,—that is, just now, at the ending of their prophecy,—they that formerly have had the power to execute four such vials on the beast's company already, must now, before they do fatally darken and overcome his kingdom by the fifth vial, be themselves once more overcome by the beast. Which killing of them, being thus mentioned after four of the vials, summed up, ver. 5, 6, and in the end of their prophecy, and in the very expiring of their time of mourning, must needs therefore be from after, or upon the time of the fourth vial, and before the fifth, or at furthest with the sixth. And then, ver. 13, the witnesses, they rise, and the tenth part of the city falls, which some have interpreted to be the fifth vial, the ruin of the city of Rome. But of that hereafter in the exposition.

After that, ver. 14, the second woe passeth away, which notes the removing of the Turkish power and tyranny,—which was the second woe, or sixth trumpet, spoken of chap. ix. 12, 13,—which is all one with the sixth vial, chap. xvi., the drying up the river Euphrates, or the preparation unto it; as in the exposition will appear.

Then follows the seventh trumpet, chap. xi. 15 to the end; at which time the seventh vial begins, as is evident by comparing chap. xi. 9 and chap. xvi. 18–21, as also chap. x. 7, in that it is said in one place that 'time shall be no longer' than until the seventh trumpet blows, and in the other, 'It is done,' says the voice, when the seventh vial is poured out, chap. xvi. 17.

And, *lastly*, as under the seventh trumpet comes in the holy of holies, which, as was said, is the opening the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven, in which the ark is seen, chap. xi. 18; so you may read, chap. xv. 5, that after the vials, (he says there, *μετὰ ταῦτα*, 'after these things,') this temple of

the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven is said to be opened. That temple out of which the vials come being but as the inward temple which was begun to be erected,—for else they had no true churches,—from the first separation, but polluted with the adjoining of the outward court by the reformers. But under the times of the fourth vial, this temple is measured and purged, and that court cast out, chap. xi. 1, now ending in the holy of holies succeeding it.

But whereas still what should befall the church from the time of the rising of the witnesses,—which falleth out about the fifth vial,—is not expressed in that 11th chapter, nor what should be the church's condition from that space between the fifth vial and the seventh trumpet and holy of holies; but we are still to seek that, for the 11th chapter does setly describe only what befell the church just before the expiring of the reign of Antichrist, as a signal added for the church's warning: therefore this part the 19th chapter supplies,—the 17th and 18th chapters being but a larger explication of the fifth vial, as all agree, namely, the ruin of the city,—the first verse of which begins thus, 'After these things, I saw an innumerable company in heaven, praising God for the downfall of the whore,' (at large set forth chap. xvii., xviii.) and therefore it must needs set forth the state of the church now after the fifth vial until the seventh, as in the exposition will appear. And then that great battle at the Lamb's marriage-supper, which follows in that chapter, how that agrees with the seventh vial, let any one judge that shall read chap. xvi. from the 14th verse to the end, and chap. xix. from the 11th verse to the end. And then come in the thousand years, and New Jerusalem, chap. xx.–xxii., which is all one with the holy of holies.

CHAPTER I.

The 13th chapter explained, from the 6th verse to the end.

Now having ordered and cast these chapters, remaining to be expounded, into this mould, I begin this exposition here, where the story of the church's first separation from Antichrist doth indeed begin, where also I brake off the First Part of this exposition.

In which my ranking of these chapters was shewed, that as the 13th chapter does throughout set forth the condition of the false antichristian church, and the several sorts of that company which shall cleave to the beast, so that this 14th chapter does in like manner set forth the company of true believers, which shall apart by themselves cleave unto the Lamb, and that in those several conditions which they are to run through. As—

1. The condition of the church in the dark times of Popery, from his first rising until the gospel's light did break forth more clearly, and a separation was made from the church of Antichrist. And this, as I have opened it, you have from the 1st verse unto the 6th. Or—

2. The condition of the church from that first separation from Popery, and believers erecting churches and assemblies by themselves, from ver. 6 to the end. Which now begins to be expounded.

And the scope of the Holy Ghost in this remainder of chap. xiv. is but to shew by what degrees the gospel should first break forth, and how churches should at first be erected and a glorious reformation made. And so it reacheth no further than till the times of that prevailing again of the beast, which after this great reformation he should a second time obtain to have over these churches, about the times of the fourth vial, which is executed by the angel that hath power over fire, who is mentioned ver. 18. Which prevailing of his, the 11th chapter (the scope whereof is to shew how the beast's reign is to end) does more fully shew forth.

Now when as the Holy Ghost had in this 14th chapter given the story of that first separation and reformation, as being sufficient to shew the foundation and progress of this new temple and true church, erected in opposition to the false, he then breaks off, and presents the general and common condition and station of believers in this new erected temple, separate from the church of the beast and from its doctrine and worship, and shews the judgments to be executed upon the false church all that while, until the kingdom of Christ, entirely together in one view, in the 15th and 16th chapters.

Now this state and condition of the church, as first breaking forth from under Antichrist, and so coming out of Babylon and Egypt, laid forth in this 14th chapter, until Antichrist's second prevailing, spoken of chap. xi, hath two parts:—

1. Their first separation, in the dark and elder times of the gospel, before the Reformation.

2. The Reformation itself, made by Calvin and others.

1. The first separation, made and continued in the elder times before Luther, hath three degrees of it orderly set forth, as light increased in the church, from ver. 6 to 14.

2. The Reformation itself, from the 14th verse to the end.

First, Of that first separation:—

It hath three degrees, as was said, set forth by three angels, as by whose ministry all the great things done in the church and world throughout this book are still said to be effected, who in their voice and cry rise higher and higher, and louder and louder, against Antichrist and his company.

The first angel, who lays the foundation of all, is said to have the 'everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and tongue, and people,' and so to 'fly into the midst of heaven,' as reaching his voice to all. And he also calls upon men to fear and worship God alone, who made heaven and earth, ver. 7. So that the matter of his preaching is the gospel, which brings to light the free grace of God in Christ for the justification of a sinner, and also the true worship of this God alone; withdrawing men from idolatry and false worship of saints and angels, which the world was then overwhelmed with: which because in those times it was called the *New Gospel*, therefore, in opposition to that calumny, the Holy Ghost calls it the *Everlasting Gospel*, which was now restored and brought to light. And by the preaching of these two things to all nations, was the foundation of that whole separation from the Pope that followed first laid.

Now this first angel's preaching doth most lively set forth the first proceedings of Waldus and his followers, who first began to make separation from Popish doctrine and worship. This Waldus, an alderman of Lyons in France, about the year of Christ 1100, being converted by occasion of the sudden death of a friend of his, as they were walking abroad together,—which mightily terrified and amazed him, God using that as a means to humble him and bring him to Christ,—fell a-preaching in that city, and converted many others to the saving knowledge of Christ. And he being a man learned also, as even Popish writers say of him, opened the Scriptures, and turned them into the vulgar French. And he and his followers, thinking it their duty to preach this gospel unto others, as did the apostles, they forthwith sent abroad some of their company a-preaching. Which when it came to the ears of the Pope, they were prohibited, as being laymen. But they, affirming it was better to obey God than men, and it being an article of their faith, *unicuique licere verbum Dei libere predicare*,—that it was lawful for any man to preach the gospel,—they went on in the course they had begun, though they were persecuted for it. And look, as in the primitive times, when persecution arose after the death of Stephen, and that the church of Jerusalem was dispersed, it was an occasion of further spreading the gospel unto other nations: so Waldus, being himself excommunicated, came into Picardy, and so into the Low Countries, and there, by his preaching, made many disciples, and then went into Germany, and last of all into Bohemia; and his followers were dispersed into Savoy, Lombardy, and the countries on this side the Alps; and Arnoldus, his companion, went into Spain. Insomuch that Poplinerius the historian gives this testimony of them, that these Waldenses, maugre the power of all Christian princes, about the year 1100, did broach a doctrine little differing from what the Protestants now hold; and not only dispersed it through France, but over all the parts of Europe. Of these things you may read at large in the English *History of the Waldenses*, and in Bishop Ussher's book, *De Successione Ecclesiae*. Thus you see they preached, as here; yea, it was their profession; and they

preached to all nations, and the doctrine they preached was only the gospel, and to call men from idolatry to worship God aright, (as you may read at large in those books mentioned,) as the angel is here said to do, ver. 7.

Ver. 8.—But in an age or two following, their number increasing in all kingdoms, and their light growing more clear, there follows out of this company a second angel, who with open mouth proclaims that Rome was Babylon, and the Pope that beast, and that Antichrist, in this Revelation described, and ordained to ruin. Which thing Waldus did at the first but begin to mutter; for in one more ancient breviary of the articles of their opinions, (as you have them in that forenamed book, *De Successione Ecclesiæ*, cap. vi., n. 16,) this is the first, concerning the church of Rome, in these modest words only, *Romanum Præsulem reliquis parem esse episcopis*,—that the Pope of Rome was but equal to all other bishops. But afterwards in the following ages, their followers grew more bold; and in another edition of their articles, in the same chapter, n. 17, you find this, *Romanam ecclesiam esse meretricem Babylonicam*,—that the church of Rome was the whore of Babylon. Which thing the professors in those next ages did inculcate, and insist on, and made it the eminent article of their profession and confession. But this was especially done by Wickliff and his followers, beginning about the year 1371, in England; and after him by John Huss, and Jerome of Prague, and their followers, anno 1400.

But then follows a third angel, more vehement than the rest,—and that was Luther and his followers,—and he proceeds further, and says, that not only Rome is Babylon, but that all those who cleave unto her doctrine and superstitions ‘shall drink of the wrath of God for ever;’ that is, be certainly damned, and go to hell. He shewing that her worship and doctrine, the image of the beast, was a damned doctrine, and laying open the falsehoods and errors of it so manifestly, that now under so clear a light of the gospel as this age held forth, it could never stand with salvation to live therein. And so he urged a separation from Rome under pain of damnation. The voice of this angel is from ver. 9 to ver. 12.

Then follows an intimation, once for all, of those martyrdoms and bloody persecutions of all those three angels and their followers, as the effect of this their preaching, and as a trial of the truth of their doctrine, and their own sincerity. So, ver. 12, 13, ‘Here is the patience of the saints;’ that is, here comes in matter for the trial of it. And for their encouragement, there is a comfortable acclamation subjoined, ‘Blessed are those that die in the Lord.’ Now how, upon the preaching of all those angels, persecutions were raised,—which from the times of the heathenish and Arian persecutions, for the space of eight hundred years past before, in the dark times of Popery, the church was free from,—and there followed the martyrdoms of the followers of Waldus, Wickliff, Huss, and Luther, and of those that embraced their doctrine, especially upon and after this third angel’s preaching; this the *Book of Martyrs* will inform you.

In the second place comes the time of the Reformation, after Luther; the state of which is presented to us under a double vision: the one of a *harvest*, the other of a *vintage*, which useth to come after harvest.

The first betokens that glorious peace and sunshine of the gospel which followed after those persecutions in Germany, England, &c., for sixty years and upwards, and this from ver. 14 to ver. 17. By a *harvest*, in Scripture, is meant the conversion and gathering in of the elect by the preaching of the gospel. So in the Old Testament, Isaiah prophesying of the conversion of the Jews in Egypt and Assyria, chap. xxvii. 12, 13, he useth this expression,

that God would thresh or ‘beat off,’ all along from the river Euphrates unto Egypt, those his elect people, that, as corn, should grow upon the shores thereof; and that he would thresh so clean, that they should be gathered ‘one by one;’ not leaving one grain of election behind, nor one ear of corn standing unreaped. It is an allusion to a harvest, and having in of corn, and threshing it. Like unto which is that speech of Christ, when he sent out his disciples: ‘Lo, the regions are white, and ripe for the harvest,’ and ‘the harvest is great.’ Which he spake when there were multitudes of people ripe and ready to receive the gospel. And since the preaching of the gospel by the third angel, what multitudes of such hungry souls have there been in these kingdoms? And what a glorious time of summer and harvest have we had? And this preaching of the gospel, that hath reaped this corn, hath been authorised by the chief magistrates, and by kingly power, even whole kingdoms professing it. And therefore he who in this vision hath the sickle given him to reap is presented ‘crowned with a golden crown;’ which, according to the analogy with the other contents of this book, chap. xii. 5, is when Jesus Christ, the Son of man, is visibly set in the throne, ruling by Christian magistrates, they using their power for him; as when the emperors turned Christians, you find the like expression used, chap. x.

The other vision is of a *vintage*, from ver. 17 to the end; which, as a vintage comes after harvest, so this falls out in the end of this summer, and after the harvest of the Reformation, and so shuts up the story of it. Wherein God, after he hath had in his corn, falls upon the grapes, the wild grapes, and cuts them down; but with another manner of sickle than he had done his own corn. He had reaped them with a sickle of conversion, but these he cuts down with the ‘sharp sickle’—twice so called—of vengeance; and therefore, it is said that they are ‘cast into the wine-press of God’s wrath.’ And these grapes are those carnal Protestants and professors of religion, who, together with the elect, have enjoyed the heat of this fair long summer, and hung like to grapes in the sun, but retaining their sourness, have been ripened indeed, but only for wrath and vengeance. And lo, how this sharp sickle hath gone up and down in Germany for well-nigh these twenty years, being such a wine-press of fierce wrath, and such a treading down to an overflowing of blood and misery, as hath scarce been paralleled in any age! For it is the vengeance of the temple, not so much destroyed, as defiled and dishonoured by their mixture; which as much provokes God unto wrath as the persecution of his temple would have done. And therefore, the angel that is the executioner of it is provoked unto it by the cries of an angel that comes from the altar, as one who is zealous of God’s worship, and disdains as much that the temple and altar (the ordinances of worship) should be pestered and defiled with such as call themselves the church, saying, ‘We are the temple of God,’ and so cause God’s name to be blasphemed, as that the idolatrous Papists, whom this book calls the Gentiles, chap. xi. 1, should tread down this holy city and sanctuary. For even these are no better than Gentiles also, who ‘say they are Jews, but are not.’

And that this vengeance should be meant of this execution of it upon the Protestant party seems evident unto me by this, that the wine-press is said to be ‘trodden without the city;’ that is, without the jurisdiction or reach of the power of the city of Rome,—for so that word city, according to the style of this book, doth still import, as chap. xi. 8, chap. xvi. 19, &c.,—and so is on purpose added to shew that it befalls even such kingdoms and places as had cast off the Pope’s supremacy. And it appears also by this, that it is mentioned apart from the vials which follow, which are all the judgments

that fall upon the Popish and Turkish enemies of the church ; but this upon a third sort of enemies within the church itself. And although it be true, that so far as there hath befallen, through these German wars, a plague upon the Popish party in Germany, (as upon the emperor, and those Popish princes under him,) so far indeed as upon them, it is to be reduced to one of the vials, which do contain all the last plagues on the Popish party, and particularly comes under the fourth vial ; yet so far as these wars have brought miseries and desolation on the Protestant party, so far in that respect it is presented in this vintage. And therefore you may observe, that the angel, who it is said hath 'power over fire,'—who is indeed the angel of the fourth vial, as the angel of the third is called the 'angel of the waters,'—because he hath 'power to scorch men with fire,' chap. xvi. 8, that angel it is that incites and provokes this angel here, with the 'sharp sickle, to cut down and tread these grapes.' So that this vintage is a distinct execution from that of the fourth vial, and yet contemporaneous with it. In a word, these wars, so far as they hurt the Popish party, are the fourth vial ; and so far as they hurt the Protestant party, they are the vintage here meant.

That *horses* are mentioned as treaders of this wine-press most fitly carries it to these German wars ; the German horses being the most approved war-horses in Europe, and these wars having been chiefly maintained and acted by them. And then also this allusion of grapes trodden in a wine-press was as suitable to express the miseries befallen those countries ; which are famous for vines and vintages, as the Palatinate and other places in Germany are. And for the like reason the judgments upon Edom and Bozrah are expressed by a vintage, Isa. lxiii. 1, because it was a country famous for vines. And then again, haply the space of 1600 furlongs here mentioned, which some make more miles, some less, may, for the length, be found as fitly to agree unto the chief seat of these wars and wine-press ; which, take the length of the Protestant part of Germany trodden down, and here only intended, may not every way extend much further. But the computation and measuring of this I leave unto others.

And whether or no God will bring this wine-press into any other of his vineyards, as England, Scotland, &c., and by bloody wars tread down the grapes there, as he hath done in Germany, keeping still to the same proportion of 1600 furlongs, as our Brightman reckons the length of England to be, and fulfilling it over and over in other several Protestant kingdoms and dominions, He only knows who is the Lord both of this harvest and vintage. Only this may be more confidently affirmed, that the rest of those carnal Protestants in England and other places, who, like the outward court, have been laid and joined to the people of God, shall yet, before the expiration and ending of the beast's kingdom and number, be more or less given up to the Papists, and to the jurisdiction of the city of Rome, and be trodden down, and made to veil to them, if not all of them by bloody wars and conquests, yet by some base and unworthy yielding to them, as a just punishment of their carnal profession of the gospel. And this in England, we see, they begin to do ; and this, I take it, chap. xi. 1 doth foretell and prophesy of. Which chapter being intended to give a signal or forerunner of the beast's ruin, and the expiration of his 1260 years and period of his kingdom, which now is approaching, doth present the state of the church, and what shall befall it, not long before his ruin ; and so withal that face of the church just before is presented there, chap. xi. 1. And the setting down what should befall it, ver. 7-14, must necessarily belong to these times, and so is to be subjoined unto this 14th chapter, (though it comes in there as a

common signal of the ending of both prophecies, and therefore between both,) to make the story of the church complete.

And this I shall handle and make to appear when I have first opened the meaning of the vials, especially of the four first of them : which though for order's sake are, by the Holy Ghost, put (as in this book things of a sort use to be) with the rest after this 14th chapter, yet they have been a-pouring forth upon the beast and his company from that first preaching of the gospel until now, as will further appear. And the reason why I would open these four first vials, ere I open the 11th chapter, is, because they synchronise with this 14th chapter ; and because four vials are mentioned as poured out, chap. xi., ere the witnesses are slain, which cannot be understood till these be first explained.

CHAPTER II.

The exposition of the 15th chapter.

THE Holy Ghost having thus first of all shewn how the reformation from Popery was to be brought about and churches erected, he here beginneth to set before us the uniform state of believers in this temple, and the several degrees of their ruining the false church, by several vials; and this, as set together in one continued view throughout all these times, from the first separation from Popery until Christ's kingdom. Concerning which, in general, I shall premise three things.

First, The difference between their condition here and the condition of the churches under the dark times of Popery, as is uniformly described chap. xiv. 1-6. And observe this difference in these four particulars:—

1. Those, chap. xiv., were virgins, but not separate; but these here stand alone in a temple by themselves, washing themselves from the defilement of Popery, as being separated therefrom.

2. Those sung a new song confusedly; but these sing the song of Moses and the Lamb—that is, the law and the gospel—distinctly.

3. Those there stood naked upon the hill of Sion, as it was ere a temple was reared upon it; but these here are gathered into a temple, and roofed over their heads.

4. Those sung their song in Egypt; but these are come out of Egypt, and so sing Moses's song.

The *second* thing to be premised is, that these seven angels and their vials, and this company here, are in the general description of them, or in that preface to their description prefixed, ver. 1, called 'a sign, great and marvelous,' and 'another sign.'

1. It is called *a sign*. A sign is always a forerunner of something to come. Now, what it is that is here pointed at as to come, ver. 5 tells us; namely, that 'after these things,'—that is, after these vials,—'the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony was opened in heaven.' So then, these vials, they are the sign of that glorious holy of holies which John saw was to come after them; or they are the sign of the New Jerusalem,—for by that 'temple of the tabernacle of the testimony' is that state meant,—and also of Christ's coming; and so they are that 'sign of the Son of man' spoken of Matt. xxiv. And these plagues do here go before him, as in like manner the prophets use to describe his progress with plagues and pestilence before him. And therefore, if you observe it, just when the last vial approacheth, chap. xv. 15, then warning is given, 'Behold, I come as a thief,' &c.

2. It is called *another sign*: for that sign, chap. xii., was the sign of the devil's being thrown down in heathenism; but this, of the devil's throwing down out of Popery, and Christ's coming to set up his kingdom. So that we of this age do indeed stand in the midst of the times of these vials, and

so may see how much of Christ's train is gone before, and what is to come hereafter, himself being to come in the rear of all.

The *third* thing to be premised and observed is, that they are called the 'last plagues.'

Christ had three sorts of enemies to subdue, by three several sorts of plagues:—

1. Satan and his false worship, together with the heathenish empire; which he despatched by the six seals, chap. vi.

2. The Roman empire; which he ruined by the six trumpets.

3. The Pope in the west, and the Turk in the east, who succeeded in the place of the Roman (both eastern and western) empire; and for these he hath prepared seven vials. And because these are the last enemies, therefore these vials are called the last plagues.

Thus much in general; now more particularly to descend to the several contents of this chapter.

There are two things which are more eminently presented to our view in this 15th chapter:—

First, The church or company of believers standing in the temple, described ver. 2-5, and ver. 8.

Secondly, The angels, who are executioners of the vials out of that temple, described ver. 6-8.

First, For the company from among whom the angels come:—

1. They have a temple over their heads, as ver. 8, 'continually filled with smoke;' as at the first dedication of Moses's tabernacle, Exod. xl. 34, 35; and at the dedication of Solomon's temple, which was a larger edition of that which Moses had given the pattern of, 1 Kings viii. 16. To shew that during the vials there should be new erections, and editions, and reformations of the temple; unto all which God still gives the testimony of his presence. As—

(1.) When that first separation from Popery was made, and true churches were set up by the Waldenses, and smoke filled their temples.

(2.) In the Reformation made by Luther and Calvin there was a further edition of the temple, and smoke did afresh fill it also.

(3.) In the 11th chapter, ver. 1, you will meet with another reformation, and casting away the outward court; and smoke will afresh fill those new-measured temples also: God still giving new testimonies of his presence, as new editions of purer churches do come forth.

2. Their station in this temple is upon a sea of glass; which, as you heard out of the 4th chapter, was an allusion to that brazen sea in which the priests washed themselves: to shew that this company of believers, from out of which the vials do come, should be such as should still more and more purify themselves afresh in their several ages from those defilements of doctrine and worship which Antichrist had brought into the church. And they, in their several successions, discovering new and further defilements, are therefore still presented as coming forth fresh and anew out of the sea of glass; and accordingly are presented standing upon the brim, as being new come out from washing themselves, and so growing purer and purer, until they become a bride fully prepared for their Lord and King.

3. They are also presented as victors and conquerors,—for such, through pouring forth these vials, they do become,—and in the end shall fully prevail over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name; which are several degrees of Popery and antichristianism, whereof some are more gross and some more refined. All which they in like

manner do by degrees, in their several successions, go on to discover and to overcome; until by that time that these vials are all poured out, they have got a full and perfect conquest over all. And therefore, in this general description, they are set forth as those that had such a full conquest; for that, take them first and last, they shall have a perfect and complete victory over all these. The meaning is not, as Mr Brightman understands it, that this company had first got a complete victory over all these before the vials began; but this is spoken of the whole company and succession of them first and last conjunctively, the intendment being to give a general description of them, and to set down what they should do and accomplish by that time their whole time is expired, and to shew how, by that time they shall have poured out their vials, they shall obtain the victory. Thus, in like manner of speech, it is said, ver. 1, that 'in them is filled up,' or fulfilled, 'the wrath of God;' *expleta est ira Dei*. Which is spoken as if it were already accomplished and fulfilled; but the meaning is, that by that time they are all emptied, the wrath of God will be thoroughly exercised and fulfilled through them and by them. And so doth this here note out, not a full victory before the vials, but a complete victory in and through the pouring out of these vials; and that this company, ere the time of the vials is fully expired, obtains it. For the vials are themselves the means by which they do overcome; and for each degree of which victory they sing a triumphant song.

4. These 'sing the song of Moses:' for the former of the vials are allusions to the plagues of Egypt; and by that time that the fifth vial comes they will have drowned the Egyptians in the Red Sea, and so will sing that song, Exod. xv. And after that they will sing the song of the Lamb, even his marriage-song, as in the 19th chapter, (which comes in after the funeral-song of the city of Rome, or the fifth vial in chap. xviii.,) ver. 6, 7, 'Let us be glad and rejoice, for the marriage of the Lamb is come;' that is, is approaching. Or this song may refer to the doctrine of the gospel, which now began to be taught among them more clearly; for Moses's song, Deut. xxxii., was doctrinal; and so in the Old Testament it was ordinary to utter matters of doctrine in songs. And thus in this book the doctrine of the church is still expressed, and is called a song. And so whereas, during the dark times of Popery, they sung as it were a new song, differing from Popish doctrine, yet so confusedly that none could learn it, as chap. xiv. 3: now they have the everlasting gospel to preach, as chap. xiv. 6, and they sing Moses's song and the Lamb's distinctly; they preach the law and the gospel clearly and rightly, and make manifest his *δικαιώματα*, which we translate *judgments*, but signifies his *justifications* (as Rom. viii. 4) of poor sinners made manifest, as ver. 4. The doctrine of justification by Christ being eminently revealed and made known in the time of these vials, and the works of redemption most clearly manifested.

And, moreover, these do also set up Christ, both in himself and in his relations to his church; as calling him—

1. The Lord Almighty; 2. King of Saints; 3. The only Holy One. And so—

1. As the only ruler and lord of his church; 2. And king that must give laws unto it; 3. As the fountain of all grace and holiness: in a word, as a God only to be believed in and worshipped, as being only and alone holy. They magnify nor saints, nor temples, nor the Pope; no, nor any creature whatsoever. For so, Jer. x. 7, the like speech is uttered in opposition to all false gods; and therefore, say they, 'Who will not fear thee?' or worship thee, and that according to thine own ways prescribed in thy word, and not

according to men's inventions. 'Just, and true, and righteous are thy ways,' that is part of their song, and all superstitions and human inventions in worship are false. So says David, 'I hate every evil way, but thy law do I love,' as being only true and righteous, Ps. cxix.—Thus much for their song.

Secondly, The description of these angels, and their preparations to pour out their vials, you have from ver. 6 of this 15th chapter to the end, as you have the execution and pouring out of their vials in the 16th chapter.

The angels are described as 'clothed in white,' as priests, and 'girt with a golden girdle' of alacrity, strength, sincerity, and truth; for in Scripture men are said to be girt with all these. And 'one of the four beasts'—that is, of the officers of the churches, whose mouths in praying the officers still are—is said to 'give these vials unto these angels,' in that theirs and the church's prayers do fill up these vials in their several successions. And the plagues they execute are said to be in vials, both because the prayers of the saints do fill up the wrath poured out,—for, chap. v., the vials are interpreted the prayers of the saints,—and also in allusion to the expression in the Old Testament, where God's wrath is described by a cup or vial in the hand of the Lord; as often in the Psalms you have it. And Rome's sin being expressed by 'a cup of abomination in her hands,' her plagues are therefore fitly expressed by vials and cups of wrath, irresistibly poured out upon their heads from heaven. And they are said to be 'filled with the wrath of God, that liveth for ever and ever,' for that these plagues are spiritual as well as corporal, as I shall shew, and are but the beginnings of an everlasting wrath, as that fire from heaven upon the Sodomites is said to be 'an everlasting fire,' and so called by Jude.

Again, these vials are said to come 'out of the temple;' that is, out of the church or churches then erected. Which because it follows the mention of the 'opening the temple of the tabernacle in heaven,' therefore some have mistaken it, as if these angels had come out of the 'temple of the testimony,' mentioned ver. 5: whereas that temple there is, by way of distinction, called the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony, even the holy of holies; and the opening of that temple, not spoken in relation unto the angels coming out, as opening upon their coming forth, but for the discovery of the ark, as you have it interpreted under the seventh trumpet, chap. xi. 19, in allusion to the holy of holies, which was kept veiled. Now, by that 11th chapter, it evidently appears that the vials are poured out before the opening of this tabernacle of the testimony in heaven. For, ver. 5, 6, you read of four vials before the killing of the witnesses; and the fifth vial is after their rising; and the passing away of the second woe is the sixth vial; and then the seventh vial and the seventh trumpet are all one, as hath been oftentimes shewed; and then comes the tabernacle of the testimony, or holy of holies, to be opened, and the ark to be discovered and seen in it, ver. 19 of that chapter. And in like manner here also, the opening of this tabernacle is said to be *μετὰ ταῦτα*, after these things,—that is, after these vials,—which is a phrase in this book always noting out things in a several succession performed, and a differing vision, as chap. iv. 1, and chap. vii. 9; and the mention of it comes in here only to shew the event of these vials. The temple therefore that these angels come out of is at the purest but the temple of priests; and yet 'filled with smoke from the glory and power of God,' it betokening his special, glorious, and powerful presence in and with the church during the time of the vials, which the smoke that filled the temple at the dedication was a sign of. And this smoke here implies, and is the sign of, three things:—

1. Of God's *presence* in these churches ; so, Isa. iv. 5, under the allusion to the smoke in the temple, God's presence in his assemblies under the New Testament is there spoken of. And here it is interpreted the glory of the Lord : for so it follows, 'the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of the Lord ;' that is, his glorious presence, which, Isa. vi. 1, is said to fill the temple.

2. Of God's *defence* and protection of his church ; and therefore it is here also added, 'and from the power of the Lord.' So that none can enter in to hurt them within the temple. And thus also, Isa. iv. 5, the smoke is interpreted 'a defence ;' and, ver. 6, there is said to be 'a covert and a refuge from the storm,' &c.

3. Of *offence* also to their enemies. So in the 18th Psalm, smoke is made a sign of God's anger and wrath ; 'a smoke ascended in his anger.' And so, whereas it is said, that 'no man was able to enter into the temple,' one probable meaning of that expression, to me, is, that whereas God poured forth upon the enemies of his church vials of wrath, and these plagues were rained abroad upon them,—against which this temple, as was said, was the only refuge and covert, men still using to fly unto the temple, and to the horns of the altar, as being their sanctuary,—God in his just judgment hardeneth, and so keepeth those his enemies of the Popish party from joining themselves to this his temple ; so that they, through the obduracy of their hearts, of which you may still read in the vials, are not able to enter into it, and so perish, and are destroyed by these plagues. And whereas it is said, 'they entered not in till the seven plagues were fulfilled,' the meaning is, that they never entered ; as, Gen. viii. 7, and Psalm cxii. 8, and Acts iii. 21,* *until* is put for *never*.

* Perhaps more apposite passages than any of these would be Psalm cx. 1, and Matt. i. 25.—En.

CHAPTER III.

The exposition of the 16th chapter.—A division of the vials.—The two last briefly touched.

THE execution of these two last vials doth follow the five first, from ver. 1 to ver. 12 ; and they are vials upon the beast, the Pope, and his adherents ; God by degrees plaguing them as he did the Egyptians, until the fifth falling eminently upon the seat of the beast, Rome itself, his kingdom be so darkened and despoiled of its glory and power, that although the beast may remain, for Jesus Christ himself, at his coming under the seventh vial, to have the last blow at him, and the full glory of the conquest, yet so weakened and darkened as that I believe the period of his power *to do* (as the word is in the original, chap. xiii. 5) for forty-two months, or 1260 years, is there set, and the date of his lease expired.

Now for the sixth and seventh vials : because they are further off to come, and that the seventh vial, and the preparation unto it, from ver. 13, belongs to the kingdom of Christ, as being the immediate making way thereunto, therefore I will but briefly touch upon these, and despatch them first. The five first, especially the fourth and fifth, being those that concern these times, and which chiefly serve for the opening the 11th chapter, I shall treat more largely upon.

Now the sixth vial is upon the great river Euphrates ; that is, the Turk, whom the sixth trumpet left standing in the east. And he is compared to the great river, (which is the epithet given to the river Euphrates in the Old Testament,) as the Assyrian monarch and his army are called in Isa. viii. 7 ; and to the river Euphrates, for his first seat was, as you heard out of chap. ix. 14, upon that river. Now this river is to be dried up for the kings of the east, the Jews, to possess their own land, according to that prophecy of their last conversion, Isa. xi. 13, 14, compared with the 15th and 16th verses of the same chapter.

The seventh vial is general, upon the air, the whole power of Satan all the world over. The relics both of Turk and Pope, and of all the church's enemies throughout the world, as ver. 14, mustering up all their forces against the Christians in the west, and the Jews in the east, are to be overthrown by Jesus Christ himself and his armies ; as you may read more at large in the 19th chapter, from the 11th verse to the end, that being an explication of this vial, the last upon the world, as the 18th chapter is of the fifth vial, the most eminent upon the beast.

SECTION I.

Seven things premised for the understanding the five first vials, which are upon the beast and his company.

Now for these five first vials upon the beast, Antichrist, and his adherents ; I shall premise these things for the true understanding of them :—

First, That for the times of them, they, as was said, began with the times of the first separation from Rome, recorded chap. xiv. 6, and so do indeed contain all those steps and degrees of ruining Antichrist, first and last, from the first time of the church's attempting to come forth out, and separating from this Egypt. And therefore the three first vials are an allusion, as you shall see in the next premise, unto those plagues which Moses and Aaron, in bringing Israel out of Egypt, executed upon the Egyptians; and so do refer to the times of the church's separation and first reformation. It appears also from the thing itself; for how can we think that all those discoveries of the whore's nakedness, and the falling off of these kingdoms from her—although they for a time should begin to court her again—should not be reckoned among the vials, they having been well-nigh as great plagues as are like yet to befall her, except that her last ruin?

And it appears likewise from this, that in the vintage of the 14th chapter, we find, as was observed, mention made of the angel of the fourth vial. Therefore the times afore that vintage must belong unto those three vials which preceded this fourth. And for the time of the beginning of them, whether at the harvest, or the voices of those angels that made the separation, the Holy Ghost hath not left us without some character whereby we may discern it, in the story of that 15th chapter, where the song which the church sings, when the vials do begin, is, as you may see it there, 'Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest,' &c. Of which this is one meaning,—though there is another,—that the plagues of these vials now beginning, the judgments of God are made manifest. Now see what the voice of the first angel is, he who began the first separation from Antichrist, and first preached the gospel to every nation, chap. xiv. 6, 7. His message unto all nations is, 'Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgments is come: and worship him who hath made heaven and earth.' That angel did but begin to give warning to Antichrist and his company of the vials that approached. But then observe the voice of the second angel, and you will find that the first vial did begin as the effect of these two angels' preaching. For this second not only calls Rome Babylon, and discovers the Pope to be Antichrist, but says, 'Babylon is fallen, is fallen;' that is, the foundation of her ruin is laid. Now here began the first vial, even in this discovery of him to be Antichrist, whom before that the superstitious world did never so much as suspect.

And whereas it is said, 'Babylon is fallen,' the Scripture speaks of a thing as done when the foundation of it is laid. So the western empire is reckoned as taken away then when the wars of the Goths began, and when the first of the ten kingdoms was broken off from the empire, anno 410; as was before said in the exposition of the 13th chapter. And the Pope is from that time reckoned to rise with his ten horns, though it was forty years after ere all the ten kingdoms were fully erected; yea, and seventy years after ere the power of the western empire was wholly extinct. Thus in the like manner, Isa. xxi., the prophet says of old Babylon, 'She is fallen,' he prophesying at the very time when the Medes first revolted from that monarchy, and began to set up a kingdom of their own, which afterward was to destroy Babylon, being also enabled thereto by that revolt. Now so is it here: when the first open and professed revolt from Rome, as from a second Babylon, was made by our predecessors, then was the foundation of her fall laid; then, says the angel, 'Babylon is fallen;' and so there begins the first vial, for the vials are the means of ruining of it.

A *second* thing to be premised is, That these vials are expressed in an allusion unto the plagues executed in Egypt by Moses and Aaron; of which the first were not so great, but they ended in the drowning of those Egyptians in the Red Sea, even as these do in the utter ruining of the seat of Antichrist.

The first is upon the earth, and the effect of it a noisome and grievous sore on the men who have the mark of the beast; in allusion to that plague of throwing dust in the air by Moses, which caused a botch on man and beast then in Egypt.

The second on the sea, and the waters thereof.

The third on the rivers and fountains, turning all their waters into blood. All this is a manifest allusion unto that turning the Egyptian rivers, &c., into blood by Moses.

The fourth is upon the sun, and tormenteth men with fire. Which may be an allusion to the punishment of Sodom. For so in the 11th chapter, where these four first vials are enumerated, ver. 5, 6, the antichristian state is called Egypt or Sodom. Or rather it alludes to Moses's consuming by fire that company that offered up strange fire in the wilderness, when they were come out of Egypt.

A *third* thing to be premised is, That as in the trumpets the Holy Ghost compared the empire to a world, so here in the vials he useth the same comparison, comparing the kingdom of the beast, and the several parts of it to be plagued, unto several parts of the world. And as the four first trumpets were so many degrees of ruining the western empire, so are these vials of ruining the beast's world or empire. The first trumpet was on the earth, the second on the sea, the third on the rivers, and the fourth on the sun. And whereas it was there shewed, that in Scripture any kingdom or body is usually compared to a world, which hath an earth and heavens, &c., wherein what is lowest is the earth, and what is highest is the heavens, the sun and stars, &c.; so in that empire then, and now in this antichristian kingdom here, the parts of it are compared to an earth, sun, sea, rivers, &c.

Fourth premise. And as I observed in the 13th chapter, that the Pope and his company were resembled by a double beast, one representing the political state of these ten kingdoms, which made up one body under him as a head; and the other the spiritual state of his church and clergy, as they call it, which make up a distinct body under him as their high priest and spiritual head: so, answerably, this his earth, and rivers, and sun, which are the parts of these his kingdoms, may, according to the analogy of this representation, be interpreted in a double sense; either his spiritual earth, sea, &c., or his political earth, sea, &c.

Fifth premise. Seeing that in the 11th chapter, ver. 8, his kingdom is called spiritual Egypt and Sodom, and this in relation to these very plagues of the vials, which are enumerated there, ver. 5, 6: 'The city,' says he, 'which is spiritually called Egypt and Sodom;' and that is more than merely or allegorically such, it importing that this his kingdom is a spiritual Egypt and a spiritual Sodom;—and it is a state, we know, that claimeth spiritual jurisdiction in spiritual things, and over the souls of men, as chap. xviii. 13 hath it, and not only or principally in things outward and political, but *in ordine ad spiritualia*, in order to things spiritual: now therefore the plagues (and so these vials, they being the plagues upon this Egypt and Sodom) upon this city, must needs be understood of spiritual plagues, upon the souls and spirits of Antichrist's adherents, as well as outward. For they must be answerable to the Egypt upon which they are plagues; yea, and

seeing that it is both a spiritual state, and yet withal a temporal kingdom also for outward power and pomp, having an earth, sea, &c., as other worldly kingdoms have; therefore they shall have double plagues, spiritual and outward also, on their spirits and also on their outward worldly kingdom. Even thus it became the righteous God, as in relation to these plagues he is called, chap. xvi. 5, to proportion their plagues to their sins, and so to 'double unto her double according to her works,' as the phrase is, chap. xviii. 6. For him to ruin this beast and his adherents but outwardly only, as he hath done other monarchies, was not enough; for he sinned, not only in assuming outward power, pomp, and glory, and a kingdom like to other monarchies, under the name and pretence of having Christ's power, but a spiritual kingdom also. The merchandise of this city was not only gold and precious stones, &c., chap. xviii. 12, but likewise the souls of men too, as it is there. She traded in spirituals as well as temporals; and therefore the highest spiritual judgments, as well as temporal, shall befall that state, and the abettors of it. And as the plagues of Pharaoh and his Egyptians were spiritual, in the hardening of their hearts, as well as temporal; so such a spiritual hardness and impenitency is made mention of in some of these vials, as well as outward plagues. And therefore they are also said, chap. xv. 7, to be 'the wrath of God that liveth for ever,' an eternal wrath seizing upon the souls of them on whom they are poured. And such are these four first vials, and so to be understood both of spiritual and temporal plagues.

I mention the four first especially, because there where this city is called spiritually Egypt, these four are enumerated; namely, chap. xi. 5, 6. And as it is evident that these vials are in that 11th chapter to be understood spiritually, so it is as evident that the same vials, as here in chap. xvi. they are made mention of, are to be understood of outward plagues, and so meant of both.

Sixthly, For the right understanding these vials, I premise, That though there be a first, second, and third vial in order succeeding each other, and which in a successive order begin after each other, and have some special precise time for their eminent pouring out and execution; yet so as some sprinklings of the first may continue still under the second, third, and fourth, and some relics of the second under the third, fourth, &c., and so of the rest. And this seems evident to me, in that their sores begun under the first vial are made mention of under the fifth vial, ver. 11 of that chapter. And so in like manner the same effect, namely, blaspheming, which is a part of the fourth vial, and an effect of it, is also continued in a further height under the fifth. And so again, on the contrary, it may fall out that some droppings of a succeeding vial may begin in the times of the vial foregoing it, and go before, as the droppings of storms do, before their strength and fulness comes; and so may these, before the extremity of pouring forth the vial itself. As for example, during the times of the fourth vial some droppings of the fifth may begin, and some preparations to it, though still the fulness of that and every other vial hath a special time in its due order succeeding.

The *seventh* and last thing to be premised is, That all the plagues on the Popish party, first and last, are reducible to one of these vials. For, chap. xv. 1, they are said to be 'the last plagues, in which the wrath of God is fulfilled' upon that party; and so every drop and sprinkling of wrath and vexation poured out goes to fill up some vial or other, as a part of it.

SECTION II.

A particular and more large explication of the five first vials on the beast and his company.

Now for a more particular explication of them :—

The first vial is principally upon the beast's *earth*, the lowest part of his kingdom; and this, according to that rule given, both spiritual and political. Now this vial was the effect of those first and second angels' preachings, chap. xiv., especially of that second angel there. For the preaching of the gospel, and the discovery of the Pope to be that Antichrist, did draw away many of his inferior subjects, and of the common people in all kingdoms, namely, the ten European kingdoms, which are his earth political. And so his authority and interest in the hearts of the people all Europe through was weakened, and the number of the worshippers of the beast lessened. So as all the world did not now, without contradiction, go after him as they had wont. And there was an effect of this vial also upon his spiritual earth; which his clergy were. For the Waldenses and their followers, by their preaching in those ages, discovering the uncleanness, idleness, and hypocrisy of the priests, monks, and nuns, who were the beast's enchanter, they did, as it were, cast up dust in their faces, as Moses did; and so they brake out in botches, and became odious to all the people. So speaks the vial, ver. 2, 'There fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men that had the mark of the beast.' Now they are properly his clergy, who, being exempted from the civil power, are more peculiarly his subjects and sworn vassals; and, indeed, by ordination do receive from him a character indelible—for this, see the exposition upon chap. xiii.)—who are also called the worshippers of his image, they being the upholders of his idolatrous doctrine. And, accordingly, we find in story that all those first gossellers before Luther made it the chiefest subject and end of their writings and disputes, to render odious and vile the pharisaical Popish clergy, as in the *Book of Martyrs* abundantly appears.

Neither was this judgment merely outward, as only bringing shame through such an outward discovery of their hateful and abominable iniquities, which was also the beginning of their ruin, for it made way for it in all men's hearts; but further, it is most certain, that the effect of the light of the gospel, which in their preaching was discovered, proved really a curse unto this Popish clergy, in order to this their breaking forth in filthiness and botches: in that for this their not embracing it, but shutting their eyes against it, God gave them up, by way of a curse, unto all manner of gross sins, of uncleanness, sodomy, &c., so as after this to commit them with more greediness than before this preaching of the gospel; even as he did the Gentiles, Rom. i.: because 'they withheld the truth in unrighteousness, therefore he gave them up *the more* unto vile affections.' So these, after the first light of the gospel began to dawn, they daily brake out into botches and boils more than ever they did before. And thus this vial was a spiritual judgment upon them, as well as an outward, in discovering their sores unto their shame. And this is the first degree of their spiritual judgment under the first vial.

The second vial is upon the *sea*. And this is the fruit and effect of the third angel's preaching, namely, Luther and his followers; who as in their doctrine they were raised up to a greater light, comparatively to the former, so the fruit of their doctrine was a further plague, both upon the political

and spiritual sea of the beast. The sea, in a kingdom or body politic, is put for jurisdiction over many people, as was shewed in the second trumpet, chap. viii. ; and so here the sea of the beast are those many kingdoms, and peoples, and nations, and tongues, which she sits upon, as you may see it expounded, chap. xvii. 15. Now after Luther's preaching, and his followers', not only particular persons, as before, were divided from the Pope, but whole nations were rent from him, as England, Germany, Sweden, Scotland, &c., and his sea lessened by a third part and more ; and some of the ten horns of the beast wrung off, so becoming like as members when divided from the body, and, as the similitude is, ver. 3, to express that division, as 'the blood of a dead man.' And every living thing died in those seas divided from him ; in that now those of the Popish faction could not, through the alteration of religion by law, live in their idolatrous worship, so quietly, safely, and peaceably as before. There was no free living or breathing for them in these separated kingdoms.

And in like manner his spiritual sea also had a vial poured upon it, even his abominable doctrine and worship ; as the doctrine of purgatory, indulgences, merit, &c., in which, as in the sea, his merchants—namely, his priests—had brought in gain, both to themselves and to the Pope's custom-house, as the expression is, chap. xviii. 17.

This sea of the beast's doctrine is turned into blood, and does, like the blood of a dead man, begin to putrefy and stink ; yea, and, which is a further plague, to be damnable. Insomuch that those who, after so clear a light of the gospel now discovered, will still continue in that doctrine, die and perish eternally. And so in that sense also it is true which is said, ver. 3, that 'every living thing died in the sea.' And see how this agrees with the preaching of the third angel, chap. xiv. 9, 10 ; he preaching, that not only that Rome was Babylon, as the former was, but that 'if any one did worship the beast or his image, the same should drink of the wine of God's wrath.' And by that wrath is meant hell : for it follows, 'the smoke of their torments ascends up for ever and ever ;' that is, now they shall be sure to be all damned who know the truth but embrace it not. And this was a further spiritual punishment upon them, above what their doctrine was unto them in former times, wherein through ignorance men remaining, many more of them were saved than now there are.

The third vial is upon the *rivers and fountains* ; that is, those who serve to enlarge or any way recover that his sea again, or to sweeten it. They are therefore called rivers, because as rivers run from the sea into the sea again, so do these.

I shall now explicate both the rivers and fountains severally.

First, For his *fountains* . they are the lesser springs ; and those—

1. The spiritual ones. When the Egyptian waters were turned into blood, we read that they digged fountains and wells ; and that they also were turned into blood by Moses. So here, they, when their sea is become bloody, dig fountains to live in. Which fountains are their writings and writers since the Reformation, that with learning and eloquence would labour to sweeten and make good some of their sea-waters again ; but in vain, our writers again confuting them, and turning all into blood, as it was before. So as still those among them that shall read the one and the other, cannot but so be convinced, that if they persist still in their doctrine they will be damned, as the curse is, 2 Thess. ii. 11, 12.

2. Their fountains temporal and political also. Such we may account those politic agents, the Jesuits, and others that have, in all these separated king-

doms, attempted to restore this his lost power and jurisdiction. And the lesser springs, namely, particular persons, have many of them been turned to blood, whilst laws enacted against them (in England, 1581 ; in Holland, 1586 ; in France, 1584 ; and again in England 1605) cut off many of them, and gave them blood to drink, many of them being martyred ; insomuch that they have a martyrology, or book of martyrs, even as we have. Thus they have had a just reward, as the angel from the altar cries, ver. 7 ; that is, true worshippers in churches, who through their prayers had procured these edicts, and therefore do now return the praise unto God's justice, in retaliating to them and upon them. That phrase, 'from the altar,' notes not out martyrdom, as some think, neither here nor chap. xiv. 18,—but this phrase, 'the souls under the altar,' is that which importeth martyrdom, as chap. vi.—but *altar* is here put to signify worship ; and so, the angel out from the altar, or place of worship, is put to signify those public worshippers and priests of God that stand at the altar, or in public assemblies, and give thanks for these judgments upon all occasions. Their acclamation is, that as they had dealt by us, so now themselves were dealt with ; and, indeed, just in the same manner : for they had singled out particular persons, and put them to death by bloody laws established ; and these kingdoms, being fallen off, have enacted the like, and put them to death in the like public manner.*

In the second place, this third vial is upon his *rivers* also, and greater streams, namely, those armadoes and navies from out the sea of those kingdoms that continue still to uphold the beast, and endeavour to lay all kingdoms into this one sea again. As the Spaniards, both against England in '88, and against Holland often since, sent out to regain Rome's jurisdiction ; who yet have still been defeated. And unto this head may be reduced the defeatment of that late navy, 1639, sent forth to the same end, as a sprinkling of this vial—though now be the times of the fourth vial—still going on, according to the rule given in the *sixth* premise.

The fourth vial is upon the *sun* ; and to the angel that is executor of it, there is 'power given to scorch men with fire.' The effect whereof is their blasphemy. This vial seemeth to me to have two distinct parts :—1. The effusion of this vial upon the sun. 2. The scorching with fire those that adhere to the beast. And according to my former general rules, I do interpret it both of outward and of spiritual plagues, and both of them falling on the Popish party ; and so the former part of the vial to import an outward plague, and the latter a spiritual punishment. Now—

1. For the vial upon the sun. The sun here, according to the *third* premise or rule given, may be put for the more illustrious light or prince adhering to the Popish party, and shining in his political heaven, whereof he is the great god or Jupiter. And this must be either the emperor, or the king of Spain, or, as it may be, both ; they both being of the same family of Austria.

The issue of these German wars, when the Popish party shall once have had blood enough given them to drink, shall be either the ruin of the one or the other, or both ; and if not of them both, then of the Austrian family in Germany, as Mr Mede first well conjectured ; though it may be the hint of his conjecture might have been taken from what was Mr Parker's opinion of this vial long before ; who interpreted this sun to be some Protestant prince in Germany, who should first have a part of this vial poured upon him by

* It can scarcely be necessary to point out that the author's manifest approbation of persecution and persecuting ordinances, is a blot that, originally derived from Rome, long attached to the Reformed churches.—ED.

the Popish party; but being thereby provoked, and afterwards raised again, should, like the sun, scorch them with his heat, and so only the latter part of this vial should fall on them. Thus Mr Parker, anno 1616, did first interpret this vial, long before these German wars. But I do much rather incline to Mr Mede's opinion, because these vials are wholly peculiar to the beast and his company, and to those professed enemies of the church who adhere unto him. And so this first part of the vial upon the sun cannot be understood of any Protestant, but of those that do adhere to the beast, even as well as the latter part of it, 'scorching them with fire.'

Now if this sun be one of these two, either the king of Spain or the emperor, I rather take the latter: for the king of Spain, though now the greater light in the present horoscope, and so would, rather of the two, seem to be this sun; yet considering those more elderly and former times, the empire of Germany hath, for this 800 years, been the eminentest principality in Europe, and hath upheld the Pope the most, and in those times done more that way than any other king, though indeed some of the emperors opposed the Pope. Now God, in bringing punishments on kings and kingdoms, reckoneth with them for what their predecessors in state have done, and respecteth former times as much if not more than present. And besides, this German empire was peculiarly of the Pope's creation, being by him set up in the first foundation of it in Charlemain; even as God is said to set up 'the sun in his firmament, the work of his hands,' Psalm xix. So the Pope may be said to have set up this sun in his. And so the ruin of the emperor is more peculiarly a punishment, respecting the papal seat and authority, than the ruin of any other prince, he having so peculiar an interest in him, as in his eldest son and chief begotten.

This vial Mr Mede thought to have been in execution in that great prevailing of the king of Sweden against the emperor, whose death diverted many men's thoughts from that interpretation. But surely, though he proceeded not to throw down that sun from his heaven, yet those glorious victories of his, and quelling of the Popish party, may well be accounted in itself a vial, although it should proceed no further, and such a darkening of this sun as he will never more recover his ancient glory and splendour. And that king did lay such a foundation of weakening his power as may end in the utter ruin of that family in the issue of these wars. Others have interpreted this vial to be upon the Pope's own temporal and spiritual authority, which is his sun or chief glory; for so *sun* in the Old Testament, and the darkening of it, is put for glory, and the obscuring of it; as Isa. lx. 20, Jer. xv. 9. And so that power and authority which the Pope once had in temporals is here to be understood; he so eminently and conspicuously shining over princes in their temporal power, that, as their own decretals speak, they used to call the Pope and the emperor the two great luminaries in heaven, the sun and the moon, entitling the Pope the sun and the emperor the moon. But how hath this his glory, in the consciences of his own vassals, and in the eyes of those princes who sometimes were subject to him, waned more and more; which now at last may haply grow yet more dim? The whole kingdom of France ever denied him that absolute temporal power he once challenged. And in these latter times, how is the king of Spain rather become the sun, and the Pope the moon, who is glad to beg light from him, and to flatter other princes, to be by them upheld, who once flattered him, and whom he excommunicated at his pleasure? So that the Pope indeed is but the chaplain to the king of Spain, whom he makes use

of for the acquiring of a universal monarchy. But which of these, or whether both of these, are here meant, the event must judge. And thus much for the first part of this vial. Now—

2. For that other part which follows, 'and power was given him to scorch men with fire.' This hath been much mistaken; as if because the sun useth to scorch with heat, therefore that power were here given to this sun to scorch with fire, and so it should refer to the sun's heat. Whereas, I take it, it is mentioned as a distinct power given to this fourth angel; that as he hath power to pour out a vial on the Pope's sun, be it taken as political or otherwise, so also that he hath a further power given him to scorch all those with fire that shall continue to advance the Pope in these his declining times. Which, as I take it, doth, according to the rule given, properly refer to a further and greater height of spiritual punishments—and so this latter part makes up the spiritual plague, as the former did the political and outward plague—inflicted upon the upholders of the beast in the times of this vial; even upon the learned among them, especially those who now take pains to write for him, or to bring in his authority into these European kingdoms again, where the light of the gospel shines so clearly and perspicuously as they cannot but long since have been convinced of it; their *sea* being turned into blood, and discovered to be corrupt, and their writings (their *springs*) so clearly refuted and turned to blood also, that those that live in those kingdoms, and still labour to bring in Popery again, cannot but manifestly go against their own light and knowledge.

Now, to punish this so presumptuous and high rebellion against so much light still shining, and age after age increasing, the angel (or the executioners of this vial) hath power to 'scorch them with fire.' And this is manifestly interpreted, chap. xi., where the Holy Ghost, speaking of this vial, says, ver. 5, 'I will give power to my two witnesses,—who are all one with these angels,—and if any man will hurt them, fire shall proceed out of their mouths, and devour their enemies; and if any will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed.' The punishment there recited is spiritual, as all the rest there mentioned are; for they do execute it as witnesses by prophesying, and therefore this fire is said to come out of their mouths. And those other plagues, (as their stopping the rain, &c., ver. 6,) must needs be so understood, namely, in a spiritual allusion. And so this of devouring with fire notes out the highest kind of punishment that men are capable of, as being killed with a witness; 'in this manner must they be killed.' And it is also there made the punishment of a wilful sinning of men, even of those that set their wills against God, and these his witnesses. For so the emphasis is put, 'if any man *will* hurt them;' and it is twice said, as making them go wholly and fully against knowledge, and so to sin wilfully.

Now both this here and that in chap. xi. do seem to be an allusion either to the fire of Sodom, the city being called spiritually Sodom, which, Jude 7, is called 'the vengeance of the eternal fire,' because that fire that came down from heaven upon the Sodomites was but a beginning of hell unto them, and a type of it unto us; or else, to which I rather incline, it is an allusion unto that fire that came out of Moses's mouth, namely, at his prayer, unto Nadab and Abihu, for offering strange fire unto God, Lev. x. 1, 2, and upon Korah's company, Num. xvi., when they said, 'All the people are holy.' Which, Heb. x. 27, 28, is brought in as the type to express their punishment who sin wilfully after the knowledge of the truth, and so sin against the Holy Ghost: ver. 26, 'If we sin wilfully, after we have received the knowledge of

the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment,' (*ἐκδοχή κρίσεως*), or receiving judgment in their own consciences, which he there calls 'fiery indignation, that shall devour the adversaries,' *ὑπεναντίους*, underhand adversaries, (so the word is), as that company was unto Moses, pretending to be for God and his people. 'All the people are holy,' say they, and so themselves were. And that unto this 'fiery indignation' that fell on that company, the Apostle's allusion there was,—who in that epistle openeth many types,—as making it a type of the torment and punishment of such kind of wilful sinners under the New Testament, is evident by what follows in the next verse, 'He that despised Moses's law died without mercy under two or three witnesses; then of how much sorer punishment shall he be thought worthy,' &c. Now, bring but Paul's exposition of that type there unto this allusion that is used both in chap. xi. and also here, and it helps fully to expound this part of this vial, as I shall shew when I come to open the 11th chapter, ver. 5, unto which I must refer you for the full exposition of it.

As Paul there calls this sin a sinning wilfully, so, chap. xi., their sin is expressed twice by the malice of the will. And that it is this sin, or at least a high kind of presumptuous sinning against knowledge, accompanied with terror, that is here meant in this vial, chap. xvi. 8, 9, appears further also by the effect here mentioned,—namely, their 'blaspheming the name of God, who hath power over these plagues.' Now, blaspheming the Holy Ghost, or the workings of him in others, knowing they are his works,—as here these do blaspheme God, knowing they are his plagues,—this is the very spirit of this sin. And then final impenitency is here also added as the effect of it; that they 'repented not.' So that it is presumptuous sinning at least that is here meant.

And you may further observe, that this plague goes on in the fifth vial; and this sin against knowledge grows up to a further height under that vial, for there they are so 'scorched that they gnaw their tongues,' as men in hell. And that in these times (the times of the fourth vial) this sin against the Holy Ghost grows very rife and common, by reason of the abundance of light and conviction that shineth in churches, hath long been the observation of godly men who have had senses exercised to discern the spirits of men growing in rage and madness, beyond the supposal of any other principle that should act them in their warped and eccentric motion and violent proceedings. And surely, how that many of the learned among the Jesuits themselves should come to commit this sin is not hard to conceive; for, in their younger years, they are bred up in ways of devotion, and have truth and light enough among them to give them a 'taste of the powers of the world to come,' who yet, after their studying our writings and discerning the truth, do, for worldly ends, wilfully go against it; and being once engaged in those ends they fall to despise the truth, and are given up unto a wilful sinning of this great sin, through a just hand of God upon them, they being ordained to grow worse and worse as their light increaseth, even as it became God under these vials to punish them.

And so, as that first small and weaker light under the first vial being rejected, their punishment was a giving of them up unto gross sins; and then, further, under the second and third vials, their doctrine having been, by a clearer discovery, made to the persists in it damnable; nothing was now left, they yet persisting, and God being engaged to rise higher in his plagues, but that God should strike hell-fire into their consciences, and seal up reprobation unto them. And thus it became him not to leave these opposers and

murderers of the saints and holy witnesses of God in all ages till he had given many of them up to this sin, of all other the highest, so to make full the measure of their iniquities, before that kingdom and state be finally ruined; as he did the Pharisees in that last age, when he meant to bring on them all their forefathers' killing his prophets in Jerusalem, giving them up unto this sin, as the effect of Christ's ministry, as this here of the witnesses' testimony.

But, above all, how those that apostatise and become of the Popish party, having lived and been brought up in 'a land of uprightness,' as it is Isa. xxvi., and yet 'will not behold the majesty of the Lord' shining round about them, but relinquish the truth they are educated in, and would bring in the worship and doctrine of the beast and whore, after so clear a light and powerful preaching so long enjoyed,—towards the latter end of the harvest, and summer growing more bright than ever,—who yet in hypocrisy deny this to be their aim, and yet their deeds do so manifest it that all the world accounts them Popish, and to be of his faction, and so they merit the title of the number of his name, being spirits such as Rome hath not worse in malice and enmity against God's witnesses: how a man's thoughts, I say, should excuse many of these as innocent, from presumptuous sins at least, yea, and this great transgression also, is as hard not to think it as the thing itself is hard to be thought of them. For their venom, rage, subtlety, hypocrisy, and underhand opposing the saints is such as the godly do almost generally suspect them for this sin. And, indeed, what other principle could act men so cannot well be imagined. Their case being in this worse than that of the Pharisees, in that they had been brought up in darkness and ignorance of the righteousness of God and of the Messiah, when the ministry of John and of Christ came upon them, calling on them to acknowledge and embrace Christ as the Messiah, whom, being but a carpenter's son, they never acknowledged. And yet they sinned that sin, through their smothering that new light, because their owning him would have put themselves out of credit, and have set up Christ.

But these men in this our age have been brought up in the contrary truth and light, and have both professed it, subscribed to it, and preached it; and yet they love this darkness of Popery, and embrace this carted* whore, and, courting her, would bring her into their tents in the face of Moses and of the whole congregation; and they loathe the truth of the gospel and of the faith they once received, and this in the face of the clearest sunshine and light that ever shone round about them. One would think God should destroy them visibly; but they must do one exploit for him first. Their destiny further is, that they should kill the witnesses for this their scorching them through the powerful testimony of their lives and prophecy, and so be even with them, and overcome them yet before the fifth vial comes. And though, as yet, they have not got a full victory, yet they are now a-making war, and shall prevail, and banish and disperse them among tongues and nations throughout Europe. But by that time the fifth vial comes, these witnesses in the end shall again have overcome them, who are indeed that 'number of the beast's name,' the last of all his company to be overcome, as chap. xv. 2, they being the last sort of his champions, even these 'names of men,' *ὀνόματα ἀνθρώπων*, as they are called, chap. xi. 13; and they shall be

* Probably referring to an old mode of punishing disreputable persons, who were dragged through the streets in a cart, with the executioner by their side. The guilt of these abettors of Popery was all the greater, because the abominations of Popery had been already detected and exposed.—ED.

killed instead of the witnesses at their resurrection, as the first degree and preparation to the fifth vial.

The fifth vial is upon the *throne*, or seat of the beast; which is plainly Rome itself, which was the old seat of the dragon, the heathenish empire, which Satan did, as it were, openly govern that empire under heathenish idolatry. But after that, this seat was resigned by the dragon unto the Pope, at his first rising, chap. xiii. 2; which city the Sibyls long since prophesied of should again become a sheep-cot; and the Holy Ghost, in chap. xviii., that it should be 'thrown down as a millstone, and be no more found at all,' but should become 'the habitation of devils only, and the dwelling of every foul spirit' for ever. Of this vial we may say, as the disciples said to Christ, 'Now he speaketh plainly, and not in parables,' as before; only, as the other vials are to be taken in the largest sense, so I think this is, though not in a spiritual sense, for he speaks plainly, and not in figures. And therefore, as was said, chap. xiii., in the explaining of that second beast, that not alone the Pope is that beast, but concrete, and together with him, his clergy, who make up one body with him as their head. And so it may be, that by the seat of the beast here is not only and simply meant Rome, the sea and seat of that chief bishop the Pope, but it may be extended to other seas and seats that fall together with it—namely, of such of the clergy, whether in Italy or elsewhere, as cleave unto the beast, and profess themselves of his number and company, who now, under this fifth vial, are tumbled down from their usurped seats, thrones, and dignities, together with this their head, whose whole kingdom is now become full of darkness and obscurity. Yet so as eminently Rome, the proper seat of the beast, is here intended, and in the letter of this vial held forth as the subject of it upon which it falls; and with the fall of Rome the number and time of the beast's reign and kingdom is reckoned as fulfilled—namely, his twelve hundred and sixty years allotted him 'to do' in, which years have now their period. And although the popedom remains to be destroyed by the seventh vial, yet his glory is here reckoned as gone and taken from him, and he is now reserved alive only for a further and more glorious execution. Therefore it is said, 'his kingdom is darkened,' for now he is put by his seven hills, his seat; his seven-headed kingdom is no longer reckoned of, as Mr Mede reasons. But that which hath chiefly confirmed me in the opinion that the period of the beast's kingdom is by the Holy Ghost reckoned to end with this fall of the city of Rome is, that I observe the 17th and 18th chapters are principally and on purpose added, first, to present this city of Rome in all her bravery before her ruin, as chap. xvii., and then to sing a solemn, stately, and triumphant song for her ruin and destruction, as chap. xviii. throughout. Now that the Holy Ghost should make this ruin of the city that hath so long reigned, as ver. 18 of chap. xvii., over the kings of the earth, so great a matter of triumph, and so eminent above all things else in this book, imports that the last and fatal period of that fourth Roman monarchy, of which that city was to be the seat, and the beast the last head, is here to be accounted as come, and the number of its years expired, the beast's kingdom being now as good as at an end. He may indeed raise some trouble, and again make some resistance, after the sixth vial, but reign any more he shall not; for, otherwise, this had been *pœana triumphalem ante victoriam canere*. to triumph before an assured victory, which the Holy Ghost would not have done upon this occasion, but reserved it till after the seventh vial.

But then was to come another manner of triumph, more high and glorious, for the marriage of the Lamb, when Rome's ruin and the beast's kingdom

will be forgotten. And, therefore, God ordained it to be performed at the funeral of this great whore, the city of Rome. And it is much that two whole chapters should be spent on purpose to set forth the pageants of the church's triumph over her. Surely here this great kingdom ends, and therefore, after that, the church prepares for the Lamb's marriage, chap. xix.

Now that that whore presented in those two chapters, the 17th and 18th, is this city of Rome, is evident by the last words of the 17th chapter,—the whore is that 'great city that reigns over the kings of the earth,'—and so those two chapters are but a fuller setting forth and enlargement of this same fifth vial, as being the most eminent and the most fatal of the vials upon the beast. Which chapters therefore I shall not need to spend time in explicating of, but do now hasten to the exposition of the 11th chapter, which was by me mainly intended, because that contains the state of the church, and the condition of it in these times, and those that are next a-coming upon us. And I join that next unto the vials, because these vials serve directly to expound it; and it mentioning the four first vials, goes on then to shew what shall befall the churches of the Reformation under the fourth vial, and before the fifth: with which fifth vial those twelve hundred and sixty years, or forty-two months of the Pope's kingdom, there in that chapter computed, are to end and expire, according to the notion even now given. And as the 14th chapter shewed us the condition of the church within itself to the times of the fourth vial, as was proved; so this 11th chapter begins where the 14th chapter ends. And from thence the supplement of the story of the church's various condition is to be fetched, as will appear in the opening of it.

CHAPTER IV.

The exposition of the 11th chapter, which was but briefly touched upon in the First Part, the larger explication being reserved here, as its proper place.

SECTION I.

Prolegomena.—Five generals premised for the understanding of it.

THE first is to shew *who* this angel here spoken of is, and *what* is his purpose, and *when* the time of his coming down here in this vision. And for this, know that the angel who comes down here, and delivers all the contents of this 11th chapter unto ver. 15, unto John, and that immediately by word of mouth, is Christ himself; as appears by his words, ver. 3, 'I will give power to my two witnesses,' which no created angel could speak. And observe withal, that Christ himself doth speak nowhere in this book, but only in this and in the first chapter. And, above all, observe that this is the very same angel that came to Daniel in the end of his prophecy, to confirm it with an oath, chap. xii. of that his prophecy. This, his alike gesture here and there doth argue: there, 'lifting up his right hand to heaven, and swearing by him who liveth for ever,' ver. 7; and so here, taking the very same oath, with the same ceremony also, chap. x. 6. And then you may take notice that his oath is taken about the very same thing and to the same purpose. You shall find that that prophecy of Daniel containeth, though more confusedly, the very same things that this prophecy of the Revelation does more clearly. As, namely, the tyranny of the fourth Roman monarchy, and the oppression of the church thereby, first by the heathenish empire, then under the last head of it, the Pope, of whom Daniel had prophesied, chap. xi. of his prophecy, from the 36th verse to the end; after whose time expired, as Daniel had shewn, should come in a fifth monarchy of the saints, chap. vii. All which things you have in this book, and the visions of them more distinctly presented. As, namely, how under the seventh trumpet, after the time of the beast expired, that same glorious kingdom was to come in. Thus, in the subject-matter of both they do agree; and so also in setting down the time determined by God, how long this last head, the Pope and his tyranny, should continue, do these two prophecies and these two angels both agree.

For concerning this time, and the ending of the tyranny of this last head (the Pope) over the church, after which should come in the kingdom of Christ, it is that the angel there in Daniel doth take that his oath, and discourseth of that his time, and the manner of the ending of his tyranny, in that 12th chapter of Daniel, and at the end of that whole prophecy. And, answerably, concerning the ending of that very time, and the manner of the ending of the beast's tyranny, and the succeeding of Christ's kingdom when that is ended, that is the very thing that the angel here sweareth about, and in like manner discourseth of just at the end of this first seal-

prophecy. So that his oath and speech, both there and here, are about the very same thing. And observe the accord in both: for there, Dan. xii. 7, he swears that 'it'—namely, the Pope's reign—'should be for a time, times, and half a time,' so mentioning it there confusedly, and more indefinitely; 'and when he'—that is, that last king, the Pope, the head of that monarchy, whom Daniel had last prophesied of in the foregoing chapter, from the 36th verse to the end—'shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, then all these things shall be fulfilled;' that is, then is the time when these things, which he had spoken of to be done just before Christ's kingdom, shall begin to take end and accomplishment.

Now in a direct correspondency and answerableness unto the angel in Daniel doth this angel here come down in this vision now, at the very end of that time, according to that course of time run out in this first seal-prophecy, which that angel in Daniel had sworn about; even now when this fatal period of the fourth monarchy, according to the series of this vision, was near approaching.

And first he renews the oath then taken, and swears again here, chap. x. 7, that 'time shall be no longer;' but that 'in the days of the seventh trumpet, the mystery shall be fulfilled which is spoken of by all the prophets;' that is, the fifth monarchy, or the kingdom of Christ, which was to succeed the other, of which all the prophets speak, as you have it Acts iii. 21. These words of the angel's oath do imply that, now that the visions of all times past in the former seal prophecy, from the primitive times, had brought things to the last scene of the world's time; *Now*, says he, as standing in the extremity, and towards the approaching end of all, 'time shall be no longer;' or, as Mr Brightman well interprets the word, '*Delay* shall be no longer.' Stay now but a little, says Christ; here you are at the last sands; tarry but till the seventh trumpet blows, it will end all.

And accordingly, the angel here in this 11th chapter explains distinctly, by word of mouth, what and how much that time of the Pope, mentioned in the oath in Daniel, was; and what that 'accomplishing to scatter the holy people'—which in the oath in Daniel was made the immediate forerunner of the fulfilling of all things—also was. So that indeed this 11th chapter here is, as concerning the point of time, but an explication of that 12th chapter of Daniel, at least of that part thereof, and by this angel's oath and speech there. And it is the same angel cometh here to express distinctly, as became the Revelation, what was there delivered darkly and indefinitely. And it is as if the angel here had spoken thus, or to this effect, in more plain words, for the comfort of the church:—

'Now, beloved, I come now, after so long a while worn out, to bid you to lift up your heads; for time now in these days of the sixth trumpet is expiring, and my kingdom is at the door: for the times of the beast, prophesied of by Daniel,—of which beast you shall hear more in this little book-prophecy, which is open in my hand, and which I here bring with me, and give you,—do now shortly end and determine. Daniel's period of a time, times, and half a time, allotted the beast, the Pope, the last head and king, to reign in the fourth Roman monarchy, is now in these times very shortly to expire, and with him the times of this present oppressing world. And that you, my church, may know, and have infallible warning, when the expiring of this beast's time to scatter the holy people shall be, I will both explain to you how long this time in Daniel, where it is but confusedly mentioned, is allotted him to scatter the holy people, my witnesses; and I will also tell you how or in what manner it shall be that he shall

'accomplish, as Daniel's phrase is, to scatter the power of the holy people; that is, for your comfort I will reveal to you and describe the very manner of that eminent and last scattering, which in the oath in Daniel is made the immediate sign when Antichrist's ruin and all those other things should begin to be fulfilled. And further, I will present to you what the face of the church shall be in that age immediately before the scattering the holy people, that so you may have together at once both a true compute of the time, as also of such occurrences, and such a face of the sky presented, as may be an eminent signal unto you: that when you see these things done, then know that the time is expiring and determining. And this I myself do thus immediately inform you of, because that last scattering will be so great a one as all the faith you have will be put to it: and therefore it is that I have took that oath, as it were, *now*, in these times; for that your faith had need of it to confirm it. Which oath, therefore, do you remember and have in your eye, for even now your redemption draws nigher than you are aware of.'

This is the first thing I premise.

2d Prolegomenon.

Now, in the second place, observe in how fit a scene or place in this comedy, or vision of all times successively, hitherto acted before John, and by him penned for us, doth this angel Christ here take to enter upon the stage, and act this part in. You before heard at large how that the seals and trumpets, chap. vi.—ix., contained one prophecy, that ran over all the times from John until the end; and then, that the little book that is open in the hand of this angel here, chap. x., doth contain another prophecy of the church, which in like manner begins at the times of John, and so again runs over all times unto the end.

Now this angel steps in now, just now, as in the last age, and towards the expiring of the sixth trumpet, and so of that first revolution of all time, with his new or second prophecy in his hand ready to be delivered. And yet because that some sands or space of time remained under the first prophecy not yet completed, he therefore in this, as a convenient season between both, fills up that little space of time that this first prophecy had yet left to continue, with an additional discourse of his own, to inform the church what special occurrences were now, before the final consummation of all under the seventh trumpet, to fall out in this small interim, as a warning to them when the end of all, even of both prophecies, (viz. of this seal-prophecy and also of that other book-prophecy,) should be.

Now the sixth trumpet, which is the Turkish empire, we yet see standing. An utter end of the Roman empire had been as completely set forth in the sixth seal as it could be; and only now the ending of it remained, and so there was no other matter of that kind, or belonging thereunto, to be added. And yet that being to continue some hundreds of years before its ending should be, and the seventh trumpet should blow, he therefore fills up that space of time until the seventh trumpet should blow, and entertains John with relating what special occurrences, that most nearly concerned his people, should fall out in the western church, over which the Pope had the dominion, now towards the end of both Turkish and Popish empire, and so in this last age, before the ending of these times. Which occurrences, though they properly belonged to the book-prophecy,—which, as was said, properly takes cognisance of matters of the church,—yet they fitly come in here between both prophecies, as the signal of the ending of the full course of both stages of

times. And when he had thus, in this discourse, filled up that remaining time in this interlude with such occurrences as were indeed yet to fall out together with it, in the times before the sixth trumpet's ending; then, I say, he concludes his discourse with this, 'The second woe is past;' that is, the time of the sixth trumpet ends also hereabouts: and so then, as in its orderly time, blows the seventh.

3d Prolegomenon.

Observe the manner of his delivering all this to John: namely, that he utters this his narration as a chorus, or as an interlocutor in a comedy useth to do his speech, and not by vision only; wherein he opens and explains what could not by vision well have been understood, and therefore gives it by word of mouth. And as thus this angel doth here, so the like doth that angel in the 17th chapter. And I the rather put together the parallel speeches of these two angels, chap. xvii., and here, chap. xi., because that, as the scope of him there was to give an interpretation and explication who the whore was, so his scope here is to give a clear interpretation of the times of this beast and whore, and the immediate tokens or signals that shall forerun the ending of them. And look, as in that 17th chapter, when one of the angels of the vials, and, as it is thought, the fifth, gives the interpretation who the beast and whore is, he doth it by a speech, merely as an interlocutor, to inform John; so here, in like manner doth this angel. Yet so, as you may also observe, that his narration here in this 11th chapter is first occasioned by a vision presented of the face and state of the church as it should be in that last age wherein these things are to be accomplished: namely, of a temple presented standing, with an outward court surrounding it, and an altar in it, and two witnesses standing before the Lord, and ministering in it. Which vision first to have been made unto John is tacitly implied, in that the first entrance of his speech begins with bidding John to arise, and to do a real act towards the temple, even to measure it. And therefore such a temple, &c., must needs have been presented to his view.

And thereupon observe, how that this vision of a temple, and of an outward court adjoined, is made the ground or occasion of the angel's following speech; as from which the angel takes the rise of his following discourse. So that this vision of the temple's measuring, and giving its outward court to the Gentiles, is the first occurrence that is here presented as belonging to that age wherein time is to expire, as from whence he takes the ground of that his discourse, wherein he explains how much time the beast was to have, and how and when it should end. Which discourse, after that explained, closeth again with the relation of another occurrence, ver. 7, that shall fall out after this, in that age, as the last signal of all. And this is done just in the like manner as, chap. xvii., one of the angels of the seven vials, who therefore must be supposed to stand in the times of the vials, being to make a description of the beast, and of the whore,—namely, Rome, the seat of the fourth monarchy,—in all the times allotted her; yet takes his rise from a vision of that whore, as then in her last old age, and in the times of the vials, she should appear, 'drunk with the blood of the saints,' just before her ruin. And yet there, in that his speech about her, he speaks of her as in her whole time of reigning she should be. Just so here, this angel (Christ) first enters upon the stage but as an actor, under the times of the sixth trumpet, and in the very declension of it, and takes his oath as under those times; and then presents to John a vision of the face of the church, in that present age, under the latter times of the sixth trumpet, as of a temple which

in these present times he will have measured by John, as representing the persons of the saints of that age, and leaving out the outward court of it, as to be given again unto the Gentiles.

And then, from that occasion,—it being part of that scattering the power of the holy people which Daniel aimed at,—he plays the part of an interlocutor, and makes a narration of the whole times of Popery, which, after this their treading down this outward court of the temple, were to expire. And he takes occasion also to relate and discourse of that opposition which the witnesses should make against the beast, or these Gentiles, all the time of his whole reign; and so describes them, ver. 3–6. And all this as an interlocutor, or a chorus in a comedy, useth to do. Till at last he comes again to that last occurrence which belonged to that age wherein he stood when he began his speech,—namely, now towards the end of the sixth trumpet,—as that which should then befall these witnesses. With which he determines his speech about them, from ver. 7 to the end of the chapter. Unto the better and clearer understanding of which, all his former description of them, and what else he related concerning them, had only made the way; namely, to shew, both what that time was, which in Daniel had been so darkly delivered, and how it should end; and how, to use the phrase in Daniel, the ‘scattering of the holy people’ should be accomplished. So then—

4th Prolegomenon.

Observe how fitly the words of the oath in Daniel do agree with all the things delivered in this 11th chapter, from ver. 1 unto the seventh trumpet, ver. 15, where the angel’s speech ends.

Now those things are reducible unto two heads:—

1. This angel’s computation and interpretation of that time mentioned in Daniel; which when it ends, the fourth monarchy shall begin to end also, and shortly after it the kingdom of Christ begins.

2. Such eminent occurrences as shall fall out at the ending of it, as signals thereof. Or rather, thus:—

In the angel’s oath in Daniel, four things were intimated:—

1. The time that the beast, the last head of the Roman monarchy, should have to reign; which was ‘a time, times, and half a time.’

2. A *holy people*, who all that time should yet continue to oppose him, and whom he should oppress.

3. Who yet, towards the end, should get some power against him; so it is there called, ‘the power of the holy people.’ And—

4. Which power of theirs he should, in the ending of that time, scatter, and themselves also, and that with an eminent scattering, which yet is the accomplishment or last act of his so doing; that is, he should never scatter them any more, but after that his reign was to end, and their mourning and oppression to cease.

Now answerable to this, you here have—

1. That time, confusedly mentioned in Daniel, but here exactly computed by a double account, (not to fail,) both of months and also of days: the one, as expressing Antichrist’s whole time of reigning, even forty-two months; and the other, the holy people’s time to oppose him in, even twelve hundred and sixty days, though yet in sackcloth and oppression. But so as both have one and the same period; and as they begun, so they end together.

2. You have the *holy people* in Daniel here interpreted by Christ to be his *two witnesses*.

3. You have the *power* of this holy people all that while set forth, espe-

cially that power they obtained in their last days; ‘I will give to my witnesses,’ &c., ver. 3. They had power given them to erect a temple, backed with a mighty party of an outward court. And out of that temple they have had power given them to pour out four vials already; so as that ‘if any man hurt them, they will scorch him with fire,’ &c., ver. 5. And in the weakest days of their prophecy, they have had power to ‘shut heaven, that it rained not,’ ver. 6, &c.

4. This angel here shews, how in the end of this time, when they are even about to cast off their sackcloth, and to finish their testimony against this beast, ver. 7,—so the word in the Greek is, *are about to finish*, &c.,—that then this their power shall be scattered, their outward court trodden down, and so they left exposed to the beast’s fury and outrage, to be by him ‘scattered among the nations and killed;’ which nations shall ‘see their dead bodies lying in the streets,’ &c. And then he gives a particular description of this their oppressing, unto ver. 14; telling us withal, for our comfort, that thus they shall accomplish to scatter them, being never to scatter them again any more, after they are once risen again, so ver. 11–13. And thus you see how this 11th chapter is but a comment on the oath in Daniel.

5th Prolegomenon.

Lastly, observe this in general concerning the joint mention or bringing in both these occurrences, and this computation of times together. They are mentioned thus together principally and chiefly in this respect, to shew how this whole series of time should end and expire; namely, with those occurrences here mentioned. So that the angel’s scope is not simply to mention this period of the twelve hundred and sixty days, &c., only to compute it, though so also he makes mention of it; but withal to shew how that with these exploits and occurrences, or when these things here mentioned should fall out, this time was near its end and expiration. Whereby this angel here doth directly hit the very aim and scope of that his former oath taken before Daniel; which was, that with the very expiring of that his allotted time, he should accomplish to scatter the power of the holy people. And therefore he so mentions this whole term of time here, as withal to shew how it shall at last be accomplished and fulfilled; and to that end he mentions such particular exploits as this beast to his very last shall play, even till his kingdom be taken from him.

Now to explain this further:—In the 13th chapter, the beast had ‘power given him to do,’ as the word is, ‘forty-two months;’ and during that time to ‘make war with the saints, and overcome them.’ And power was given him ‘over all tongues, and nations, and kindreds;’ that is, over the ten kingdoms of Europe, ver. 5–7. Now the Gentiles here, and that idolatrous company that worship this beast, ver. 3, 4 of that 13th chapter, and that set up this power of his, are all one and the same; and their lease here, of treading down the holy city, runs, and is made, as you see, for the very same term of years here that it is there. Only mark the different scope of the mentioning of them in that 13th chapter and here: namely, that here it comes in to shew how this whole time should end, and fully be accomplished; and also with a narration of that very particular last war and victory, which this idolatrous company should obtain against the holy people, even their last scattering them before the ending of this their time. But it comes in there, as it was considered wholly and entirely, as yet through all times to be fulfilled; with all those wars and slaughters which in that whole time Antichrist should make against the saints. So in chap. xiii.

Now that the mention of these two computations of that whole time does thus come in here in relation to these last exploits and war of Antichrist, at and towards the ending of that time, is many ways evident. Of both which I shall demonstrate this severally and apart. And—

1. For the mention of their 'treading down the holy city for forty-two months;' this comes in but, as you may observe it, upon that one particular occurrence of giving up the outward court anew to the Gentiles, to this or the like purpose; as if the angel had said, 'Cast out that same outward court of the temple of this present age, which hath indeed helped against the Papists, and kept them off, but yet hath defiled the churches; leave them out, for this court is given to the Gentiles now in this last age, for them to re-enter upon and to get power over. And so with this last treading down and overcoming that outward court, which once they had possessed, but lost from their dominions, it is that they shall have accomplished that whole term of forty-two months allotted them for treading down of the holy city, namely Europe, the destined seat of this church and of their reign.' And thus their full dominion over the whole for forty-two months' space or length of time shall be made good by this, that however they had lost for a while part of their dominion over it, yet they regaining this outward court now towards the end, they will be found to have possessed the whole forty-two months, first and last. That look, as upon the giving in of the last payment, we use to make mention of the whole sum as paid; so here, upon that last eminent regaining their lost power over some of the European kingdoms, the whole term of the time of their reigning comes to be mentioned.

This I here premise, to prevent that great mistake which hath diverted interpreters from taking the measuring this temple here, and giving up the outward court, to be meant of some special occurrence to fall out, or some act to be done to the churches of these latter times; but they rather take it of the Papists themselves, their possessing throughout all ages the face of the church, which they interpret the outward court, because of this that is added, and that followeth upon it, 'and they shall tread down the holy city for forty-two months.' As if it imported, that after the outward court is given up to them, they should have so many years of reigning over it. Which if it were so, it could not be meant so particularly of the temple or church in this last age, and the outward court thereof. But this, according to the former coherence given, need not divert any man's thoughts from the present age to former times; as it hath done some men's, to think the churches of the primitive times to be the temple measured, and the outward court to be the outward face of the church, which the Pope hath possessed these 1200 years. The coherence may easily be found to be this: as if the angel had said, 'Measure anew the temple you now see standing in these last times of the sixth trumpet, and of Antichrist before his fall, and cast out the outward court thereof; for it is again given to the Gentiles: and so—namely, with this last treading down of it, and regaining, as it were, the whole anew—they shall fully accomplish their allotted time of treading down the holy city, namely, their forty-two months.'

But the removal of this mistake more fully I refer to the *Appendix* that follows. Only for the present, for a confirmation that this is, and may well be, the meaning of the coherence of these words, observe—

(1.) It is not said that they shall tread down the outward court for forty-two months; but the holy city, which is much vaster than the outward court: the greater part of which city, namely of Europe, they kept the lordship over, even when the outward court was separated from them and not yet recovered.

So that to me the outward court here is one thing, and the holy city another, though this court indeed stands in the city; even as the outward court and the temple were distinct things from the holy city of Jerusalem, though standing therein, as I shall afterwards in the particular exposition more fully shew. And—

(2.) The purpose and scope of the mention of their whole time of forty-two months here, is to shew how in this latter age it should be fulfilled and ended; even in a full power and jurisdiction over the holy city, in a re-entry on that part of it, the outward court also; which is again laid common with and unto the rest of the city. And so now it may be said of them, as of a king who reigns and hath jurisdiction over a country (suppose) for fifty years; it may be said he hath reigned over it fifty years, although some few years before the end of his reign, some of his subjects haply revolted from him, if so be he were their king before the revolt, and in the end again recovered his royalty over them; the account being taken from the beginning to the end, first and last.

And one reason why Antichrist's time of 'doing' is reckoned by months, and not by days, may be to shew, that though he hath not the whole time of his reign the same continued jurisdiction, yet by months he hath, from such a time to such a time, though not the like power all that time. For so at first the Goths interrupted him much in the exercise of his power. And then—

(3.) These words, 'and they shall tread down the holy city for forty-two months,' do fitly come in, as a just reason why this outward court is now in these last times given to these Gentiles; and so do insinuate a reason why Antichrist is thus permitted again to take possession of the most and chief part, if not all, of this outward court, so as to have fair hopes of recovering all Europe again. 'And they shall,' &c. The word *και*, or *and*, is often used as a causal particle, and notes out a reason of a thing. So then, the term of their commission over all the nations and tongues of Europe being forty-two months, and none exempted but such whose names are written in the book of life,—as you have it, chap. xiii. 7, 8,—therefore, though this outward court of carnal Protestants, and unregenerate, hath made a separation together with the true worshippers; yet they being inwardly Gentiles, and their names not written in the book of life, therefore they are given unto these Gentiles again, as being their allotted inheritance, as it were, for so long a time here mentioned; which is not fully run out as yet, in this age of the sixth trumpet, of which Christ spake this. They are yet within the bounds and date of their lease, which is forty-two months, not yet expired; and therefore they are to be re-entered upon by them. So that the mention of this their term comes thus in: as if in a suit at law, to recover one's own ground leased to one for twenty-one years, a man pleads and shews, at the eighteenth year's end, how the whole term of his lease was twenty-one years, as yet not expired; which he exhibits as a just plea why some part of it withheld from him should be restored to him, it being included in the tenure of his lease as well as the rest. Just so is it here; this outward court being within the bounds of the city, and being land belonging to the Pope by gift, for so long time,—they being not written in the Lamb's book,—and his lease of forty-two months not being expired; therefore, says the angel, here it is given or restored to him again: and so 'he shall accomplish to tread down' it, and the rest of the holy city, for forty-two months. Which are the angel's words in Daniel, chap. xii., and which this angel came to interpret.

2. And in the second place, for the mention of that other computation of 1260 days; it is yet more plain that this is brought in here principally to shew how this time should end and determine now at the last. And so that both this long description of the witnesses, and the declaring their whole time, is indeed but in order to this their last accomplishment. This is apparent by the 7th verse, which is the close of all the former narration. The words there are, 'and when they shall have finished their testimony;' that is, held out to testify, during that whole time of 1260 years. Or they may, and ought rather to be rendered, 'and when they are about to finish'—*ὅταν τελίσωσι*. Which notes out, not a full end first made, but a being about to make it. So that when they are about or near the finishing of this their testimony, then shall this befall them. And further, in that he spends the better half of his discourse in this chapter in the setting forth this one particular,—namely, their last scattering, upon the finishing their mentioned days of prophecy,—this apparently shews that this was the chief scope which that former part of his discourse had tended unto. And in that, although Antichrist, the beast, hath had many famous overcoming of these witnesses in former times, and killings also of them, yet that he should single out this, which also is nowhere mentioned in the larger book-prophecy, and yet here, and that haply not for the greatness of the prevailing in itself considered, but for its eminency in this respect, that it should be the last, and with which their whole time should end. Which also is made eminent by this, that after these witnesses had got so much ground upon the beast, and won a temple and an outward court from him, set up upon his ground, as it were; that then, after all this, this prevailing of his should fall on them. Hence it serveth as the most eminent prognostic and sign of their times expiring; and therefore is here mentioned. So that I shall conclude with this brief series of the coherence and connexion of one thing with another in these first verses.

Here is the same period of time twice mentioned, under a several computation: the one of forty-two months, the other of 1260 days, both which come all to one. But the one is mentioned as the time that the Pope and his company shall reign; and the other, as the time for the witnesses to prophesy in sackcloth. And they both come in, in order and reference, unto the two of those last occurrences, which shall accomplish the reign of the one and the oppression and mournful condition of the other.

1. Their whole time of treading down the holy city shall end with a recovery and treading down the outward court of the temple, the reformed churches. And so the mention of that their time comes in only in that respect, to shew how it ends. And accordingly the vision of the temple, and the angel's bidding John to measure it, comes in but as an introduction to the mention of this last occurrence. And then—

2. Being in like manner to mention the same time of 1260 days, as the time of the holy witnesses' prophecy, in order to their last scattering and oppression, he inverts the order, and first mentions the time of their prophecy, by way of a continued narration with what went before; and then after that, mentions their last scattering as the accomplishment of that their time. And it was fit that this mention of their whole time should first be immediately connected to the foresaid mention of their enemies' whole time, and the times both of the one and the other first set together, for that this latter serves to explain the former, which else were ambiguous and dark, as I shall shew hereafter; and especially, because these witnesses are mentioned as the continual opposites set up against these Gentiles, and as the

main butt and object of their malice. That same *xai*, ver. 3, 'and I will give power,' is used here, as often elsewhere, adversatively for *but*; as if he had said: 'Whereas they have forty-two months allowed them to tread down the holy city,—Europe, the chief seat of Christian profession,—and the witnesses in the compass of that time have won a temple and an outward court from them; yet that this allotted time of their reign may therefore be made good unto them, even to the last, they shall regain that outward court of the new erected temple separated from them; *but* so as they shall not so reign all that while as to carry it without opposition, "but I will give power to," or uphold, "my two witnesses," by their testimony to oppose them continually, though in sackcloth, that whole time of 1260 days, and even at this their last treading down the outward court, to avenge themselves of these Gentiles with fire, &c. But yet for all that, these Gentiles shall go on, and in the end of these their days prevail yet further, even over these my witnesses also; and when they are about to finish their testimony, shall kill and destroy them.'

So that the mention of their time, though it comes in a good way off before, yet is in order to this their last killing; to shew, as in Daniel, how it should be accomplished.

SECTION II.

The measuring the temple, and casting out the outward court, chap. xi. 1, 2.

§ 1.—*An explication of this double computation of 1260 days, or forty-two months; and why they are together here mentioned.*

These things thus premised, I come to interpret the contents of this chapter, from ver. 1 to ver. 15, which are reducible to three heads:—

1. This double computation of the times above-mentioned.
2. The occurrences that were to fall out in those times of Antichrist, in the age just before their fatal period, unto the accomplishment whereof those occurrences do conduce; which age, as I take it, is that that we live now in.
3. What is withal said of the two witnesses, as woven in by the angel in his discourse of them, by way of describing them, in order to the explanation of what should at last befall them.

1. For these computations of the times, both of the beast's reign, and the witnesses' oppression here mentioned; these things are to be explicated about them:—

(1.) That they are both the same term of time that in the oath in Daniel the angel intended. This appears by chap. xii. ver. 6 compared with ver. 14, for what in ver. 6 is called 1260 days, is in the 14th verse of the aforesaid chapter expressed by this, 'a time, times, and half a time.'

(2.) He makes this double computation of that time, first by months, then by days; so without ambiguity to explain how much time was meant in Daniel by that indefinite number, 'time, times, and a half.' Which, as it is laid down in Daniel, is altogether ambiguous; for who could tell what is meant by a time and times? or who could tell but that a hundred or a thousand years might be the time, and ten thousand the times here meant, they being only expressed in the plural number and indefinitely, as well as two of those times? Therefore, clearly to free it of all ambiguity, he explains this first time here by forty-two months. Now, reckoning twelve months to a year, these forty-two months make three years and a half. So then, by

time is meant a year; by *times*, two years; and by *half a time*, half a year more. And yet because there was some ambiguity in that also, in that some nations reckon but twenty-eight days in a month, whereas others reckon more,—so the Jews reckon twenty-eight, but the Egyptians thirty days,—therefore he reckons the same time by days also, even 1260 days; which forty-two months do make up, reckoning thirty days to a month.

Now all these are not solary days, that is, natural days, consisting of day and night, but the prophetic days; as in Daniel a day is put for a year, and a week for seven years, and so thirty days for thirty years, and 1260 days for 1260 years. And that thus they are to be taken appears by this, that the witnesses, ver. 9, are said to lie in the view of all nations, as being haply banished out among them, for three days and a half; and their enemies are said to send gifts one to another in the meantime. Which if they were but three natural days and a half, all this in three natural days and a half could not be done.

(3.) By joining together these two computations here, and so shewing them to be the same, he thereby clears the mention of them, as they are apart named, chap. xii. and chap. xiii., of which otherwise there might have been a doubt, whether the forty-two months, chap. xiii., had been 1260 days of years. But by thus linking them together in this 11th chapter, it is made certain that those numbers are the same.

(4.) Though both Daniel there, and the angel here, do mention only the times of the Pope's reign, who is the last head of the Roman monarchy; and not the whole time from John's days, but only the latter part of it for the last 1260 years under the Pope; yet so as this was sufficient enough for the computation of the whole time that the visions of the Revelation do run through, and served fully enough to shew the contemporaneousness of things in both prophecies, and to shew when the fourth monarchy should end, and so when the fifth should be towards its beginning. Which was his principal aim; and therefore, as in the 17th chapter, ver. 8, he explains who this beast was, and what he should be at last, so in this chapter he shews what the time of this beast's reigning is, and when it should end.

Now to demonstrate all these:—

1. This explication of this time may serve as a sufficient measure of the computation of the whole time spoken of in the Revelation. For if you know but either when this time of the Pope's reign begins or when it ends, you, who live in these latter days, may know how much time the prophecy of this whole book runs over. We know by story when John began to write this prophecy, even ninety-four years after Christ, or thereabouts. So that it is about 1550 years since John. Now 1260 years are to be allowed the beast, the Pope, from his beginning to his end. And to know when and in what age he began, the Holy Ghost hath given us a hint and character, chap. xvii.; telling us that he riseth one hour with the ten kings, which was not long after the year of Christ 400. So that 300 years are all that before that, even from John's time, do belong to the primitive times, before the Pope's reign. And then, after the end of this Pope's or beast's time, there is but the Turks' ruin to come, (which is the second woe mentioned here, ver. 14,) and then comes in the New Jerusalem. And if we who live in these last days could but know when he either begins his time or ends it, we might easily tell, at least with a conjectural knowledge, how long it will be from the incarnation of Christ unto his kingdom here on earth, which is the fifth monarchy.

2. I might also at large shew how this computation, coming in here in

this chapter, shews the true synchronising and contemporaneousness of things both in the seal and book-prophecy, which was necessary somewhere to be done, and is here in this chapter most fitly done between both these prophecies. For the sixth trumpet of the seal-prophecy is, ver. 14, made to end upon, or not long after, the ending of the Pope's reign, whose story belongs to the book-prophecy. For, says the angel there, after the rising of the witnesses, 'The second woe is past, and behold the third woe cometh quickly.' Now that second woe is the sixth trumpet of the seal-prophecy, (so chap. viii. 13,) and the passing of it away is the sixth vial in the book-prophecy, the effect of which is the ruin of the Turk, or at least a preparation thereunto by the calling of the Jews. And then the seventh trumpet begins with the seventh vial. And so, as it is probably thought, these 1260 years of the beast and the rising of the witnesses do end with the fifth vial, after which the sixth vial shall not stay long.

And it is probable that the angel's division of things into this double series, of six seals and six trumpets, is suited to his division of all times: which, from John's time to the kingdom of Christ, he branches either into the time of the beast's reign, which he defines to be 1260 years; or the time before his rising, which he defines not. For the beginning and ending of the beast's time being once known, thereby the other times foregoing, or the primitive times, might easily be computed. So as, when we know, through the help of this angel's speech in this chapter, that the book-prophecy and the seal-prophecy do meet towards their ending and closure downwards; then, how they run along upwards is not uneasy to conjecture. For the seal-prophecy being branched into two so equal divisions of six seals, chap. vi., and then six trumpets, chap. vii.–ix.; the six seals containing the story of the empire till the beast's rising, and so taking up all that tract of the primitive times before the beast's 1260 years do begin; it is therefore likely that the six trumpets do contain the story of the empire during those 1260 years in which the Pope is to reign. And then, as they end not far off from each other, as was even now shewed, so also the times of these six trumpets, and the beast's reign of 1260 years, should begin not far off of each other. Thus the mention of this one term or period of time here serves, as you see, for the measure of the computation of the whole times of this book, and both prophecies of it; and so comes fitly in between both for such a purpose.

And, lastly, the reasons why the Holy Ghost singleth out only the times of this last head, the Pope, thus to be the rule and measure whereby to sum and cast up the account of all the times of this book, are—

(1.) For that the beast's reign was to have the longest time allotted it of any monarchy after Christ, and the longest of all the heads of the Roman monarchy foregoing him; yea, it was to contain as much time as had passed from Rome's first building until his rising, and so would afford a computation of the greatest part of that time, and indeed three parts of the whole time from John until the kingdom of Christ.

(2.) The matters of this book being not so fully to be opened till about the time of the end, as it is in Dan. xii. 4; if the times of the beast, whose reign was to continue till towards the end, should then come to be known, then the whole time from John downward would be known also by them that live in these latter days, for whose benefit and comfort, as most concerning them to know it, this computation was made and here given.

(3.) This beast, the Pope, being the last head of the fourth or Roman monarchy, which but for him had failed, but was in him healed again and

restored; to know when he should end, and with him that monarchy, this would be inkling enough of the approach of Christ's kingdom, which is immediately to succeed it. To give the inkling of which, for the church's comfort in these latter days, was the thing herein principally aimed at. And—

(4.) This beast being to be the most eminent oppressor of the church in the times after Christ; therefore the computation of his time, beginning and ending, and the oppression of the witnesses by him, would be most acceptable to be known, and so be most inquired after by the church.—And thus much for the computation of the times here mentioned.

§ 2.—*The occurrences that fall out towards the expiring of these times here computed: and, first, a general view and division of them.*

As Christ was thus careful, as you have seen, to give us this computation of times; so further, for our comfort, he makes a relation of such occurrences also as should fall out towards the ending and expiration of these times: which is the second head we are to explain.

And as the computation of Antichrist's times was twofold, so answerably the chief occurrences of things appertaining to the accomplishment of those times are two:—

1. The re-giving up the outward court to the Gentiles, with the treading down whereof they are to end their whole reign and time of the treading down the holy city.

2. Their killing the witnesses, with which their 1260 days of prophesying in sackcloth do end also. The one is annexed as the signal of the period of their reign, and the ending of their forty-two months; the other as the signal of the accomplishment of these witnesses' oppression for 1260 days, with this most eminent victory of the Gentiles over them.

And then again observe how each of these occurrences have two others here mentioned with them, as conjunct appendixes to them, or occasions of them:—

1. The giving up the outward court to the Gentiles is accompanied with a measuring the temple by John, representing the godly of that age, who leaves out the outward court, as being ordained by God to be given up to the Gentiles.

2. This last killing the witnesses is much occasioned, and, in a more especial manner, enemies are provoked unto it, by the hurt these witnesses did them by fire in the times just before, as we shall see anon; in revenge of which they are encouraged to kill them.

Or, for the better conceiving all these, I cast them into this mould:—

John and the angel standing here in the very extremities of time, even the times of the fourth vial, (this age, as I take it,) wherein Antichrist's reign is drawing near to its end; John hath represented to him, as an introduction unto all that follows, the face of the church in that age, and is himself bidden to represent the work of the godly of that age towards that church. And—

1. The church in this age is represented to him as the temple standing in the holy city Jerusalem,—as it was represented to Ezekiel, chap. xl., which he also measured with a reed, as John is bidden to do here,—namely, the temple inward, in which the priest only was to come, and in which stands the altar, with a company of true worshippers; but round about it, as enclosing the temple without, lies a vast outward court, into which (as of old, the multitudes and crowd of the people of the Jews professing the true God,

so here) all sorts of professors of true worship do come. This temple, the church of this age, is moreover represented as adorned within with golden candlesticks, and two stately olive-trees, ver. 4, being two eminent witnesses and prophets that minister before God in his church. And the Gentiles, they possess the city already, and have done a long time, and are still to possess it, till their forty-two months be expired. But the temple, and the outward court about it, of late days erected in this city, they have been kept out of; and so could not come at these witnesses, who are within the temple, nor have been able to overcome and kill them, as in former times; against whom, notwithstanding, in that they have so tormented them with fire and other plagues out of this temple, they are even mad again with vexation, and an eager desire to be avenged on them. But now, before the expiring of their forty-two months, God being angry, both with the carnal gospellers in the outward court, so profanely mixing themselves with his worshippers, and laying themselves to his building and temple, and also with the carnal gosselling of the two witnesses among them, and with the imperfection of his temple building, not yet answering the pattern, and therefore intending to erect a purer temple; he—

2. Bids John, representing the godly of that age, measure the temple anew, and so begins to make a new reformation therein, more answerable to the pattern in the mount; for he is not pleased with the old one that now hath stood so long. And therefore, in this new reformation, he commands John to leave out that outward court, as intending, after his purer churches shall thus first have, as it were, excommunicated them, to give up that outward court to these Gentiles, who have already took possession of the city, and kept it a long time, but shall now again enter upon this outward court, it being within their lease and demise. And so with this overrunning the outward court of the church, shall they accomplish their reign over the whole city, being then to be driven out of all for ever, which makes them so angry, as you have it ver. 18.

And thus they having gained the outward court, which fenced and kept safe the witnesses, as from persecution by the Papists, who yet had vexed and plagued them, by shooting of wild-fire out of the temple, though they had also shot back again that which had hurt the witnesses all that while: but now the beast can come to them to overcome them and kill them quite, for their outward court was won, and so utterly scatter the power of the holy people; but yet so as with this the days of their oppression shall cease, this being the accomplishment of their years of scattering, and the last war wherein Antichrist shall any way prevail. He (the relics of him left) shall indeed make head again before the seventh vial, but it shall not come to a victory as this doth.

§ 3.—*The occurrences, ver. 1, 2, (the measuring the temple, altar, &c., and the leaving out the outward court, and treading down the holy city,) more particularly and fully explained.*

So then, here are two things to be explained:—

1. What this temple and outward court are, and what the measuring of the temple, &c., and the leaving out and treading down the outward court and city. And—

2. Who these witnesses are, what their description, and what this their last killing.

For the first; I will make good and establish what I think to be the true interpretation, and then consult those other false interpretations given of it.

It is wonderful to me to see how exactly this vision, in the whole series of it, represents the present face, the affairs, stirrings, and alterations now a-working in the churches of Europe; the type and antitype so fully answering and suiting each the other.

1. For the first; the holy city here, wherein these Gentiles have a lease of forty-two months' reign, are these kingdoms of Europe, which for these thousand years and upwards have been the metropolis and chief seat of Christian profession, as Jerusalem of old was of the worship of the true God; which, therefore, in the following part of this book-prophecy, is made, from the rise of the beast, the only stage of all, until that New Jerusalem and holy city, which comes from heaven and succeeds this; this being in the meantime the Old Jerusalem, as that the New. Yet—

2. This city, for the punishment of the world, God permits the Gentiles to tread down for forty-two months, alluding to that expression which Christ used of the sacking of that Jerusalem in Judea, by the Romans, Luke xxi. 24. Now the beast, the Pope of Rome, with his idolatrous crew, they are these Gentiles; and so called because they set up the image of that worship which was practised under heathenish Rome and Gentilism; so chap. xiii. 15. And as the hundred and forty-four thousand, the company of true worshippers, are called the Israel of God, so are these called the Gentiles; their religion and worship being, as was said, the image of the first heathenish religion, under the heathen empire, the first beast. And this city they were to have power and jurisdiction in till forty-two months were fulfilled, as in chap. xiii. appears. But—

3. Towards the end of their time, there begins a great part of this city to fall from them, though they still kept possession of the greatest part; and they lost much ground, and enclosure and separation being made from them, and within it a temple built, namely, churches separated from Antichrist, which you heard of in chap. xv. And further, as that in Jerusalem was built on the north side of that city, Ps. xlvi. 2, so is this temple built in the northern parts of Europe,—the city here meant, as was foretold in Isa. xlix. 12, and Dan. xi. 44,—for in these northern kingdoms hath been the reformation of religion.

4. Unto which temple there hath been an outward court laid of carnal and unregenerate professors, who have made the greatest show in this building, and took up so much of the room, that although true churches and temples, by reason of the true worshippers among them, have been set up, yet they have been defiled with the addition of an outward court, into which all sorts came. So that indeed these reformed churches are outward courts more than inward temples. And by reason of this their mixture, great corruptions and defects, both in the form of the temple, or church-fellowship, and impurities in the worship and about the altar, have been continued among them.

Now for the understanding of these allusions, we must know that there were belonging to the temple in Jerusalem—

1. The *holy of holies*, which was at one end enclosed and separated from the rest of the temple, after the manner of our cathedral quires.

2. The *body of the temple*, whereinto came the priests only; and in which stood the altar of incense, which was answerable to the body of our cathedral churches, compassed by the inner court: wherein—

3. There was a larger *outward court* encircling the whole temple, into which the people of all sorts, both men and women, did come. And this was answerable to the churchyards which go round about our churches.

Now this third and last court is that which is here said to be without; that is, without the compass of the temple. And it is called the 'great court' going round about the other, namely, encompassing the inward court of the priests, and the holy of holies; thus, 1 Kings vii. 12, it is expressly called. And it is by Ezekiel called the 'outward court' very often, in distinction from the inward court or temple where the altar was; which, in distinction from this, is also called the 'court of priests.' So 2 Chron. iv. 9, where it is said, Solomon 'made the court of the priests, and the great court,' namely, that into which the people came.

There was indeed a fourth court for strangers to come into, built by Herod. But that is not here alluded to, for the Scripture mentioneth it not. But the outward court here is that which Ezekiel, as I said before, does so often call by that name, in distinction from the court of priests: for to his measuring there, is the allusion of this measuring here; of which you may read, chap. xl. 17, 27. And the inner court is put for the temple, and the temple for it, as being all one.

Bring this then to the New Testament. The Scriptures and prophets, by the notion of a temple, do still express the true church, as 1 Cor. iii. 17, Eph. ii. 21, and many other places. And by priests, who only are to enter into the inner temple, they express true worshippers. You have both these expressions put together in 1 Pet. ii. 5, 'You, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.' And whereas the people entered not into the temple then, now all that are holy are bidden 'to draw near, having their bodies,' or whole man, 'washed with water,' as the priests were wont to be; even water of regeneration and sanctification, as Heb. x. 22.

Now, in distinction from these true worshippers, the carnal professors of religion, and crowd of unregenerate men, that join themselves to the church by professing the same religion and faith, though yet continuing in the natural uncircumcision of their hearts, are called the 'outward court' here, they having no right to approach this altar. And, by the law of distinction and opposition, if the true worshippers now under the gospel be typified out by the priests, who were in a peculiar manner holy unto God, and whose holiness typified forth inward holiness under the gospel, then carnal professors now, who are Jews outwardly only, are left typified out by that common crowd of Jews who came then into the outward court. And these may most truly be termed an outward court, in a comparison with this temple and true worshippers, be the notion of temple taken in what sense it may. For whether temple or church be taken for the mystical temple or church of the elect and sincere worshippers, these are without, (as the Apostle's phrase is, 1 Cor. v.) in comparison to them, and are carnal worshippers, worshipping God in the letter, not in the spirit, with 'outward bodily exercise,' not 'in spirit and truth,' as 1 Tim. iv. 8; and they are such as to a stander-by, who hath skill to judge, are, for the generality, apparently such; even Jews outwardly only, not within, as Rom. ii. 28, 29.

Or if temple be taken for churches instituted, or congregations of true public worshippers, (as Eph. ii. 22, it is taken; as also Heb. x. 22, compared with ver. 25, where the assembling together to worship is called a 'drawing near,' &c.,) in that respect also these carnal men joined with them are but as the outward court laid to the temple, who join in the same service, but do 'draw near with their lips' only, and, as Isaiah speaks, chap. i., 'tread his courts with sacrifices abominable to God;' whilst the other, as a holy priesthood, are only within the temple, and do 'draw near with assur-

ance of faith, having their hearts sprinkled, and their bodies washed with water,' as the allusion to the priests' entering into the inner temple where the altar stood is, in Heb. x. 22.

So that, in what sense soever the Papists, whom some would have to be the outward court here meant, might be called the outward court, these also may. As whether because they arrogate to themselves the name of the church, and say, 'they are Jews, and are not, but do lie.'

In this respect may these also be called the outward court, who with impudence do arrogate to themselves the name of the church, and under that name do in some places cast out the true worshippers; and who, by reason of their multitude and number,—the best congregations of the first Reformation consisting of many more apparently bad than good, and many of those churches having none but men unregenerate,—are in view only or chiefly the church; whilst the true visible worshippers are a company of hidden ones in comparison: and therefore the outward court, in the type, was called the great court.

Yea, these unregenerate Protestants are much rather to be accounted the outward court, and so are mainly here intended; which will appear, if you put but two things together:—

First, Outward court here is oppositely put unto all these other particulars enumerated that were to be measured; both unto temple, altar, and worshippers therein; and so oppositely doth import, not merely an outward face and place of worship, but as withal including persons worshipping also, and so carnal worshippers, in full opposition to the other. For otherwise this expression answers not the type, namely, the outward court in the Jewish temple, in which were the multitude, as in the inner temple the priests. So that the outward court imports and includes a company or sort of worshippers, as well as it imports the outward visible face of the church; and that by a metonymy, the *continenens* being put for the *contentum*, the thing containing for the thing contained: even as these phrases, *heaven* and *earth*, do often import, and are put for, all things therein contained. And so *outward court* here implies a sort of worshippers therein; and in that respect is opposed to, and distinguished from the temple, and the true worshippers therein. And indeed, churches, and the face thereof, in the notion of the New Testament, consisting not of material buildings, as Cameron well shews, it is the persons worshipping who have the name of churches: and so here, persons worshipping, distinct from the temple and true worshippers, must needs be meant, as those that do constitute and make up this outward court. So that, take persons away, and the face of an outward court ceaseth to be. Thus Cornelius à Lapide upon the place:—*In hac parte templi*, says he, *et in adorantibus sacerdotibus symbolicè significantur fideles, qui Antichristi tempore erunt optimi, religiosissimi, Deo conjunctissimi, et in cultu ejus solidissimi. Per atrium exterius intelligit Christianos infirmiores, et vitæ laxioris, ideoque a Deo remotiores. Hos (ait) ejice foras, id est, extra ecclesiam. Quasi dixisset, Rejice eos inter infideles et apostatas; quia hi cedunt gentibus et Antichristo affectis, et ideo indigni sunt qui inter fideles numerentur.*

Now then, *secondly*, add to this, that this outward court, thus consisting of a multitude of false worshippers, is here made distinct from the Gentiles: for this outward court, and the worshippers thereof, are 'given to the Gentiles;' and therefore are to be left out in the new measure taken.

Now a company of worshippers, who are distinct, both from the true worshippers of the temple, and from the Gentiles or Papists, must needs be the multitude of carnal Protestants that fill our churches, and make an out-

ward court, together with the temple. For if the Gentiles be this outward court themselves, then who are these Gentiles that are to tread it down?

Neither, *thirdly*, can it be thought that the Gentiles, possessing the outward face of the church, should so fill up this outward court here meant, as to be made, as they are here, the other sole contradistinct and opposite party to the temple and true worshippers. Unless we would say, that all Protestants are the inner temple, as well as the priests and true worshippers therein, and both to be here measured; and so the Papists and they share these two alone between them. But we assuredly knowing that of Protestants not one of a hundred are true worshippers, according to outward judgment, by those rules the reed warrants us to judge of others by, may as assuredly also conclude that this multitude of carnal professors are not here intended by the angel, as at all included in the temple, and among the true worshippers; especially seeing he puts the reed into John's hand, to measure none but such as are visibly true worshippers. And therefore they must necessarily make up that third party, distinct both from the temple-worshippers and from the Gentiles; and are they who are to be cast out by the one, and seized on by the other, as the outward court is here said to be. And more sure I am that, according to apostolical institution, such as they ought to be left out by those that build true churches, and churches to be measured anew without them. And therefore, if this measuring the temple fall under the times of this sixth trumpet, I cannot but imagine this new reformation begun, to be intended; and that re-entry the Gentiles are now a-making upon the outward court of our churches, and their yielding to them, to be the giving thereof unto these Gentiles here.

And, *fourthly*, the Papists cannot so well be meant here by the outward court, as some would have them. For I see not that the angel would vouchsafe them, in this his mention of them here through this type, so much as the bare name of the outward court unto his temple. That Romish church is not worthy in his esteem to be so accounted of in the proportions of this allusion. But he rather calls them Gentiles, as being idolatrous worshippers; and elsewhere, the 'synagogue of Satan,' 'worshippers of the beast and his image,' 'Sodom, Egypt,' &c., as being in a further distance and degree of comparison remote from the true temple here, and the worshippers therein. And so between the true worshippers in the inner temple, and these Gentiles, he placeth a third sort of worshippers, who are not Gentiles in their worship, but separate from them in it as well as the true Israelites; and who worship the true God after the manner of the worship of the temple outwardly; and yet are but 'outwardly Jews,' as Rom. ii. 28, and remain uncircumcised in heart and life. And these in this allusion doth God allow the place and name of the outward court; which till the reed, the light of the word, came, distinguishing true worshippers from them, were accounted as of the inner temple, but are now discovered to be without, as the word in the original is. So that the outward court doth typify out a company who in these times have a greater nearness to the true worshippers than the Gentiles have, and yet are but without. And though this outward court is here said to be 'given to the Gentiles,' yet, mark it, not to them as those who are reckoned the worshippers therein, not as the 'treaders of the outward court,'—as in Isa. i. the phrase is of God's house,—God reckoneth not them such; but as the 'treaders down' of this outward court, as they are said to do by the holy city in the next words, God bringing in upon these carnal professors, for their contempt of the gospel and of the true worshippers, the worst of the heathen upon them, to tread them down by violence, either of conquest over

their bodies, as in Germany, or over their consciences, in making them again to submit to their superstitions and idolatries, as they shall go on to do in other places.

And observe the glorious wisdom that is in God's proceeding herein, as the reason of it. For God intending to have a church most holy unto himself, under the seventh trumpet, in which 'the ark shall be seen,' which notes out the holy of holies, as it is ver. 19 of this 11th chapter,—and his manner being to carry on his church unto perfection by degrees,—he doth therefore, about the midst of that time, between the first reformation long since made and that seventh trumpet, in an age or so foregoing it, set his builders on work (whom John here represents) to endeavour to erect a new frame, and a reformation of that reformation; and to take the reed, and measure over anew both temple, altar, and worshippers, and to cast out that outward court of worshippers, with those corruptions of theirs which hindered that thorough reformation; and so to contract his temple into a narrower compass, as the proportion of the inner temple to the outward was, yet purer and more refined; he delighting more in truth, and purity of worship, than in magnitude or multitude of sacrifices and worshippers: and so to make to himself a church that shall consist of priests, and an inward temple separated from that outward court, into which the true worshippers are called up from the other, which before lay common to both. And how elegant is this allusion here, whereby he sets forth the several states and conditions of his church, growing up unto perfection!

The first reformation he sets out by an inner temple, more imperfect, unfurnished, and, besides, defiled by the adjoining of an outward court unto it.

The second reformation, more pure, he represents by the inner temple measured again, to be finished and cleansed from that mixture.

And then, in the last verse, he opens the holy of holies, into which no unclean thing shall enter, as it is chap. xxi. 27. For though their second reformation, and the reed thereof, keeps out men civil and profane, whom godly men, whom John here represents, may judge visibly so to be; yet many a hypocrite, that maketh a lie, may scape and crowd into this inward temple still, whilst the judgment of men, who often err, applies this reed. But into the other temple to come, under the New Jerusalem, shall none of these enter. There shall be a golden reed then, as chap. xxi. 15; whereas now there is but an ordinary cane, reed, or staff, which, though in itself it be straight, yet being to be applied by men, they may be deceived.

Now, having given this more general view what is meant by the temple and outward court, I will more particularly explain what it is to *measure* the temple, altar, and worshippers therein; and what it is to *leave out* this outward court.

1. To this end Christ 'puts a reed into John's hands,' who represents the builders of this age; that is, puts into their hearts and hands the word, and the light thereof, as alone a sufficient rule to square churches, both worshippers and worship, by. Other reeds men would have, but God hath given us rules in his word to square the whole frame and model of this temple by. And this is to be laid as a principle, that we admit of nothing in matters of the church which the word does not warrant. Which principle was never yet so fully taken up and practised by our reformers hitherto; though it hath long been contended for, as the fundamental groundwork of this building.

2. By *temple* here I understand not only the church of the elect,—for they

are all one and the same with them that worship God in spirit and truth; whereas here, in this enumeration, temple and worshippers therein seem to import distinct considerations at least;—but I rather understand churches or congregations of public worshippers considered as such; church-fellowship, as you call it; which, as well as the company of the elect, was typified out, and called the temple; as Eph. ii. 20–22. For the Apostle there having first said of the Ephesians, that as they were saints in common with others, so they were built up with all the elect into a temple unto God, and this ver. 20, 21, and so made part of *templum electorum*; he after that, says again of the same Ephesians, as they were a company knit in church-fellowship, that they were 'built together for a habitation to God,' ver. 22. And so the particular church at Ephesus made a temple and a habitation apart, and, as it were, a little sanctuary. Now every such particular church bears the name of the whole, and may also justly be called the temple; because in a church so gathered, the ordinances of church-communion and worship, as the sacraments, excommunication, &c., are to be administered, and not out of such a church-state, or such assemblings; as at the temple of Jerusalem only sacrifices were to be offered. And therefore—

3. By *altar* here, which was that main ordinance of temple-worship serving for sacrifice, which was nowhere out of it to be used, I understand church-ordinances of public worship and sacrifice. And—

4. By *worshippers*, I understand the persons who only are to be of this temple, and to approach to this altar; as only the priests then did into the inward temple, and unto the altar: even such only who are 'lively stones, built up in a spiritual house, and a holy priesthood, to offer up acceptable sacrifice unto God;' as it is in 1 Pet. ii. 5. So that, although *temple* here doth connote and import worshippers,—for now, under the New Testament, temple and worshippers are materially the same, as by that place of Peter appears, though formally they may be considered as distinct, as here they seem to be,—and so *worshippers* importeth these persons considered in such meet qualifications as belong to them as saints, and are required in them to make them meet worshippers in this temple, which this reed lays forth; yet formally *temple* notes out these persons as to be gathered up in a church-assembly, according unto Christ's institution. Now then—

5. To *measure* all these with this reed implies a drawing of a true platform by the rules of the word; by shewing both—

(1.) What a true church or temple is, and how to be built; and what the power, the frame and constitution of it, &c. This is rightly and truly *measuring the temple*. And—

(2.) Laying out the right way of the administration of all church-worship and ordinances, as excommunication, sacraments, ordaining officers of holy things, who partake and 'serve at the altar,' and all this by the word. This is to *measure the altar*. In a word, all that which, Rom. xii. 1, the apostle calls λογική λατρεία, word-service or worship; he speaking to the Romans in that chapter as they were a body of a church, as in the 13th chapter he speaks to them as members of a commonwealth.

(3.) *Measuring the worshippers* is, with the reed, laying forth who are true saints, and so are meet matter for and to be worshippers therein; and so judging of men by the rules of the word, and accordingly admitting into, or rejecting from this fellowship, and 'judging them when within,' as the apostle speaks.

1. And thus measuring is taken for drawing a platform of all these things. As appears by that measuring the temple by Ezekiel, unto which the angel

here alludes, Ezek. xliii. 10, 11, where it is called a 'shewing them the pattern, the form of the house, and fashion of it;' together with the 'goings out and comings in' for administration, &c.; all the ordinances thereof, and all the forms of those ordinances, and all the laws thereof. And as there Ezekiel sees distinctly, and apart measured the temple, chap. xli., xlii.; then the altar, chap. xliii. 13; and then concerning the worshippers the angel gives laws, chap. xliv., blaming them that they permitted 'strangers, men uncircumcised' in flesh and heart (speaking in the language of the type) to be in his sanctuary, ver. 7; giving a law, ver. 9, that none such should enter in; shewing whom he would have to be priests and Levites, and who not, and their duties, in the rest of that chapter: even so here John is bid to cast out the outward court, as being strangers unto God, and unclean, and using strange forms of worship. And—

2. *Measuring* is here also put to signify that such a temple, altar, and worshippers should now, in this age, begin to be built and erected, and men set on work to do it. So in Ezek. xliii. 10, 11, the measure is taken to that end, that Israel, seeing the true pattern, might be ashamed of their former aberrations, and for the time to come might keep to, and do according to, that pattern, and square all by it. Measuring here respects not the old temple so much, as if the temple that had hitherto stood were to be measured, but it respects a new building, or finishing of a church. So also Zech. ii., the measuring the city, ver. 2, was to signify not the taking the platform of Jerusalem as then it stood built, but as further anew to be built and inhabited, ver. 4, 5. So also the temple, as then being yet unfinished by the Jews after the captivity; the plummet, or measuring-line, chap. iv. 10, which answers to the reed here, signified that the temple should be finished; which appears, if you compare the above-named place with ver. 9 of the same chapter. And—

3. *Measuring* imports protection also. So, Zech. ii., the measuring the city there is in the interpretation given, ver. 5, explained, that 'God would be a wall of fire round about them, and their glory in the midst of them.' And so here so much may be intimated, and so hoped for. For the outward court is therefore not measured, because it is given to the Gentiles. But, on the contrary, the worshippers are measured, and called up, as it were, out from the outward court, that they may be preserved from the re-entry of those Gentiles upon them, or power over them; at least, from such power as they had over the outward court. To get into this temple is the greatest preservative to keep the saints from the over-growing corruptions and defilements of these Gentiles; and it may unto many prove a protection and sanctuary from their power, as to those churches in New England it may be hoped it shall. 'God will create a defence upon his glory.' And, however, they shall hereby be reserved for that resurrection which afterward is to come, ver. 11, 12, &c.

Now, in the second place, on the contrary, the not measuring and the leaving out the outward court, and yet measuring the other, is—

1. By the word exactly putting a difference between them that fear God and them that fear him not; measuring out who fear him by marks, signs, and spots upon his people, (as in Deuteronomy God speaks,) which the word gives. And this distinguishing and putting a difference between men and men, the word calls excluding or leaving them out. Which, accordingly, to make way for the right constitution of churches, in discerning the true matter of them, hath been the chief work of the godly ministers in England in this last age; who, though they wanted the ordinance of excommunication in

their churches, yet in lieu of it they had excommunicating gifts, and were forced, because of that profane mixture in churches, to spend most of their ministry in distinguishing men, by giving signs and marks of men's natural and regenerate estates, and convincing and discovering carnal men to themselves and others: which God in providence ordained, to make way for the erection of more pure churches. For by this light was set up in godly men's hearts a spirit to discern between the clean and the unclean; and so to hew and set apart the materials for this temple, as the stones for Solomon's were.

2. This implies a rejecting them from church-fellowship, and not admitting them into the new-reared temple, as being not fit matter for this building; which is a kind of excommunication of them.

3. This leaving out the outward court may also imply a rejecting such forms of administration in worship, (liturgies, &c.) and corruptions therein, which are not found agreeable to the word. For I take the phrase of *outward court* to import a full opposition to those particulars mentioned in the former words; which, as you have heard, are these—temple, altar, worshippers. And therefore oppositely, all carnal and corrupt worshippers, or forms of worshipping, cleaving to ordinances, as left in the first reformation, as the filth which the sea leaves behind it at an ebb, these are all comprehended under that expression of outward court.

Now, in the last place, consider the reason given why God stirs up his people, now in this age, to do thus by this outward court. Which is, because, as their forms of worship came from Popery, and themselves are inwardly and in heart Gentiles; so he hath, for many glorious ends of his, ordained them unto Popery again, more or less to be subjected to it. And therefore he declares this as the reason why he would now, and not before, put it into the hearts of his builders thus strangely and suddenly to reject them: because that the time is now come when, by his decree, they must return to the Gentiles again. Only ere the Gentiles should thus again seize on them, they must first be left out by the templers, the true church; which, being once done, they forthwith become as heathens, as Christ says; and being 'cast out' they 'wither,' and become a prey to men, as it is John xv. 6. Popish opinions and practices take them again. And how, by degrees, do these Gentiles win ground upon the outward court in England? And how does their winning ground drive the true worshippers into the inner temple, and cause them to abandon their mixture with the outward court? So that as this new reformation made way for their ruining the outward court, so the Gentiles' winning more upon the outward court doth further this new reformation; God carrying on these two works at once.

Now the word *given*—'it is given to the Gentiles'—imports an easy kind of conquest which the Popish party obtains over them; they yield, and give up the fort as it were, and suffer the Papists to come in upon them, without much or long holding out. Now in such a dispensation of God towards the carnal Protestants, thus to give them up again unto the Gentiles, there are many and glorious ends which God may have in it, that may make it the more probable that so indeed he intends to do, ere he means to bring in that glorious church to come. As—

1. That he might have a purer church, according to the primitive institution; these treading of his courts becoming loathsome to him, with their oblations. And though the first reformation was, outwardly in show, more specious and glorious, for the multitude of those that reformed, and this is to be by much a smaller and narrower building,—even as in proportion the outward court did far exceed the inner temple,—yet this consisting of purer

worshippers and worship, squared by the word, this second building shall in true glory excel that other.

2. God may do this to let many of these worshippers taste of the fruit of their own ways. They took upon them to be the true church-zealots and defenders of religion against the Papists, and yet cast out God's true worshippers and their ministers, saying, 'Let God be glorified;' whilst they beat their fellow-servants, as the parable hath it. But here they are met with being cast out by them again. And upon their being rejected from their fellowship, the protection and defence of these from the Gentiles cease, and they are given up to them.

3. For the same cause that God let Popery come in upon the world at first, for the same he suffers it thus again to overflow; even because men 'received not the truth'—so clearly shining in the prophecy of the witnesses amongst them—'in the love of it.'

4. To throw out this rubbish that would hinder that temple, which after all he intends to build and make most glorious. For these, like those Samaritans, Ezra iv. 1, 2, offer indeed to build with them; but being, according to God's appointment, not to have a hand in it, they would be a hindrance to it; as indeed they have been.

5. That of that glorious restauration, and resurrection of the church and witnesses, which is yet to come, and is foretold in the 12th and 13th verses of this chapter, only true worshippers, who in this time of trial stood out as faithful witnesses against Popery, and the invasion of it, might have the honour and praise. Therefore God brings this trial upon all the churches, so to burn up and consume this dross, and to discover those carnal Protestants—that have spoken as big words and talked as hotly against Popery as any, and made that the evidence of their sincerity—to be such, and unsound, by a base yielding unto the Gentiles the Papists: that so, when Christ seems to revive his church again after this, ver. 13, then, as you have it in Isa. lxvi., Christ may appear to his people's glory, but to their shame who yet before cast them out, and said, 'Let God be glorified.'

6. That the Gentiles and the Pope might thus accomplish their time and period of forty-two months, with an investment of the Pope into his old territories, now towards the expiring of that his time. Which reason the next words do give, 'And so they shall tread down the holy city for forty-two months,' and be found domineering in it, in a manner, as fully as before, towards the end of their forty-two months; that so their lease may well-nigh expire in a full possession: and that so the confusion of Antichrist—the greatest work to be done for the church from the apostles' days—may be the more glorious unto God. Thus Daniel seemed to foretell, that after those 'tidings out of the north should trouble him,' which was this separation of these northern kingdoms from him; as also 'out of the east,' through the prevailing of the Turk, when he came so near unto his territories; that, enraged with this, he shall 'go forth in great fury,' chap. xi. 44, 'and plant his tabernacle' (his power and jurisdiction) again 'upon the glorious holy mountain,' (where the temple stands,) 'between the seas.' And what follows? Even that after all this his recovery of power over these churches of the Reformation towards his end, yet 'he shall come to his end, and none shall help him.' And after Rome's recovery of her power thus, and when the whore begins to sing her sister Babel's song, just before her fall,—as Rev. xvii. 7, 8,—and saith in her heart, 'I sit as a queen, and am no widow,' as having her ancient paramours again, and so thinks she shall now see no sorrow; therefore 'shall her plagues come in one day; for strong is the Lord

that judgeth her.' And thereby will be seen God's omnipotent power in her confusion. There is nothing also in it, that, chap. xvii., the ten kings or states of Europe are twice mentioned as giving their power unto the beast; and, ver. 17, are the second time said to agree to do it, through some special hand of God to fulfil his will: even till those words of God, uttered by Daniel in the fore-cited place, shall be fulfilled; for unto some word of the Old Testament do these words here refer.

§ 4.—*An appendix to the 1st and 2d verses of the 11th chapter, refuting other interpretations given of the measuring of the temple and outward court, (which you may read, or not read, as you please).*

This interpretation of John's measuring the temple, as in this latter age to be performed, being thus made forth to hold in all things, as you have seen, I shall not need to spend much time, and yet some, in refuting other interpretations.

Mr Mede would have the new book-prophecy to begin here at this 11th chapter, and the sixth trumpet under the seal-prophecy, fully ended before, at the conclusion of the 9th chapter; and the oath of the angel, chap. x., to supply the seventh trumpet. And so makes the angel here, in chap. xi., to begin again anew, aloft from John's time; and so this 11th chapter to be a short, compendious representation of the story of the church in all ages, beginning here anew from John's time, and, as it were, the contents and brief sum of that larger story which begins at chap. xii. And so would have all the several states of the church in all ages more briefly here represented through all times. As—

1. That of the primitive times, until Antichrist's rising, under the type of the temple measured; till when, says he, the church remained pure, according to the pattern: and therefore John is bidden to measure it, as a pattern of the truth unto after-ages. And then—

2. The face of the church during Antichrist's time, for 1260 years, under the type of the 'Gentiles treading down the outward court and holy city:' thereby, says he, representing how the Papists should arrogate and possess the name and face of the church so long time; which yet, because it will not bear the measure of the reed, John is therefore bidden to leave out, as neither in doctrine nor discipline keeping to the word, nor unto the primitive pattern, but utterly swerving from it, as the church of Rome hath done. And in this state the church continues for 1260 years; the Gentiles having that time allowed them to tread down the holy city. And the state of the true church all that while is but as of these witnesses in sackcloth. This interpretation the reverence had to the integrity of the church for the first 400 years did beget; together with that appearance, at first view, that the outward court should here be said to be given to the Gentiles, to be by them trodden down, as the holy city is, for forty-two months. Which mistake I have abundantly removed in the first section, and in the fifth general premise to this my interpretation.

But further to remove the supposition on which this interpretation of his is founded:—

1. The sixth trumpet, and the times of it in this vision, are not yet ended here in this angel's intention. For the angel, after his long discourse of the occurrences that are to fall under the times of the sixth trumpet, doth then (when the time of it, according to the series of this vision, did indeed come to end) say, ver. 14 of this chapter, 'The second woe is past, and the third cometh quickly.' And you may observe, that after the expiration of the

time of these woe-woe-trumpets, which are the fifth, sixth, and seventh, such a closure comes in after each of them, 'One woe is past, another comes,' &c. And thus, after that the times of the fifth trumpet were out, according to the series of the vision, this closure is added, chap. ix. 12, 'One woe is past, and behold there come two other woes more.'

Now at the end of the 9th chapter, there is no such close annexed. But here, chap. xi. 14, when the angel had related the occurrences which are to fall out in the latter days of the sixth trumpet,—that is, whilst the Turkish kingdom yet stands, and which shall fall out not long before his fall,—then, and not before, he brings in that close of the times of that trumpet, 'The second woe is past, and behold the third cometh quickly.' Which shews, that either part of the matter and of the woe that goes to make up that sixth trumpet complete, remained to be uttered by this angel, chap. xi, (which when he had declared, he says, 'The second woe is past,') or that, according to the course of the vision, the time of it was now expired. And then—

2. The angel takes his oath, chap. x., as yet standing under the times of the sixth trumpet, and afore* the times of the seventh; and that seventh trumpet's time yet not come to blow, according to the order of time presented in this vision. And therefore it is not a mere suspension of the vision itself until he had begun with or run over all times again, as Mr Mede would have it; but its time to blow was in this vision not yet come. This the very words and phrase of the angel's oath, chap. x., do imply; when he says, 'In the days of the seventh trumpet, when he shall begin to sound.' Mark that phrase, *the days of the seventh trumpet*. It implies that he speaks according to the compute of vision-time, as I may so call it; for vision being a representation of events, even as a comedy is of stories, accordingly these visions that succeed each other have a supposed artificial time that runs along with the representation of those events in these visions, in their due order,—even as the several seasons of the year are in a prognostication laid forth according to artificial names, (as in an almanac you read of dog-days and the like,) or even as in a map all countries are represented, with their several climates or situations, by lines of longitude and latitude, which have artificial names by geographers given unto them. So from the 6th chapter of this book, hath been represented a map or vision of all times, and these as successively governed by angels, from whence they have their names, as seasons have from their planets that govern them, (as the dog-days in summer, from the dog-star's reign at that time.) So the days of Christ's kingdom to come are called 'the days of the seventh angel;' and so the times before it are called the days of the sixth angel, or the sixth trumpet, under which the Turk reigns. Now then, in that the angel swears, 'time shall be no longer but till the days of the seventh angel;' when he begins to sound, all shall be finished; it implies, that according to the course of time in this vision begun, this time was not yet ended.

To demonstrate this, consider—

1. That those words, 'Time shall be no longer but till the days of the seventh angel,' do imply a long series of time already past in the visions of the former angels, and time hitherto brought down; and so he must needs speak this in a respect to vision or representative time, as I may so call it, which he, as an actor coming in his due place and order, stood under. And accordingly, likewise he must be supposed to speak unto John as a spectator brought to the last stadium or scene of time. And therefore he speaks as

* In the original edition it is *after*, which I have ventured to alter to *afore*.—Ed.

taking it for granted that there was some time yet left, according to the series of this vision; and yet no more but until the days of the seventh trumpet, which was next to come upon the stage. And so the angel must be supposed to speak those words as yet standing under the days of the sixth trumpet, as yet not ended, but as having some time still to come. For should he be supposed to begin again aloft at the top of time, and so to bring John thither, as having ended the former prophecy; and then, with a new vision, to begin to run over all time again; he should, in the same speech, take in two several accounts of time at once. For whilst he says, 'time' (or delay) 'shall be no longer,' (which imports that whole space of time under the former trumpets, from the age wherein John lived, to be past and off the stage already,) in respect thereto he must be supposed then to stand under the sixth trumpet, as viewing all that time gone over. But in the following words, when he says, 'but in the days of the seventh trumpet, when he shall begin to blow,' he should speak as taking all time afore him anew, and as beginning all time again, according to this opinion. And it were strange if in the same sentence two speeches should bear such differing dates.

2. Those words, 'But in the days of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound,' do also argue this. For—

(1.) He says not to John, The vision of that angel, and his sounding, I will not give thee now, John, which yet should now in order follow; but he says, The days of his sounding (as speaking of vision-time) are yet to begin. 'When the angel,' says he, 'shall begin to sound;' as manifestly noting the time of sounding, according to the order of representative time in the vision, not yet to be actually come to be presented; and not the vision only suspended unto John. And—

(2.) When he said, chap. xi. 14, that 'the second woe is past,' he adds, 'Behold, the third woe cometh quickly;' as noting yet some space of time between this and the seventh trumpet to come, as between the sixth vial and the seventh there is to be. So that the vision is not suspended only; but really, according to the series of this prophecy, it still went on, and this seventh was to follow. And—

(3.) Accordingly, when in the 11th chapter the seventh trumpet doth indeed sound, there is a voice heard—in answer, as it were, unto what the angel had said, chap. x., that 'delay should be no longer'—that 'now that time is come,' &c. He had said it should be no longer than till then; and now, when it sounds, the voice says, that 'time is come.' So that then, and not till then, according to the series of this vision, was the time of the sounding of it. And all this argues the vision of this 11th chapter, and the occurrences of it, to be a supplement or addition to come in towards the end of the sixth trumpet, and not to begin again at the top of time. So that rather, I take it, he still speaks all in this 11th chapter, as standing in the last days of the sixth trumpet, the times whereof are not ended; and so mentions such occurrences as shall fall out in the latter times of it, in which John and he do stand, as hath been shewn. And—

Secondly, for that other thing supposed,—namely, Mr Mede's making the first four hundred years until Antichrist's rising to be the temple measured, as so long agreeing with the reed, and so continuing as an exact pattern for churches, and so intended in this measuring,—I say two things:—

1. If the meaning should be that these primitive churches are therefore measured, that they might be held forth as a pattern to churches afterwards, as is intimated in his quoting Ezek. xliii. 10, 11, and applying it to this

measuring in such a sense only, I cannot imagine, that although a just and a due reverence is to be given to those times, that yet Christ would ever impart such an honour to any church not purely apostolical, as to make them the pattern for worship and doctrine, which is honour due only to the word, and unto those churches extant in the very times of the apostles, only so far as they kept those ordinances in which the apostles settled them; so 1 Cor. xi. 2, 22. Otherwise the apostle pulls down the pride of that Corinthian, and of all other churches, for arrogating this unto themselves, saying, 'What! came the word of God out from you, or to you only?' chap. xiv. of that epistle, ver. 36. It is therefore too much to give to those primitive times, especially for the first 400 years. For—

2. Although the doctrine and discipline of the first age in which John lived, and in which churches were then settled by the apostles, might then be thus measured to be held forth, and so to serve for a pattern, as we have the story of it in the word, which on purpose relates the state of those churches, yet to make such an integrity to extend to those other following ages, until the very times wherein Antichrist rose,—which in many matters both of worship and government did so much swerve one age after another still more and more from the rule,—this were unsafe. For the corruptions which still did steal in upon the doctrine and worship, in the first 300 years after the apostles' deaths, were indeed the occasion of the rise of Antichrist, the mystery of whose iniquity began to work in the apostles' times, and in every age more than other so prevailed, as that Antichrist arose in the view of the best churches and fathers, though then undiscerned by them; which, had they kept that primitive integrity, had been utterly impossible. And therefore to reduce our worship, &c., now unto the pattern of the first four or five hundred years, which is the plausible pretence of our new deformers, is to bring Popery again in by the same degrees now as it at first crept in by. And this the devil, who knew the way of introducing it then, to that end crieth it up now.

For my part, I rest assured that the light which hath broken forth in many of our reformed churches since Calvin's time, and which still increaseth, and shall until Antichrist be consumed, is both in matter of doctrine, interpretation of Scriptures, worship, church government, &c., much purer, and might be taken for a truer measure, than what shines in the story and writings of those three latter primitive ages. But yet it were too much to attribute that to it which this opinion puts upon the light of those primitive times. But all that I have said in my foregone exposition is, that now in this age, light coming in, and discovering how far the constitution of churches in their outward government, &c., hath swerved from the true pattern, therefore John is set at work afresh to measure it. Which use of the phrase is very proper, as implying only a reformation and restitution of the church attempted, after a swerving from the rule. In which sense Beza and other interpreters understand it, without any arrogation to these times. And—

3. For his making the outward court to represent the church's state as in order of time succeeding this temple of the primitive times, I only say this, that it seems to me that these two, the temple and the outward court, are represented as rather existing together and contemporaneous, the one being bid to be measured, and the other to be cast out, at one and the same time, as being not capable of the true measure. And the contrary opinion would make no churches erected according to the pattern in this Reformation, since Luther and Calvin, but still to remain, as it were, hidden under Popery as

an outward court until Antichrist's times are fully out. Whereas churches are, and have been, long since erected, and that as exactly according to the pattern as any we read of, the apostles' age only excepted. And then—

4. For that other supposition, that the 11th chapter should be a compendium of all times from John's age unto the seventh trumpet, so to shew the synchronising of two prophecies, I say—

(1.) It were strange that in a compendium one particular passage (of the killing of the witnesses) should be insisted upon more largely than all the rest, and take up the half of that discourse, as from ver. 7 to 14 this does; and that such a passage or occurrence as this, that is not mentioned in the large prophecy that follows, whereof this should be the compendium and argument, should yet come in here by itself; would it not rather argue that the angel here did chiefly intend to give some special occurrence, which should go before the seventh trumpet in the church of the age that preceded it, as a sign of its approach?

(2.) It is true, indeed, that one end of this angel's coming down was to shew what was the time and period of the fourth monarchy, under that last head the Pope, whose time and continuance Daniel had mentioned but indefinitely. But yet his purpose was to make mention, and but a mention, of no more times than simply those 1260 years of the last head, which were enough to interpret Daniel, which was his scope, and not explicitly to ascend to the whole time of the Revelation. And then his annexing to that computation such occurrences belonging to the book-prophecy as should fall out at the ending of that time, and his subjoining the expiring of the sixth trumpet, which belongs to the seal-prophecy, it being the passing away of the second woe, ver. 14, presently upon the ending of these occurrences; this serveth sufficiently enough to shew the connexion of all times in both prophecies, and more clearly than that other way of Mr Mede's.

There is but one objection, both against this way of mine, and that makes most for that opinion of his, that I know of; and that is, that, chap. x., John eating a little book which contains a new prophecy, and therefore, ver. 12, he says he must prophecy again; hence, therefore, it follows that the seal-prophecy must be supposed ended, and so this 11th chapter to contain a new prophecy from the beginning.

To which I answer, that the angel's coming down now towards the end of the old prophecy had a double scope; the one to give a new prophecy, the other to give an exact computation of the times of both prophecies, himself as yet standing in the end of those times of the one prophecy, and being shortly to enter into the other; and so withal intending to give a signal of the ending of those times for the church's warning. Which occurrences that were to be the signs, because they were passages belonging to the book-prophecy, as being the fates of the reformed churches in the days before the Pope's ruin, which are matters belonging to the book-prophecy; hence it is necessary that John should now first eat that little book, the story of which was entirely to begin at the 12th chapter, that so thereby he might be, as it were, enabled to conceive of these passages related, chap. xi., they being such as belonged to that book-prophecy. For John had not yet seen the beast ascending out of the bottomless pit, who is mentioned, ver. 7, nor heard of the witnesses and their vials; but by eating that little book now was signified to him that therein was contained the vision of these things which these passages here related did concern. And besides this, there was likewise signified unto him thereby, that now in the last days of the sixth trumpet the book was open, as Daniel says.

But for a more full answer to be added to these, take in that fifth pre-cognition, or premised consideration, which in the beginning of this exposition of chap. xi. I laid down beforehand, tending to the opening of it.

I might do the like by the interpretations of Mr Brightman and Mr Forbes; who, though they make the measuring to signify and represent the godly's discerning the difference between the *temple*, the true church, and the *outward court*, the Popish and false church, in these latter days of the first Reformation; yet so as they make the outward court here to be the outward face of the Popish church, the seat and name of which they possessed, and the temple to be the church of God in all ages hid under Popery, as the temple was, within the outward court, and for many ages not discerned; whilst the Popish church, possessing the outward court, stood only outward to the eye, and held the name and face of the church, but became now to be discerned or measured by the reed of the word; which is, say they, the measuring here. So that they make the church, in these anterior times under Popery, to be the temple, and the outward face of the church all that while to be the outward court. And having placed this temple and outward court in the first days of Antichrist, and this measuring of the temple thus high, even from the dawning of the gospel so long since, they accordingly go on to make the following occurrences of this chapter to be all already fulfilled.

The 1260 days of the witnesses,—which they would have to be the two testaments,—their 'prophecy in sackcloth,' they make to be expired, and their slaughter past, in that council of Trent, coincident with the Smalkaldic war in 1547, or thereabouts. After which there was in Germany a restoration of the gospel, after 'three years and a-half,' where the 'tenth part of the city' fell off again from Popery. After which the seventh trumpet sounded, say they, when these northern kingdoms settledly embraced the gospel, and became the kingdoms of Jesus Christ; where, that he may for ever reign, without any recovery again by the beast, I say Amen, as Jeremiah did.

But this interpretation I cannot assent to; for, as we shall see afterward, this killing the witnesses, and the passing away of the second woe, or the Turkish dominion, together with the sounding of the seventh trumpet, are all yet to come.

And for their making the temple measured to be the company of elect past through all the ages until then, but now in the beginning of the gospel discovered, these things are against it:—

1. The visions of this book are still of things present or to come, and not of things past. And therefore this seems much rather to note out the present state of the temple, existing as then unto John, under some of the times of the sixth trumpet, than a discerning what was past and gone before that time.

2. The condition of the true worshippers, whilst hidden in those anterior times of Popery until the Reformation, are rather represented in chap. xiv.—which chapter summarily contains the several faces and conditions of the church through Antichrist's reign, as the 13th chapter doth the state of Antichrist during that time—to be as a company of a hundred and forty-four thousand upon Mount Zion, whereon as yet a temple was not built: and so distinguished from them under the times of the Reformation, when only we come to have the first mention of the temple, ver. 15, 17, and of the altar, ver. 18; therein alluding, as it seems to me, unto the state of the holy city, wherein, until Solomon's time, there was not a temple built, though in

David's time that mount was by the Jews inhabited. So nor was this virgin company as yet formed up into a distinct temple and altar of worship distinct from the Popish, in any eminent manner, but rather lay scattered in the Popish churches, and were hidden among them, although they were not of them. But now, in the Reformation, they began to be built up into a temple apart, and to set up an altar distinct from that of these Samaritans. And then—

3. To make the measuring this temple to be an after-sight, or discerning of them, does not enough fill up the meaning of that phrase, though that be connotated and implied in it; which we find elsewhere used, as Ezek. xliii. 11, for drawing a platform of God's house, and the ordinances thereof, to keep them, and put them in practice; or else for building and finishing an edifice, as Zech. ii. 2, 4, compared, and Zech. iv. 9, 10. Which must therefore rather respect a temple as in these times existing and in being, or to be built and finished, than a temple in ages past, and but now discovered. And—

4. These opposite negative words, 'Measure not, but leave out the outward court,' do import a real act of rejection put in execution, and, in fact, done towards that outward court as then existing, and not merely a discovery or judging them only to have been but an outward court in ages past. They do imply an act of leaving them out in that building that was now erecting, as being such whose form and frame was not for this building, nor capable of that measure which was now to be applied.

All these things argue to me, that this vision and work appointed John here respected not anterior times, but the face of that church the times whereof he then stood in, and the work of that age about it. Whereas, according to their interpretation, the outward court must have existed at the beginning of the times of Antichrist; for they suppose the outward court—that is, the face of the church—possessed by Antichrist forty-two months, even from the beginning.

There is a third interpretation, which to me seems more probable than either of these, and which I exclude not in this of mine; and that is, that this measuring the temple, &c., should be that first reformation and erecting of churches, with that separation made from Popery by our worthies, they casting out that catholic Romish church as not agreeing with the rule. And so that reformation and separation falling out together with, or not long after, the Turks' possessing the eastern empire, which is the sixth trumpet, chap. ix., this 11th chapter, beginning with that reformation of the church, should thereby orderly continue the story of the sixth trumpet, without any *chasma* or void space of time between the 9th and 11th chapters. Whereas, to draw it down to our time, leaves an interim or vacuity of a hundred years. But—

1. I conceive the scope of the angel here not to be so much to make up a complete story continued to the other, chap. ix. For the former story of the trumpets having contained only the fates of the empire, it therefore suited not his scope to annex this reformation of the church thereunto, as any homogeneal part of one continued story, although in time immediately succeeding it. For that more properly belonged to the book-prophecy that follows, and is at large set forth, chap. xiv.—xvi. But his scope seems rather to be to give a computation of the times of Antichrist, and a signal of their ending, by the occurrences of the age just before, singling out to that end such particular passages, that otherwise belonged to the book-prophecy, about the church in that last age as should be most eminent, and likewise designatory

of the ending of those times, being such also as should fall out before the expiring of the sixth trumpet or second woe.

And if these occurrences have any affinity with the sixth trumpet, it rather lies in this, that whereas the fifth and sixth trumpets had contained two woes on the Christian world in the east, for their idolatry, from the Turks and Saracens, this contains a like woe on the churches of the reformation in the west, by the Papists overrunning their outward court, as a punishment of their carnal gospelling. Which, added to those woes brought upon those Grecian churches by the Turks, should make the woe of the sixth trumpet complete. And so the treading the wine-press without the city, (in Germany,) chap. xiv., should be reduced to the sixth trumpet, as a part of it, rather than to any of the vials. The vials being upon the Turk and Pope only, but these other woes upon those other professors of Christ and his name, after a fleshly way, both Grecians and Protestants; the one by the Turk, chap. ix., the other by the Papists here in this 11th chapter. And then—

2. The main eminent business of the first reformers from Popery being chiefly about matters of doctrine corrupted by the Papists, and about the idolatries of Rome, therefore both in chap. xiv., in the voices of those three angels, and in chap. xv., in their song there, matters of doctrine only are mentioned. And though they laid the foundation of the building of all churches, yet that was not *τὸ ἐργόν*, that very work unto which they did so specially attend. It was not so much the right measuring and constitution of churches, and of the materials of them; as here that is made the main thing intended, even to measure the temple, altar, &c., and indeed is, and hath been eminently and peculiarly the work in hand now in this last age.

3. Let it be considered that the Popish party in this allusion cannot so properly be called the outward court, but they are rather intended by Gentiles here; and so the outward court must note out that third sort of worshippers between these Gentiles and the temple, as I before shewed. And—

4. This being that exceeding great error and defect laid in the foundation of the churches of the first Reformation, especially in our British churches,—namely, the adjoining this outward court of carnal and unregenerate Protestants, and receiving them from the first into the temple, worship, and communion of all ordinances; so that the bounds of the church were extended as far as the bounds of the commonwealth; which was done out of human prudence, suddenly to greaten the party against the Gentiles in the city: that as the earth helps the woman, chap. xii., so this, as an outward court, might round about shield the true temple and worshippers in it against the beast. And then, on the other side, this being, in this new-begun and second reformation of these churches, the main fundamental principle which is here mentioned, of receiving none into churches but only such worshippers as the reed, or light of the word, so far as it gives rules to judge others by, applied by the judgment of men, who yet may err, shall discover to be truly saints, (which belongs to another dispute;) and this vision falling out in, and as belonging to, the times of this latter age, and being purposely intended, as it were, to amend and correct that very error: hence it seems most properly to belong to this work of a second reformation.

Yet, because that was a true measuring, and this but the finishing of that building whereof their hands had laid the foundation, and like Zerubbabel's finishing the temple; therefore I verily think the Holy Ghost had an aim at both, as unto two several gradual accomplishments of it. For this I per-

ceive in almost all prophecies: that there are several accomplishments which the Holy Ghost hath in his eye, yet so as he fixeth upon one, and usually the last of them, as the main intended. For which I could bring many instances; of which one I shall hereafter give. And that he might have such a double aspect in this, I shall shew when I come to the killing of the witnesses.

CHAPTER V.

The exposition of the 11th chapter continued.—The description of the witnesses, ver. 3-6.

SECTION I.

Some things in general premised.—The division of the particular acts ascribed to them: with the order and time of each.

Now I come to the angel's discourse concerning the 'two witnesses;' who are the holy people, whose power is at last to be scattered. The description of whom is set down, to make way for the relation of that their scattering.

Two things, as was said, are here related about them:—

1. The description of their condition and of their power, ver. 3-6.
2. The last scattering of them, and of this their power.

I. For their description, which the angel makes, to the end that John might know whom he spake of, who were at last to be thus killed; he describes them as throughout all ages they had opposed Antichrist: which he doth upon that occasion that he had for to mention their whole time. But especially he sets them out by what in their latter times, the age immediately foregoing this their killing, they should have power to oppose the beast in; and yet, how that after all he should prevail against them. So that there is this use and end of this so large a description of them, ver. 3-6, that the time of this their last killing might be more evidently discerned, when it was to come; namely, after they should have done thus and thus against the beast and his company,—to wit, set up a temple, and poured out four vials,—and when they should be come to one of the highest plagues, even 'to devour them with fire,' which is the fourth vial, that then their enemies should prevail against them.

Now this description of them is absolved many and several ways: as—

1. By their *office*; they are *witnesses* and *prophets*.

(1.) *Witnesses*, as being in all ages to testify against Antichrist; but especially now at last.

(2.) *Prophets*, as being to prophesy, and thereby to feed the church, whilst in the wilderness, the same term of 1260 years; as you have it chap. xii. 6, where it is said that 'they'—that is, these prophets and witnesses—'shall feed her,' &c.

2. They are set out by their *condition*, which is in sackcloth and mourning; whilst the Pope and his clergy are in their silk triumphing.

3. By their *number*; they are two. For—

(1.) *By the mouth of two witnesses* (at least) *every word is to be established*.
And—

(2.) They are two, in allusion to those famous pairs or couples, for by couples they have still gone, in the Old Testament, living in the like times;

and which were fit types of these times of Antichrist, and the church's state therein, in the various progress of it throughout all ages of Antichrist's reign.

The couples were these:—

1. Moses and Aaron, prophets to the church in Egypt, and in the wilderness.

2. Elias and Elisha, prophets to Israel in Ahab's time, wherein idolatry prevailed, and no face of a church was seen, and but seven thousand hid in corners that were godly.

3. Zerubbabel and Joshua, prophets in the days of the finishing the temple, after the people were come forth from Babylon's captivity.

And that to these three pairs the allusion is here made, is manifest.

1. To Moses and Aaron: for—

(1.) These execute Egypt's plagues, ver. 6, like as they did.

(2.) They 'devour men with fire,' ver. 5; as Moses did twice by his gain-sayers in the wilderness.

2. To Elias and Elisha; for as they shut up heaven, that it rained not, so these here do the like, ver. 6.

3. To Joshua and Zerubbabel; for therefore, in ver. 4, these are called the 'two olive-trees,' and 'candlesticks,' that began and finished the temple after the captivity.

Now, out of this allusion made to such persons, you may in the general observe, that they are eminent both as ministers and magistrates, for such were all these types in their times, who especially are here intended, under the notion of two witnesses. And thus we have had the description of their quality, office, condition, and number.

Then further, they are set forth to us by their several exploits, which they are to perform and execute during the whole time of their prophecy. And these are particularly related in each verse following. Which before I explain particularly, let me premise this in the general to your notice about them: That the angel doth enumerate them, and order his recital of them, so as to draw our eyes unto two of these exploits or facts especially, as being the more eminent, and as those which were nearest to the times of this last age, wherein John measured the temple. And these are—

1. Their *devouring their enemies with fire*, which is mentioned, ver. 5.

And—

2. Their being *two olive-trees, &c.*, ver. 4.

Which two are first mentioned, and set in the first view, as being such as did set forth these witnesses according to what they should be in this latter age. And to confirm this, you may observe—

1. That those words in the 5th verse, 'If any man hurt them, fire comes out of their mouths,' &c., have indeed a direct reference to those words, ver. 3, 'And I will give to my two witnesses,' &c.; so that it is as if he had said, 'I will give to my two witnesses power, that if any man hurt them, fire shall come out of their mouths,' &c. And the particle *καὶ*—and I will give, &c.—is there, ver. 3, adversatively put for *but*; as noting out that special opposition that these witnesses should have power to make against the Gentiles that should enter upon their outward court. 'But,' says he, 'I will give to my two witnesses power, that if any man hurt them,' &c. To this I say, do these words, 'and I will give,' ver. 3, refer, as well as to those other words, 'they shall prophesy,' &c., which follow in the 3d verse, as Piscator also observes. That whereas he had said three things in the 1st and 2d verses: as—

(1.) That the temple was to be measured and finished in this latter age, by the godly in it, whose person John sustains ;

(2.) That their outward court, which fenced the temple and witnesses, was to be regained by the Papists, and trodden down ; and—

(3.) That the Gentiles' whole time of reigning, upon this occasion mentioned, was to expire :—

Answerably and oppositely, as *xai* is taken, he says three things of these witnesses : as—

(1.) That the same space of time that the Gentiles are to have to reign in, the same these have, even as many, to prophesy in, and shall be enabled to oppose them all that while. The witnesses are to have their twelve hundred and sixty days, for the Gentiles' forty-two months ; so ver. 3. And—

(2.) Whereas this temple was in his latter age to be begun to be measured, but that work is interrupted and hindered by this assault and invasion made by these Gentiles upon this outward court and temple ; yet these witnesses shall be as those 'two olive-trees,' ver. 4, 'that minister before the Lord of the whole earth,' whose power is engaged in that work. And thus they are called, to signify that as Joshua and Zerubbabel then,—who were called two olive-trees in that vision, Zech. iv., in respect that they were to perform the like work of finishing the temple, against all opposition made,—so should these two witnesses now complete the finishing of this temple measured, notwithstanding this interruption by the Gentiles' invasion of the temple and outward court. And so this is oppositely spoken to that second thing said of the Gentiles. And—

(3.) Although these Gentiles in their subduing the outward court do much hurt to the witnesses, who shall oppose them in this their assault upon it and the temple, yet they again shall be able to avenge all the hurt done to themselves, by fire returned upon their enemies, and spit out of their mouths against them, whilst they are thus endeavouring to regain the outward court from them. And this is the first thing in general to be observed. Now—

2. To the same purpose you may observe, that this power given them to hurt their enemies is spoken of as a matter of fact, done at that present time, and in the age wherein John in the vision stands, bearing the persons of the godly who were to measure this temple. Yea, and that this is spoken of as an encouragement to that work, that 'if any man will hurt them, fire comes out of their mouths.' But now—

3. On the other side, it may be observed, that whatever else is said of their power in the 6th verse, besides these two things in the 4th and 5th verses, is brought in merely as a thing added for illustration's sake, to shew what power besides this they have in their days formerly exercised. As thus, 'These have power in the days of their prophecy,' &c., ver. 6. But the prime and eminent thing which is first mentioned is that their devouring their enemies with fire ; which is plainly the fourth vial, mentioned next the measuring the temple, as conjunct with it. And again—

4. This exploit of theirs hath an emphasis set upon it also, ver. 5, 'In this manner he,' speaking of him that shall hurt them, 'must be killed,' as noting the greatest plague which these witnesses could execute, and that which so vexeth and tormenteth their enemies, as ver. 10 hath it, and so scorseth them, as the fourth vial expresseth it, that they are thereby provoked to kill them for it, and so to rejoice over them chiefly in this very respect, as ver. 10 tells us. Yea—

5. These four plagues being plainly the four first vials, you may observe,

that they are here mentioned *ordine inverso*, in a clean contrary order from what they are ranked in, chap. xvi. For the fourth vial of fire, which in chap. xvi. is made last in execution, is yet here ranked first ; and that vial on the earth which is first there, is mentioned last here ; merely to shew that this of fire was that which belonged to the present times of this chapter, and the visions of it, namely, when the temple is measured, and also as that which was mainly intended,—and the other to come in only for illustration's sake, to shew more fully who these witnesses were, even the same that the pourers forth of those vials.

SECTION II.

The acts of the witnesses : first, in the darkest times of Popery, withholding the rain, what ?—next, in the times of separation from Popery, in the three first vials, ver. 6.

This being premised, to the end that you might know what times to refer these unto, I come now particularly to explain these several exploits here against their enemies, and that great service they do for God all this long time of their prophecy. Which serviceable acts of theirs have a double aspect :—

1. Towards their enemies.

2. Towards the temple, the church of God.

Or they may be divided, according to the several times in which these services were performed. As—

1. What in this last age they were to do before their killing, and now when the temple is measured, and the outward court to be trodden down ; and this in the 4th and 5th verses. And—

2. What in the former ages of their prophecy they had also done ; which is laid down ver. 6.

And this division you will here see to fall in according to that division which I made of these times, chap. xiv., and in the vials.

For the *first*, what they did to their enemies. And—

1. What they did against them in the days foregoing this latter age, wherein John is supposed to stand. Which acts of theirs are set forth in the sixth verse.

(1.) And those were either done in those first times of all, even in the darkest times of Popery, when the hundred and forty-four thousand stood on Mount Zion without a temple, and when idolatry overspread the world, chap. xiv. 1-6. Then these witnesses did 'shut heaven, that it rained not ;' which in the allusion refers to the times of Ahab, as the fittest type of these first times. For that exploit carries us unto what Elias then in like manner did, when he brought that curse on the land for their idolatry, that it rained not. When also the church was so small, that Elias thought himself alone ; and when Ahab and his priests of Baal—that is, the Pope and his mass-priests—ruled all the world. But hereby is signified, that then these prophets had this privilege, to have true grace only, and the dews and influence of heaven to come down upon themselves, to have a truth of doctrine among them to save them ; which fell not into the knowledge and hearts of these priests of Baal. You heard, chap. xiv. 3, that they had a peculiar song unto themselves, which none else could learn. Now all these dews of grace and saving doctrine were restrained and withheld from those idolaters, as a just curse upon them for their apostasy. Or—

(2.) In the times succeeding next to these first times ; that is, from and

after the times of their separation from Popery, and upon their coming out of that Egypt. Then, as Moses and Aaron, they execute the like plagues to those of theirs on Egypt, even the three first vials, which are therefore also mentioned in this 6th verse; for which I refer you to the 16th chapter. And these are the days of that separation of churches from Antichrist, and first reformation, set forth in the 14th chapter.

SECTION III.

The acts of the witnesses in this their last age of prophecy. And, first, their devouring with fire, ver. 5, what? The allusion thereof unto Moses's destroying Nadab and Korah's company with fire, applied.

But then—

2. In their last days of all, towards the time of this new reformation of the temple, and before this their killing to come, they pour out the fourth vial in scorching and devouring their enemies with fire, as ver. 5 shews us. Even as Moses and Aaron, when the church was come out of Egypt, and in the wilderness, devoured Nadab with fire, Lev. x. 1, 2, and two hundred and fifty princes in the rebellion of Korah, Num. xvi. 35. And this devouring their enemies with fire holds not only to those that profess Popery, but of 'any man that shall hurt them,' though living among them; as you have it ver. 5.

Now observe how this type agrees with the face of things in this latter age. For as when this fell out, Moses had then brought the people out of Egypt, and had long before begun to set up the tabernacle and other ordinances of worship; so when falls out the rebellion of these men here devoured with fire? It is after the church has come out of that spiritual Egypt where these former plagues were executed, and after that public worship is erected and set up according to God's appointment in many things; that is, after the first great reformation made by Luther, &c. But here is a company of rebels that rise up against Moses for his endeavouring to keep to the word in his temple's frame and fabric, and for his calling for this at the builders' hands.

Observe the quarrel of both those companies then, and of these now.

The first quarrel then was about introducing human inventions in God's worship, which himself commanded not.

The second was, not only a renewing and continuing that quarrel, but further, to take away all distinction of persons in worshipping.

For the first; (1.) Nadab and Abihu, they offer strange fire—namely, the common culinary fire, which in God's worship was strange fire—before the Lord; which God commanded them not. For by his command, only fire from the altar should have been offered which originally came down from heaven. And so the sin for which they were devoured with fire, it was a transgression in bringing in, or continuing to use, such human inventions in worship as God had not commanded, and a justifying such to be warrantable. And—

(2.) That other company that clave to Korah, their sin was as their offering incense, not being true priests, so their quarrelling Moses and Aaron for putting such a difference between the people, as making some to be priests, (of the tribe of Levi,) and others not. Whenas, say they, 'all the people are holy;' and therefore 'ye take too much upon you, ye sons of Levi,' &c. Seeing every one throughout the whole congregation is holy, and so is as fit to worship and draw near to God as you, 'wherefore then lift you up yourselves above the congregation of the Lord?' who, they thought, were God's

people, and whom he had chosen to draw near unto him. This was the quarrel, as Moses states it, ver. 5, and unto this sin they added rebellion, ver. 14.

Now, what has been the quarrel, that in England, which I instance most in, as being best known to us, and in some other reformed churches, which hath since the first Reformation been continued,—of the latter days of which times, this is especially here understood, for it is the fourth vial,—but about human inventions? Which are as that strange fire then which God commanded not, which yet are introduced and continued in worship, and by the most justified against the few witnesses, the pleaders for the commands of God to be the only rule of worship. And again—

Secondly, for that other, the putting such a difference between men and men, by the faithful witnesses and prophets, between the holy and the profane; this hath been another and a greater ground of hot and violent opposition against these witnesses. And for this, the latter of the two, as then also it was, these witnesses have all generally still preached that only those who have such or such a work of grace upon their hearts, and that do endeavour to walk thus and thus holily in their lives; that such only are saints, and the children of God. The stream of their ministry in England hath still run in this channel, thus to distinguish men from men, and to separate the precious from the vile, and this occasioned from that promiscuous mixture of all sorts. The chief work and bent of their ministry hath been to mark out whom God hath chosen, and who only are true priests and worshippers of him in spirit and truth. And for this, whatever hath otherwise been pretended, have those of the other side quarrelled, opposed, and silenced them, saying, as Korah's company, 'Are not all the people holy?' Have they not all been baptized? 'You take too much upon you,' you precise ones, out of the pride of your spirits, to 'lift up yourselves above the congregation of the Lord.'

Or else the quarrel hath been about God's own election of a few to be priests unto him, even as then, that God chose the tribe of Levi from the crowd of common Israelites, 'who are his, and whom he hath chosen;' as ver. 5 of Num. xvi. This was the quarrel then; and these now plead the cause of all mankind in universal grace and redemption.

All the quarrels between the Popish party, the number of the beast's name, and the witnesses, are reducible to these two heads:—

(1.) True purity of worship; and, (2.) true holiness, and peculiar election of worshippers.

And the light in both these things hath in our days grown up so high and clear, as that many of those who oppose either or both of these do sin even out of rebellion and presumption in opposing that the truth of which they are convinced of, as Korah's company did. And so their punishment riseth to be like to that of Nadab, and those two hundred and fifty of Korah's conspiracy, even fire from the Lord devouring them; which is, as was said in the fourth vial, a spiritual punishment on their souls; and this is the effect of the powerful conviction of the word out of the mouths of the witnesses, who spit fire into their consciences, and begin hell-fire beforehand. And this very allusion is thus interpreted and applied to that 'fearful expectation of wrath' which those have in their consciences who 'sin wilfully against the knowledge of the truth,' and so against the Holy Ghost, Heb. x. 26, 27.

And, indeed, bring but Paul's exposition there of this very type and example of those Israelites then, unto this allusion here made unto it by the angel; and that of Paul may clearly expound this of John. The allusion

there is to those who died by Moses's hand, and that 'without mercy,' for despising the law which he brought from God to them, and more particularly to those who 'died by fire,' as that phrase, 'the expectation of fiery indignation to devour the adversaries,' doth shew; who therein were true types of those that sin wilfully under the gospel, and despise it. They were types of these, both in their sin and punishment; for—

1. Their sin is rebellion, as the others' also was. Korah's company, after Moses's conviction of them, came to a despicable scorning of Moses, and doing opprobrium to him for bringing them out of Egypt; as you may read, Num. xvi. 13, 14. And such is their sin mentioned, Heb. x. 26, even a 'sinning wilfully, after the receiving of the truth.' And so here in this 11th of the Revelation, the emphasis of their sin is put upon their wills,—'if any man will hurt them,'—and again it is repeated, 'if any man will hurt them,' ver. 5. And—

2. As they then were struck dead by God, upon their 'despising Moses's law,' and conviction of it 'under two or three witnesses,' as Paul interprets it, Heb. x., Moses and Aaron themselves testifying against them, and convincing them; so here, the angel adjudgeth them to this notorious death, for despising the testimony of these two witnesses, and the light of the gospel in their mouths.—Thus in their *sinning* they were true types of these.

And then, secondly, in their *punishment* they were their true types also; for—

1. A punishment they there have executed on them, of all the sorest, which Paul calls a 'dying without mercy.' So in that 10th to the Hebrews, 'How much sorer punishment,' says Paul, 'shall he be thought worthy of?' &c., sorer than that of Nadab and Korah's company there being devoured with elementary fire; and indeed so sore, as he knows not how to express it, but utters it by an imperfect indefinite speech, *how much sorer?* rather leaving it to us, from comparing their sins together, to conceive it, than that he was able to express it. And in like manner here also, their punishment, you see, hath this emphasis put upon it, 'in this manner he must be killed;' as noting out the extremest punishment that could be.

2. A punishment it is, not so much killing their bodies as their souls. So in the type, the fire that came forth rather blasted than burned them. Their bodies and clothes were left whole, Lev. x. 5. It burned and scorched their souls, not their bodies, say the Hebrew doctors; and so it was the liveliest type that could be, to lay a punishment upon their souls. Now unto such sinners under the gospel doth God answerably become 'a consuming fire.' Again—

3. That which here in the Revelation is called fire, is there by Paul expounded, 'fiery indignation,' and 'a fearful looking for of judgment,'—namely, in the consciences of those men who sin this sin,—*φοβερὰ ἐκδοχὴ κρίσεως*, a fearful and certain expectation of judgment, as it is in the original: God sealing up, by some flashes of his wrath, these men's eternal damnation, who do sin this sin. And this fiery indignation sparkles forth upon all occasions, from the writings and lives, and from the preachings and testimonies of these witnesses' mouths, as this place implies. And—

4. As Paul here useth the word, 'devouring the adversaries;' so the same is used of them, Lev. x. 2. And so also here you see the same phrase used, 'devouring their enemies.' In the original the same verb is used in one place that is in the other; and the word for enemies used Heb. x. 27 is *ὑπεναντίους*, *subcontrarios*, underhand adversaries: shewing that not always

those that thus sin do presently renounce all profession of God, as the Pharisees did not; for then they should not have place and opportunity to hurt the witnesses. So that they profess God still, but do underhand, and by pretences, oppose his people.

The like to this, we read the effect of the powerful light of the ministry of John Baptist and of Christ to have been: whose crucifying, as it is manifestly alluded unto here, in killing the two witnesses, from ver. 7 to ver. 14; so also this effect of his ministry on those Pharisees in those his times, who were tormented with it, is in the like manner alluded unto here, in those that were tormented with the light and heat of these witnesses' prophecy, as ver. 10 of chap. xi. expresseth it, which, chap. xvi. 9, is called a 'scorching men with great heat and pain.' Now John, and after him Christ, were 'burning and shining lights,' as Christ spake of John, which the Pharisees despising, the effect of their ministry upon many of these was this very sin, and so a tormenting of their consciences with this 'fiery indignation.'

And accordingly, in the prophet Malachi, we have the times of Christ's ministry, in this respect, called a 'terrible day that shall burn as an oven' those Pharisees' consciences; so Mal. iv. 1. And as it was the torment from Christ's ministry that made these Pharisees crucify him, though knowing him to be the Son of God; so it is the torment of these witnesses' ministry here, increasing so in light and power under the fourth vial, that causeth their adversaries to kill them; as, ver. 10 of this 11th chapter, is expressed.

And thus you have seen the power which they have against and over their enemies.

SECTION IV.

Secondly, their temple-work in their last days, in being two olive-trees, explained; from the allusion to Joshua's and Zerubbabel's finishing the temple.

But, *secondly*, their power is also further set out in that temple-work which they do for Christ and his church in these latter days, especially in that measuring, building, and finishing the temple, spoken of ver. 1. To represent which to us, the Holy Ghost hath called and singled out the most proper and choice type, and the most lively allusion that the Old Testament doth afford us. 'These,' says he, 'are the two olive-trees, and the two candlesticks, that minister before the God of the earth.'

Now, where in the Scriptures do we find this spoken, and of whom, and upon what occasion? Find but this, and by having recourse thereto, you will see all things suit and conspire to make up a full type of that work of this age. You have this vision of two olive-trees and a candlestick made unto Zechariah, as you may read in the 4th chapter of his prophecy, and the interpretation thereof. And it is made unto him on this occasion. The people coming out of Babylon's captivity, Joshua and Zerubbabel had from their first coming forth begun to sacrifice, and to set up public worship; and after two years began the erection of the temple, laid the foundation of it, and set up the altar, as you may read in the 3d of Ezra; but left the work imperfect, without the roof covered, or the temple as then adorned with all those holy utensils and ornaments of it which yet were ordinances that, to the complement and perfection of his worship then, God had appointed.

And you may further find, that they had then left the temple so incom-

plete, through the opposition of a Samaritan faction, that pretended to be for God as well as they. So, Ezra iv. 2, 'We seek your God,' say they, 'as you do.' Who yet were of a mongrel religion, between the Jews and Gentiles; as, 2 Kings xvii. 41, you may read. And being not taken into this work of building the temple, nor owned by the true Jews, they therefore hindered the people in building, ver. 4, and raised up the opposition of the Persian monarchy to frustrate their purpose, ver. 5, and made them to cease by force, ver. 24, 25, and so the work lay imperfect for years,—and yet, notwithstanding, it was a true temple and place of God's worship,—until God stirred up the prophets Zechariah and Haggai, by their prophecy, to move Joshua and Zerubbabel unto the finishing of this work, Ezra v. 1.

Now, among other visions which, to excite them to finish the work, the prophet Zechariah had had, this, in his 4th chapter, of two olive-trees and a candlestick, into which the olive-trees did empty their oil, was one. The meaning of which vision was this. The two olive-trees were Joshua and Zerubbabel, *sons of oil*, as in ver. 14 they are called. Which phrase notes out their being full of oil; as being those two who should lay out their grace, gifts, and estates, which was their oil, and spend their fatness, and use their heartiest endeavours in and for the repairing and finishing the temple. Which finishing of it is there represented by the candlestick, the candlestick being one of the most necessary utensils that went to make complete the glory of the temple; and so, by a *synecdoche*, is put for all the rest. And it being one of the last to be brought into the temple when once fully finished, and when the roof is covered, therefore it fitly served to resemble the finishing of that temple, and the adorning of it with all those accoutrements and ordinances which God had appointed for the perfection of it. And hence, in the exposition of this vision in that chapter, is Zerubbabel presented with a 'plummets in his hand,' and 'a measuring line,' to measure this temple to be now fully finished, even as here John is presented with a reed; and this promise is annexed, that in despite of that mountain of opposition raised by that Samaritan faction, ver. 7, Zerubbabel's hands, which 'had laid the foundation of this house,' even 'his hands shall also finish it;' as you have it, ver. 9.

And all this is made the meaning of that hieroglyphic, there represented, in a vision of two olive-trees and a candlestick: for, ver. 5, when the angel said to Zechariah, 'Knowest thou what these be?' that is, Knowest thou the meaning of this vision? and he said, 'No;' the angel answers, 'This is the word of the Lord,' namely, his mind in this vision, 'unto Zerubbabel,' &c.—namely, this which I before recited, about Zerubbabel's and Joshua's finishing the temple, as you may there read it interpreted by the angel.

Now this is the very type alluded unto here. And how fully suits it all our former interpretations given of measuring the temple? The church having been long since come out of mystical Babylon, hath set up public worship, and by the authority of princes hath begun the foundation of the temple; but hath been hindered from going on to full perfection of discipline intended and endeavoured, through the mixture of a Samaritan party, by whom they have been still interrupted from attaining that perfection which many have contended for. But in the end God stirs up many of the English spirits, like Joshua and Zerubbabel, to finish what was before left incomplete, and to begin to make a further and purer edition of churches according to the pattern. And so they stand in this age with a measuring line, as Zerubbabel, or a reed, as John here, in their hands; and, like these

two olive-trees, do empty oil out of themselves unto this work, endeavouring to add unto this temple such ordinances as, though to the being of a church not absolutely necessary, for they were temples before, yet are institutions of God, and do tend, as the candlestick then did, unto the perfection, beauty, complement, and glory of it. And though the foundation of this temple, laid in the first reformation, is in this allusion included, yet the allusion principally falls upon this finishing of it. For that is the most proper and peculiar aim of the vision of the olive-trees, as in Zechariah it is presented, unto which the allusion here is; the end of Zechariah's prophecy being to excite unto the finishing of the temple.

These two witnesses the Holy Ghost here calls the olive-trees and the candlesticks, which are the churches themselves, as chap. i. 20. So that both eminent persons, and likewise churches themselves, the purest of them, are the witnesses against the false church that are here spoken of.

But some would carry it thus: that the witnesses are the olive-trees *unto* the two candlesticks, the churches; for so in the vision of Zechariah they are mentioned as pouring oil *into* the candlesticks. And besides, the copulative *and* being in the Hebrew sometimes put for the preposition *unto*, according to this Hebraism, *וְאֵל* here should be so taken. And the churches now under the New Testament are called *two* candlesticks, whereas there in Zechariah is mention but of one candlestick, because now there is not one church only, as the Jews then had, but they are multiplied by particular congregations. There are sister churches now, and not one mother church only. And you shall sometimes, in the allusions to the temple, find in this book the proportion doubled to what it then was; to shew the increase of the gospel, as we observed out of the 4th chapter.

Now this new reformation of the church here typified out, though it be as yet but as their first attempts to finish the temple then were, even a 'day of small things,' (which who, almost, despiseth not?) yet it shall go on and spread, and at length be perfected, as that work then was. For it is of God, 'the God of the whole earth;' which attribute of his is here mentioned to shew the power that backs these builders, and to shew that now the work is not to be effected so much by power and might,—as that finishing the temple then is said to have been,—but by the Spirit, causing the hearts of the godly to fall to it. And that Samaritan 'mountain' of opposition, even Rome itself, that hath stood in the way of it, shall in the end 'become a plain before it;' as there, Zech. iv. 5–7, that Samaritan faction did before Zerubbabel.

And out of this temple are the vials to come, and to pour out their plagues upon this false church, as you may read chap. xvi. 1. So that the true church is still ordained to be the ruin of the false. And 'when that which is more perfect comes, that which is imperfect will be done away.'

And however the beginning of this work may seem small and contemptible, yet the work itself is of such moment and concernment for God and his glory, and shall so far go on and prosper, as he is pleased in this book to take notice of it; as of any further progress of his church unto purity he still doth, as in the 14th chapter we have seen. And yet I fear these olive-trees and candlesticks among us will, as the rest of the churches in Europe, have their 'power scattered' ere this building be fully finished. But after this, they shall revive again, and 'grow up into an holy temple unto the Lord,' from the times of the witnesses' rising, after their being killed, until the New Jerusalem, as chap. xix. will shew.

Now, to make the allusion to the condition of Joshua more full, I will only add this, that as these witnesses are here presented in sackcloth, so is

Joshua there, in 'filthy apparel,' Zech. iii. 4. And as there he had change of raiment given him, so after a few years will these witnesses also have the 'garments of praise for the spirit of heaviness,' as Isaiah speaks; and their testimony being ended, they shall put off their sackcloth, and put on 'fine linen,' the wedding apparel of the Lamb's bride, as chap. xix. you have it. And so in the end, the glory of this temple, set up after Antichrist's demolition, will yet be rendered more glorious, as that of Zerubbabel's also was, by Christ's coming into it. And a holy of holies shall be added unto it, or rather swallow this up, in which 'the ark shall be seen,' as it is in the last verse of this 11th chapter. But these witnesses must be killed first; which is the last thing I am to speak of in this chapter.

CHAPTER VI.

The killing of the witnesses, ver. 7-10 of the 11th chapter.

SECTION I.

The time of their three years and a half not yet come.—A reconciliation of this and Mr Brightman's opinion, in a double fulfilling of it.

THIS angel's scope is, as was said, to shew how, according to the angel's oath in Daniel, Antichrist should 'accomplish to scatter the power of the holy people,' towards the end of his reign of 'a time, times, and half a time.' And so, what is here said of the beast's war and victory refers not to the conquests and slaughters which Antichrist, during his whole reign, should make of the holy people, or witnesses, spoken of chap. xiii.; but particularly designeth out an eminent prevailing over them at the last, or, as the first words of ver. 7 have it, *ὅταν τελέσωσι*, &c., 'when they are about to finish' or end the term of their prophesy in sackcloth, even their 1260 years; which is the same space that Antichrist hath allotted to him to reign in. Now, what power these holy people, the witnesses, had got before this their last scattering, hath in their description been declared. They had power to erect a temple to themselves, and out of it to pour forth four vials upon their enemies, as hath been shewn. And that they might the better fence themselves against the beast, possessing the greatest part of Europe, the holy city, we have heard how they had environed the temple with a mighty party of carnal professors, separating with them from the beast, as with an outward court; which, we have seen by ver. 1, the Gentiles are again to subdue unto themselves and to tread down. Which 'treading down their outward court' is indeed one part of that his last 'accomplishment to scatter the power of the holy people,' or haply it may rather be termed a preparation unto it. For come at the witnesses they could not, till this outward court were gained. Which, when they shall have more fully won, which is now a-doing, then they further shall 'kill the witnesses;' for then both they and their inner temple will be exposed to the irruptions of the Gentiles, and will be easily subdued by them, whenas their outworks shall first be thus taken and recovered. And this will not be fully done till even towards the finishing their allotted time of prophesying in sackcloth,—and so of the beast's reigning, which is to expire soon after it,—with their ascension into heaven. Now—

I. For the times when this last 'killing' of them here intended shall come to execution; the question among interpreters is, Whether it be yet past or yet to come?

Mr Brightman, as was said, maketh this measuring the temple to be long since fulfilled and past. So also this killing the witnesses here, and the expiration of their time of prophesying in sackcloth, to be already wholly past;

and this in that great overthrow of the Protestant party in Germany by Charles the Fifth, anno 1547, and in that condemning the Scriptures, which he makes the witnesses, by the Council of Trent about that time, now well-nigh a hundred years since.

But most others, as Graserus, Matthias Hoe, Mr Mede, Mr Wood, &c., do think it yet to come. And according to that series of interpretation hitherto by me given, if that hold good, it must necessarily be as yet to be executed. And it seems to me most evident, both by what is said to go before it, and also to follow after it; of which nothing that is to follow after it is yet fulfilled, although a hundred years, since the time that Mr Brightman interprets it of, are run out. For—

1. This is to fall out towards the ending of their prophecy in sackcloth, or of their mourning and oppressed condition, after which they are to cast off their sackcloth. As Joshua's filthy garments—who was one of the types of these—were taken from him, and a 'fair mitre was set upon his head;' so after their resurrection, these witnesses are to be clothed in 'fine linen,' as you may read, chap. xix. Now it is evident that the time of their prophesying in sackcloth, of bewailing the condition of the church under Antichrist, and of their oppression by him, is not yet out. The filthy garments they wore during their captivity in Babylon, they still have on; as Joshua also had his on in Zechariah's time, which was a long while after they were come forth out of Babylon. So the true witnesses are still in an oppressed condition, whilst Antichrist's church, and those of their enemies even in the reformed churches, are as the church-triumphant, in silk, and at their full liberty.

2. This is here to fall out towards the ending of the reign of Antichrist, in respect of his 'power to do;' for this is that last scattering, prophesied of by Daniel, with which he is to accomplish his times. Now we see he hath his kingdom yet standing, and his power to do; and there are a hundred years more run on since that havoc made of them by the Papists in Germany, and yet Antichrist's forty-two months are not expired, we being now but under the fifth vial. And when the seat or throne of the beast—Rome itself—shall come to be ruined, then shall his kingdom be full of darkness, and the glory of it so damped and extinguished, as it is thought, that from that time his reign is accounted of as at an end. And—

3. We see Antichrist as yet but in his first march towards this war; he is but now going forth to win the outward court, which he must again recover ere he can come at the witnesses; and this killing of them is placed here, after his recovery of that. And though he hath trod down Germany, yet he is but setting up and advancing his engines of assault and battery upon other such places where God hath the most of his powerful witnesses in these last times: though already he be evidently set down in his siege of them also, by his instruments, and those that receive the number of his name, who are to be his last champions.

4. We evidently see by what is gone before in the description of these witnesses, that four vials of the seven are to be poured out by them before this their killing. For in the days of their prophecy, they 'smite the earth' with plagues, which is the first vial; and turn the 'sea and rivers into blood,' which is the second and third vial; and then 'devour men with fire,' which is the fourth. And then after all these exploits of theirs, comes their killing. So that this falls out after, or under, the fourth vial. But that slaughter a hundred years since was but under the second vial, and indeed but in the beginning of that vial; and we as yet see not the full effect of the

fourth vial, which is but now a-pouring forth. And therefore this killing of the witnesses here is not as yet fulfilled.

5. After their rising again, the 'second woe' is said to 'pass away.' Now that second woe is the sixth trumpet, which then is said to pass away when the times of it are expired, or the foundation of its ruin laid. And that sixth trumpet is, as hath been said, the Turk, and his great power and tyranny. Whose kingdom we see yet to stand in its full vigour and flourish, and no fundamental blow of weakening given to it.

6. Much less is the seventh trumpet begun to be blown, which yet is to 'come quickly' after the sixth, as you have it ver. 14. For although Jesus Christ, in these northern kingdoms, hath been assisted in that his harvest of his elect since the Reformation, by supreme and princely authority; and therefore, chap. xiv., that peaceable harvest was reaped by an angel crowned; yet—

(1.) The kingdoms of the world becoming Christ's, for him to reign for ever, and this at the beginning of this seventh trumpet, his kingdom then shall be another manner of one than as yet he hath had; even that fifth monarchy which is mentioned in Dan. vii. 14, and is to begin at the end of the days of the beast. And, if you mark the words, this shall be a kingdom that shall not be administered by deputies, and by a delegated power; but by Christ the king's immediate rule and government: 'Thou hast taken to thyself thy great power, and hast reigned,' &c., ver. 17. And—

(2.) When that seventh trumpet shall begin to sound, 'then,' as chap. x., 'shall that mystery be fulfilled spoken of by the prophets,' and which Paul calls a mystery, Rom. xi., even the 'New Jerusalem,' and 'kingdom of the saints,' and the 'first resurrection,' as appears by ver. 15–17 of this chapter, compared with chap. xx., xxi., &c. But now since that resurrection of the witnesses, which Mr Brightman would have this to be, is almost a hundred years, and yet none of these things are begun, nor as yet to begin.

(3.) The seventh trumpet, and the last vial, as hath been often said, do fall out together; or rather, the last vial begins the seventh trumpet, as the last verse of this 11th chapter, compared with the seventh vial, chap. xvi., doth shew; for there are the same thunderings, hail, &c., in them both. Now we are yet but under the fourth vial, and so very far off from the last.

Yet I will add this, which may reconcile that opinion of Mr Brightman with this other, and haply serve in the closure of all to give some small further hint about the time of the last vial's fulfilling, and so concerning the expiring of times before mentioned.

As I said before, about the measuring the temple, that the angel might have an aim, both at that first laying the foundation of true churches, and also at this second reformation now in hand, and take both in his view at once, they both being degrees of the same work; yet so as ultimately he looks unto the latter, as the special intendment of this place, though the other were in itself infinitely far the greater work: so I conjecture that he might take in two killings of these witnesses, which should follow after, or, it may be, accompany both those measurings; the one at or after that foundation laid, the other at or upon the finishing to be begun, and so ordered that the first should be a foregoing resemblance of this other to succeed. Yet so as his ultimate aim and scope still should be at a latter killing of them, which is yet to come.

I have observed it in many instances, which I could produce, that many prophecies in Scripture have had two several gradual accomplishments, whereof both the one and the other are intended by the Holy Ghost; yet so

as the latter is usually more eminently intended, and the first sometimes intended as a foregoing type of that which is to follow. You may observe many passages quoted out of the prophets, and applied by the apostles in the New Testament unto the times of the gospel, as being then fulfilled, which yet had a gradual accomplishment under the Old Testament, in the times after the captivity of Babylon. So that the Holy Ghost aimed at both. Thus the 9th verse of the 1st chapter of Isaiah is quoted by Paul, Rom. ix., and applied unto the gospel times.

Yea, and you shall sometimes find the same prophecy even under the Old Testament fulfilled over and over; and so to have two several intended accomplishments. For instance, I will give one which some learned men have fallen upon, although I find others do dissent from them in it. And I rather pitch upon it, because it is proper to the thing in hand; for it is made the type of this measuring the temple. It is that prophecy of rebuilding the temple after the seventy years' captivity in Babylon; which, as some think, had a double accomplishment aimed at. And as there were two eminent leadings into captivity, the one of Jechoniah, the other of Zedekiah, when the city was destroyed; so, according to learned chronologers and best interpreters, I find a double reckoning of the seventy years, and of the building again of the temple: some reckoning from that captivity of Jechoniah, in the first year of Nebuchadnezzar; some from that of Zedekiah, in the nineteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar, as the Jesuits Sanctius and Ribera do affirm. I will not meddle with the dispute about it; but that God kept a double reckoning of that seventy years, in respect to a double gradual accomplishment, to me seems evident. For Ezekiel begins the captivity from that carrying away of Jechoniah, Ezek. i. 2, 3; and the prophet Jeremiah, in the 29th chapter of his prophecy, ver. 10, comforts those that were carried away with Jechoniah with this, that after seventy years God will visit them, &c. Now one seventy years was ended, when Cyrus gave leave to lay the foundation of the temple, as reckoning from the first captivity. And yet after this, in Zechariah's time, when the temple was to be again measured and finished, there is another seventy years said to be ended; as the time wherein this temple, which hitherto had lain imperfect, was to be perfected. This you may see by Zech. i. 12, 16, compared. For there the final ending of the seventy years is made the foundation of the last work of perfecting the temple, and God's returning in mercy, according to his promise, for to do it. So that a double captivity, and a double seventy years, ending in a double work, the one of laying the foundation, the other of finishing the temple, seem to have been in the Holy Ghost's eye.

Now why may it not be so, even in this also, that the computation of the beast's reign, and the church's coming out of Babylon, the killing of the witnesses, and the measuring of the temple, may have a double accomplishment and expiration, and all intended, yet so as the latter mainly aimed at?

The like instance might be made of the computation of another period of time and prophecy fulfilled, which, because I may, in the closure of this 11th chapter, have particular cause to mention, I will also instance in. It is that of Daniel, chap. xii. 11; the things in which chapter refer to the times of the end, under the New Testament, when is the time of which the angel tells him that 'knowledge should be increased,' &c. And Daniel inquiring when these things should be, the angel answers, 'From the time that the daily sacrifice'—namely, of the Jews—'shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days.' Now by history it is evident, that there hath been a double taking

away of the Jewish sacrifice under the days of the New Testament, and a double setting up the abomination of desolation; that is, heathenish idolatry. And so a double computation must needs be taken of these 1290 years.

When Vespasian and his son Titus sacked Jerusalem, destroyed the temple, and advanced heathenish idolatry in the room of it, then was one time when both these things were evidently done; both the Jewish sacrifice taken away, and the 'abomination that maketh desolate' set up. And if from that time we reckon 1290 years, that first setting up heathenism instead of the Jewish worship being in the year after Christ's birth 69 or 70, they end in 1359 or 1360; when indeed the first great increase of knowledge, and discovery of Antichrist began, under Wickliff, Thaulerus, &c., and a great diffusion of the light of the gospel amongst us Gentiles. But there was another, both 'ceasing of the daily sacrifice,' and setting up of heathenish idolatry, by Julian the apostate emperor, about the year 363, who both suppressed the Christian religion, typified out by the daily sacrifice, after it had been set up by Christian emperors, and also advanced heathenish worship. Yea, he did set up the Jewish sacrifice again, which till his time had ceased, and was then taken away, and never unto this day set up again. And it is observable how special a hand God hath had in binding the Jews from setting up their daily sacrifice at Jerusalem again. The Turk, whom they live under, tolerates all other religions, and theirs also in all other exercises of it, but suffers them not to live at Jerusalem or to sacrifice there; and yet permits the Christians to inhabit in it, and to possess the sepulchre of the Lord, and to perform all rites of their religion. And though the Jews would give much more for the like kind of liberty, to have that place to dwell in, and to sacrifice there, yet it is prohibited them.

Now from either of these times above-mentioned may this computation of 1290 years be taken: the one respecting the blessed times when the more clear light of the gospel, and the discovery of Antichrist, began to come among us Gentiles; the other those happy times to come, when the Jews shall first be recalled, which some fix about the year 1655 or 1656. And so two accomplishments of those 1290 years.

Now then, to return unto the thing in hand. Mr Brightman, he reckons the beginning of Antichrist's reign, and the witnesses' beginning to prophesy in sackcloth, from the time of the Roman emperors' removing to Constantinople; which he interprets to be that 'taking him that letted out of the way,' as Paul to the Thessalonians hath it,—namely, the emperor,—who being removed to Constantinople, and the Pope having Rome, ordained to be the seat of the beast, thus left him, he might soon begin to gain power. And that, indeed, from thence his first conception did begin, may not be, nor is it by most, denied. And so Mr Brightman, from thence beginning the 1260 years of the witnesses' prophesying in sackcloth, which falls eighteen years short, according to the account he makes, after that of Egypt, and of our vulgar account, makes the end of those years to fall out in 1550, when the rising again of the Protestant cause in Germany did begin. And thus in like manner the term of Antichrist's kingdom or power to do (namely, as formerly he had wont) might be reckoned to have had one kind of period in the falling off of these kingdoms of England, Scotland, &c., which fell out not many years after this, even before 1560,—which Mr Brightman, according to that his series of interpretation, interpreteth to be the seventh trumpet, when the kingdoms of the world became the kingdoms of Jesus Christ,—and so before that settled peace of the gospel established, and the throwing of Antichrist and his power out of those kingdoms. In all which kingdoms

the witnesses had first their times of being overcome and killed for three years and a half, though at several times in each of them. So in Germany, in that victory got over the Protestants, anno 1547, or thereabouts; just three years and a half after which they revived and enjoyed that peace which since they have had.

In like manner in England, after that, in Queen Mary's days, whose reign, although it lasted five whole years, yet the first part of her reign was spent in 'making war' upon the witnesses, or, as I may so speak, in the preparations of war against the witnesses, in getting statutes made for their burning, &c.; and the killing and martyring of them was but for three years and a half. After which ended, they rose again in Queen Elizabeth's beginning to reign, and have since that time hitherto enjoyed, as it were, a heaven.

Thus also in France, in the year 1572, which was fourteen years after, and about 1260 years after Constantine, (according to our account of years,) the massacre of the Protestants began, and in appearance an extinction of the religion, as they called it, for three years and a half: when, anno 1576, their peace and liberty was again granted them, and they had a manifest resurrection. Thus God observed a gradual fulfilling of this their killing and rising, as a shadow foregoing that great and last one to come.

But then there is another computation of the beginning of Antichrist's reign, and of the witnesses' prophesying in sackcloth in opposition to him, reckoning it from his birth and bringing forth into the world, as that former was from the time of his conception, about a hundred years after Constantine, in anno 406 or 410, when not only the Roman emperors were removed out of the way unto Constantinople, but also the western empire itself began first to break into ten kingdoms. Which is the truest and utmost character of the time of the beast's rising, as was shewed in our exposition of the 17th chapter. Which breaking the western empire was that 'taking out of the way' which Paul especially aimed at. For then the Pope had full scope to get his power, which these new kingdoms were to give unto him. Which term of his, if the reckoning be made after the ordinary compute of years, will end in 1666 or thereabout.

Now as there is this other computation of the Pope's times, (beginning and ending,) which falls out in this century of years now running on; so also in this same century, since the year 1600, there hath answerably been begun another, or second measuring the temple, as being to precede the expiration of this other computation of the witnesses' prophesying, which is yet to come. And in like manner also there will follow another great and eminent slaughter of the witnesses, and prevailing of the beast over them, before this second computation of his and their time be ended; that is, before 1666.

SECTION II.

The allusion unto Christ's last passion, in this last slaughter of the witnesses, explained.

Thus much in general for the time of the witnesses' killing. Now—

II. To come to the thing itself. For the understanding of which I shall also in the general premise this:—

That this their last *killing, rising, &c.*, is represented in an allusion unto the story of Christ's own crucifying and rising again; which makes this the most remarkable of all former sufferings, in that it is in an exact conformity

to his death,' and to the circumstances of it. In all other passages of this book, the allusions are still to stories of the Old Testament. But this, in a manner alone, alludes to that great and eminent story of Christ's passion and resurrection, which are the centre of all, both in the Old and New Testament. And whereas all other stories in the Old are but types of the sufferings and resurrection of Christ, here those sufferings and that resurrection of his are made the pattern of these of the witnesses; and that not in respect of that general, common conformity that is in all the sufferings of all the saints for Christ and his gospel unto those of Christ,—as Paul speaks, Phil. iii. 10, and therefore calls them the 'after-sufferings of the body of Christ,' Col. i. 24,—but this here is made such in some peculiar eminency and transcendency, above all sufferings that have been formerly in any age; and it being the last, it is in a singular manner set forth unto us thereby. Which may at once both provoke us to prepare for it, as Christ did, when he knew what he should suffer; and also comfort us against it, as being therein in a peculiar manner to be made conformable unto Christ: which will draw on with it a peculiar conformity also in reigning with him in glory.

Now that the allusion here is indeed unto the last sufferings of Christ, &c., is acknowledged and observed by all interpreters. And it appears in every circumstance here related.

As, for example, in that, as he, after three-years-and-a-half's preaching upon earth once finished,—when that he had almost carried it in the people's hearts, the world going after him,—was yet in the end prevailed upon by his enemies, and put to death by the foreign power of the city of Rome, having then jurisdiction over Jerusalem, and for three days did lie in their power: so in like manner that these witnesses, after three-years-and-a-half's (for that is the exact compute of 1260 days, or forty-two months) prophesying well-nigh expired, and now when they are about even to finish it,—having so mightily prevailed in the people's hearts, that their Pharisean enemies are afraid of utterly losing their credit and authority,—that then these Pharisees, again acknowledging the foreign power of Rome, should prevail over these witnesses, and that so far as by and under the authority and jurisdiction of the beast, and for his sake, should now at last kill them, and have them in their power for three years and a half; which do bear a like proportion to those 1260 years or days forepassed, that Christ's three days did to his three years forepassed; their enemies also rejoicing, feasting, and sending gifts for joy that they had them thus down, and in their power; even as the Pharisees did at that their great feast of the passover, when they were, as they thought, rid of the torment which Christ's ministry had put them to, and made it the joyfullest feast and passover that ever they kept: after all which, that those witnesses should notwithstanding rise again, even as our Lord did, and rise with an earthquake, as he then did, and with an affright to their enemies that see it, as befell those soldiers who saw his,—as you may read in the story of his resurrection,—and after this should ascend up to heaven, as he then did;—all this makes the allusion here very full and observable. And because the Holy Ghost thus alluded unto Christ's sufferings, therefore John, by way of parenthesis, puts in these words, speaking of the place where this slaughter was to be: 'in the city,' says he, 'where our Lord also was crucified,' ver. 8. That same *ἔπου καὶ, where also*, may have a double reference: it may as a copulative relate to the former cities unto which he had resembled it, even Sodom and Egypt, in this sense, 'and that city also where our

Lord was crucified,' that is, Jerusalem. And it may as well refer unto the word *crucified* in this sense: where our Lord was before in like manner crucified, there are these now in like manner to be killed.

SECTION III.

That this killing of the witnesses is to be executed by and under the power of the beast of Rome; and so could not be meant of any of the former persecutions in the reformed churches, which were from among themselves.

Thus much in general for the understanding this great occurrence which is yet to come in the church.

Now more particularly to explain some things about it, though it be a difficult thing to hit right in the understanding, and much more in applying the circumstances of a prophecy unto things to come, and which the events do best interpret.

1. Take notice, that the power and authority by which this slaughter shall be made is to be that of the beast, or the Pope of Rome; and this as having regained more or less power in these places where these witnesses are. This is evident—

(1.) In that not so much their enemies who are among them, and of the reformed religion with them, that yet hate them, but 'the beast that ascends out of the bottomless pit,' is said to kill them. And—

(2.) In that he calls the place where their dead bodies lie, and so, by consequence, where this slaughter is to be executed, 'the city where our Lord was crucified.' Which is not spoken of Jerusalem, but of Rome; that being here called the great city, which, chap. xvii. 18, is called 'the city which then ruled over the kings of the earth;' which can be none but Rome. And to make this good, we are to know, that the jurisdiction of the Roman empire was then in John's time called 'the city.' And therefore the whole world was called *Orbis Romanus*, the Roman world. And in like manner now, all kingdoms subjected to the Pope are called the church of Rome, as together making that great city. And in that world the city of Rome was the regal palace, from whence issued out edicts and commands over all. And in such a sense it is said, 'the city where Christ was crucified;' because it was the Roman power and authority by which he was put to death, though it were done at Jerusalem, for thither did the jurisdiction of Rome reach; and therefore Christ says, 'they should deliver him up unto the Gentiles,' Matt. xx. 19,—that is, the Romans, who then had trodden down that holy city, and got the command of it; the Pharisees owning Cæsar for their king. And thus now for the killing these witnesses, it must be that the beast of Rome shall again recover so much owning and acknowledgment in the places of the Reformation, whether by secret combination or by professed avouchment God only knows, where the witnesses are to be killed; so as, for his sake, and at his instigation, these Pharisees, either as joining with him, or else using the help of his party, shall kill them. And so far must the beast have a hand in it, that he may truly be said to do it; and that in order to the further advancement of his power in those places. And therefore—

(3.) The place where their dead bodies are said to lie is said to be *πλατεία πόλεως τῆς μεγάλης*,—'the street,' the extension of the jurisdiction, 'of the great city,'—as being within the jurisdiction or walls of it, as it were. You heard before how that the Gentiles were to regain the outward court, and so it to become part of the city again, and within the extent of its jurisdiction.

So that, however the witnesses have had enemies from among themselves, who have been, as those Pharisees were to Christ, of the same nation and religion, and yet have persecuted them from the first, even from the times of the first reformation downward, and therefore it hath been that the faithful witnesses have continued to prophesy in sackcloth and mourning, even now in their last days, when yet a separation hath been made from Antichrist, because those among them still continued to oppress them; yet none of all those wars and prevailings against them all that while, by those of their own, are this same war and killing of them here so eminently set out. For this must be by the beast, even by their enemies combining with the Papists, or using the help of the beast, to join with them against the witnesses; or, it may be, beginning again to submit to the beast, in a more open and avowed manner, as those Pharisees did to Cæsar. And so, for his sake, and to advance his power, shall they kill those witnesses, who indeed are only and alone the greatest and most hearty withstanders of him, and that will stand it out against him. Or if, when this is done, they do not so openly avow the beast's power, yet it may be said to be done by the beast, if by a party or combination of men that are for him, though not professedly, yet who, in order to reduce his power into those churches, do raise this war against the witnesses and oppress them. And that which may give suspicion of this is because, as I shewed out of chap. xiii., there is a generation of men set forth as the beast's last champions, who yet should not, at least at the first, so openly own his name or character, that yet receive the 'number of his name.' And these are there reckoned his as truly as the other, as being they who should interdict buying and selling to the beast's opposites, in order unto his advancement. And they doing this in order unto the beast and for him, the beast therefore and his power may be said to do it.

But I fear that they shall proceed yet further, even to an open acknowledgment and professing the Pope's power, though perhaps not as infallible head of the church, yet as universal patriarch of the west, and so endeavouring to effect a union and reconciliation with him. For these men, as was said, are to bring in but an image of Popery, as it was of heathenism, especially at first, though with intent to introduce more. And with this doth that speech of the angel in his oath, Dan. xii. 7, accord, which, as I said, this angel here came to renew and interpret; that when 'he,' namely, this beast, 'shall have accomplished,' namely, with this last killing, 'to scatter the power of the holy people,' &c.

That which I here cite this for is, that it must be he and his power that must do it. And in that the Gentiles are here said to obtain the outward court, ver. 1, so as to 'tread it down' with the rest of the holy city; this would argue a prevailing of them, so far as to gain a subjection from carnal Protestants, by reason of which it shall be that even the beast's power, as entertained and owned by the most, may be said to kill them. And likewise the allusion here to Christ's suffering, by the power that then Rome had in Jerusalem, the holy city, would argue this also. That even as then, a governor, or president, from Rome, namely Pilate, lay at Jerusalem, and was, in the name and power of Rome, the author of Christ's crucifying; so, at least, that Rome should now in like manner have her legates, that should have power in these places to procure the deposition and death of these witnesses. That so, as God ordained Jerusalem, the city where Christ was crucified, unto which the allusion here is made, to be the slaughter-house of all the prophets, insomuch that Christ said, 'It was not possible that a prophet should perish but in Jerusalem;' and therefore it was that himself was

so secure that he should not be killed until he came thither; so that Rome is in like manner ordained to have a hand in the deaths of all the witnesses, though others may persecute them too. And so this last and great slaughter and martyrdom of them shall be executed by her. That so when at her downfall she comes to be reckoned with, it may be said, as it is in chap. xviii. 24, that 'in her was found the blood of the prophets, and of the saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth.' And therefore, until the Romish flag be advanced upon the walls of the outward court of this temple, reckon not this time of the witnesses' three years and a half to be come. But when you see that abomination of desolation begun to be set up, then flee into the mountains, as Christ in another case speaks.

SECTION IV.

The time of the beast's enjoying this full victory but three years and a half.—The time of obtaining it, and of killing the witnesses, may be longer.

2. For the time of the continuance of this slaughter. Whereas there is here mentioned the beast's 'making war against them, and overcoming and killing them,' then 'when they are about to finish their testimony,'—that is, towards the time of the end of it,—and then their 'lying dead for three days and a half;' we must herein warily take heed we mistake not this only mentioned time of three years and a half, as if that were all the time allotted for this last war against them, victory over them, and slaughter of them. No, it is not said they should be overcoming and killing them only so long time; but that these witnesses should lie dead no longer, after a full victory obtained, and slaughter once made. So that that war against them, and killing of them, may be much longer in execution than for three days and a half only. And indeed, how long that shall continue before these three years and a half begin, we know not. The Gentiles have already been a long while a-besieging and making war against the temple, and have not as yet prevailed. It is not yet come to an overcoming of so much as the outward court; that out-work is not yet fully enough gained: for the winning of the outward court I account part of this their making war against the witnesses. But how long soever this war may prove, and how far soever it may be lengthened out, yet when it comes to a complete victory once, then, for our comfort, we are sure that the time of the witnesses' lying dead shall be but for three years and a half, until their rising, or beginning to rise again. And as in a great eclipse of the moon, the time whilst all or most of its body is darkened, and whilst that eclipse is in its fulness, useth especially to be set down and taken notice of by astronomers, and that time is especially accounted the time of the eclipse, and not so much the time when it begins to lose, or after that to recover some light: so is it here in this great and last hour of darkness which the church is to have, wherein the time of its total eclipse is only reckoned. The Pharisees were long a-laying their plots against Christ, and consulting how to ruin him, but at the last prevailed only for three days. And thus all hitherto done is but the war in order to this conquest; the enemies are as yet but a-taking the out-works, and making their approaches, &c.

3. For this time here mentioned of their lying dead, it is but for three years and a half, which is here called three days and a half; whereby three natural days, consisting of twenty-four hours, cannot be meant. For how shall the noise of this full victory be carried to nations and tongues, who are said to 'see their dead bodies,' partly in that respect of having the news of

it? And how shall the whole Roman party universally rejoice, and send gifts one to another to congratulate this victory? These three days, therefore, and a half, in which they are to lie dead, are such as those 1260 days formerly mentioned were, even prophetic days, taken according to the style of the prophets, namely, days for years. And such a three years and a half had Jerusalem, the holy city, under Antiochus, when the temple was polluted, and 'the daily sacrifice,' God's true worship, 'taken away,' and heathenish idolatry, which there, and still elsewhere in Daniel, is called the 'abomination that maketh desolate,' set up; and when those that were the most eminent for godliness did fall by the sword and by captivity, (as you have it Dan. xi. 31, &c.) for many days. But the last persecution of his reign was for three years and a half, as in 1 Macc. i. 30 to chap. vi. you have it recorded. But in the 11th chapter of Daniel, where this Antiochus is prophesied of, he is in this made the type of Antichrist; and therefore after that the prophet had thus set forth and ended that his tyranny at ver. 35 of that chapter, he begins, ver. 36, to set out the Pope and his tyranny unto the end of the chapter: so passing from the type to the antitype, even as Christ doth, in the 24th of Matthew, from the story of the destruction of Jerusalem to that of the end of the world, because that was a type of it. And therefore it is that Daniel useth this transition, ver. 35 of that 11th chapter, when he had ended Antiochus's story, that there remains yet 'a time ordained,' so Graserus and others read it,—that is, yet another series of the fates to be related, whereof this was the type; and so he passeth on to describe Antichrist (who is that king mentioned ver. 36) unto the end of that chapter, whose ruin and end, he says, should be after 'ill tidings to him out of the north'—that is, the reformation of religion in these northern countries—had so enraged him as to cause him to 'go forth in fury,' at his last endeavouring utterly to root out, &c. And in which expedition he should so far prevail as to 'plant his tabernacle on the glorious holy mountain,' that is, to overrun the church. Which, indeed, I take to be all one with this last war and killing the witnesses here, for it is there just before his end too, for three years and a half; whereof that last prevailing over the Jews by Antiochus was the type. And such a like time, as I said before, had the Pharisees over Christ, even three days, which Christ calls the 'hour of darkness;' even as this is thought to be that 'hour of temptation to come over the whole (Christian) world,' Rev. iii. 10. The enemies, indeed, think to have the day of it, but they shall have only the hour of it. This great and fearful eclipse, in the fulness of it, shall last no longer; this is their hour.

And such a like space of time is used in Scripture to express a short time; as Hos. vi. 2, 'After two days he will revive us, and in the third day raise us up,' &c.

Again, such a like time had Julian over the church, when he had again set up heathenism. Some say his reign was three years long, though others say less. And so hath God ordered it, for the like holy ends, that as heathenism had a prevailing again in the world, before it was utterly extirpated, for that small time in Julian's reign, and this even after that Christianity had been set up forty years before by the imperial power of Constantine; so that Popery (the image of it) should in like manner expire, and after a glorious reformation made by kingly power, and casting out of Popery in many states, that it should yet have a prevailing over those churches, or the eminentest of them, once again before its final and utter extirpation.

SECTION V.

The sharpness and the extent of this victory, how great; whether unto death natural or martyrdom discussed.

Concerning the sharpness of this victory of the beast, and of the Popish party, how far it shall extend; as—

Whether unto blood or to martyrdom and to death natural of the witnesses, and whether this killing here be meant of such a kind?

I find some who interpret all done to them to be meant of a civil death, not a natural; that is, a killing them considered as witnesses, not as men; that is, a taking away all power from them of prophesying as they had wont—a general silencing of ministers, and deposing magistrates and men of worth that profess and uphold religion, putting them from their places, shutting their shops, burning their books, &c. And for this makes—

1. That their death and lying dead here is but correspondent to their resurrection. Now, their resurrection is not from a natural death, and therefore such not their killing.

2. That their bodies, when dead, are said to 'lie in the street of the great city for three days and a half,' and after that a 'spirit of life to come into' those dead bodies. Now, that cannot be meant of naturally dead men, for their bodies cannot be supposed to have lain naturally dead so long above-ground. And then, in that the spirit of life is said to enter into those bodies that were dead, and in that it must be supposed that those lay dead who are first here said to be killed, all this would seem to carry it to the very same individual persons that were killed, that they should rise; which to suppose of a natural resurrection before the day of Christ, we have no warrant nor any ground for.

And accordingly they interpret that following passage, that those of the nations, tongues, and kindreds, suffer them not to be put in graves, as that which may be construed and taken in the better part, as shewing what should hinder their enemies from killing them outright, namely, that there was a party of Protestants in the nations about them that should hinder their enemies from martyring and utterly extinguishing them, and should preserve them above-ground for a reviving; even as men whom we think not dead, but in a swoon, we use to keep out of the grave, and not bury them, because we hope they may revive again. And so these Protestants, that the cause may again prevail, they may preserve the persons. And this the rather appears the intentment here, in that these of the nations, tongues, and kindreds seem to be a diverse and distinct company from the enemies of the witnesses; for of their enemies, that is said which follows in the next verse, 'And those that dwelt on the earth rejoiced over them,' &c. As if the angel went about to describe the differing spirits of the two sorts of men, of whom he speaks, towards these witnesses: the one, whom he calls those of nations, tongues, and kindreds, as friends doing them this kind office, as 'not to suffer their bodies to be put in graves;' but the other, whom, as diverse from these, he calls under a new phrase, 'those that dwell on the earth,' as enemies rejoicing over them.

Which makes this suffering of the witnesses herein alone to differ from Christ's,—unto which, in all other circumstances, the allusion holds,—that Christ was really killed, and therefore buried. But these, though killed as witnesses, yet are not suffered to be buried; as noting out a keeping them from an extinction, or an utter taking them out of the way, though by their

enemies they be suppressed. And it may be, that as Christ foretold his resurrection the third day, and so it was commonly known and bruited, that even the Pharisees had knowledge of it, and said unto Pilate, 'This deceiver said he would rise the third day,' which they laughed at as a vain dream: so it may be, this very notion of such a prevailing of the Popish party for three years and a half, which hath been so long and so much spoken of in the church, shall be so commonly known, as already it begins to be, that for that very cause these friends of theirs may so far interpose as to hinder the utter extinction, or the burial of them, wholly under-ground, (as it were,) as hoping that this notion given out of their resurrection, after three years and a half, may prove true, as the disciples hoped of Christ's resurrection all the while that he lay in the grave.

And whereas it may be thought, that because the Holy Ghost singleth out this one last killing, and instanceth in it alone, above all those other that have foregone it throughout the beast's whole reign,—although he hath made many wars against and slaughters of the witnesses in former times,—that therefore this should be the worst and sharpest; their answer hereunto is, that this killing of them here is thus particularly and alone mentioned in another respect,—namely, as it is the signal of the Pope's ruin,—and so that this argues not the soreness of this their last killing above any foregoing. This is that which useth to be said for this opinion. But, for my part, I think it cannot be denied but that—

1. This lying dead here of these witnesses must needs be metaphorically meant, and understood of such a civil death, and of a suppression of them and their cause, and, as *they are witnesses*, to be so put down and extinguished, that they for a time remain as men laid forth by the walls for dead, and as men in whose testimony there is in appearance no life, or likelihood of a revival, their enemies having now got such a power over them. This is certainly made the great matter of their enemies' rejoicing: that as the Pharisees thought they had Christ sure enough when they got him condemned and crucified, and had him in the grave; so these their enemies shall think they have the witnesses down sure enough for ever, so great, desperate, and helpless in all view will the suppression of the witnesses by these their enemies be. And this was principally intended in their being said to lie dead; and, oppositely, the revival of them and their cause is set forth by a resurrection from the dead.

And to this purpose there may be something in that phrase in Daniel, when the angel, speaking, as I take it, of this last war of the beast, says, 'He shall accomplish to scatter the power of the holy people;' as noting out rather the dissolving their power as witnesses, than killing them as men. So that whatever proceedings the power of their enemies may reach unto, further to kill or martyr the natural bodies of these witnesses; yet this is the thing eminently held forth in this metaphorical expression, and therein eminently intended, that the cause and testimony of these witnesses should be as desperate and hopeless, without any appearance of life. And the Holy Ghost would have us take notice that their enemies' prevailing should so far reach.

2. But yet withal, in the second place, I am notwithstanding afraid, lest that so great a victory over them, and the suppression of them as witnesses, should also be followed with great effusion of blood, and with martyring many of them. And although this their lying dead and rising again be metaphorically meant and intended to set out the desperateness of their cause and testimony, and so to illustrate that glorious revival of theirs afterward; yet

those other foregoing words, 'He shall make war against them, overcome them, and kill them,' may import further proceedings, by which they got this complete victory. I confess I am afraid of those many metaphors; lest this same killing mentioned after overcoming should not be meant really and properly of some further cruelty in enemies so malicious, when they have got the power in their own hands. For if the intent of that word *killing* were to express their suppression only as witnesses, that word *overcoming* had then been sufficient to import it. Sure I am, in the 13th chapter,—where the rage and utmost cruelty which the beast should at any time, through his whole reign, exercise against the saints, is so prophesied of,—all that cruelty of their enemies, which proceeded to so great slaughters of them, is expressed in the same words that here, 'And it was given him to *make war* against the saints, and to *overcome* them,' ver. 7. And yet under those two expressions—whereas here are three, *killing* being added—are contained all those bloody executions and butcherings of the saints, by martyrdom and death, which afterwards, in the 10th verse of that chapter, is more fully expressed, when it is said, 'He that kills with the sword must be killed by the sword;' as shewing the cause and manner of the beast's bloody fall and ruin in the end, and what it is that should provoke God and man unto it, even their butchering of the saints.

And although Antichrist's power is in general there set out, as it should be in his height and ruff, and during the whole time of his reign, as getting power over all nations, tongues, and kindreds, and here only his last particular war against the witnesses is described, which should immediately forego his ruin; yet it follows not that this expression here should not be of the same nature and kind, and import the same cruelty and manner of prevailing, that is there intended. For notwithstanding that the issue of the last particular war is the fatal and utter ruin of the beast, yet that hinders not but that he may first recover again the like power, and exercise the like cruelty over these witnesses for this small space, which he had done in former ages, when he obtained power so long to continue over them. Yea, it may be feared, by that dirge of her own funeral song, which herself at last makes, in the 18th chapter, ver. 7, 8, that she shall recover her ancient power again, or at least entertain certain hopes and expectations of it, through her prevailing over some, and those of the chief, of her lost kingdoms. For there you may read, that when the next day, as it were, she is to be burnt for a witch and a whore, she saith in her heart, and sings, 'I sit as a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow:' which is spoken of her present condition just before her fall; for it follows, 'therefore shall her plagues come in one day, and she shall be utterly burnt with fire; for strong is the Lord who judgeth her.' All which implies, that as her destruction should be sudden, and in the midst of her rejoicing, so that she shall have got such power and footing again, as that God's omnipotent power must be put forth in that her so sudden and unexpected ruin after all this.

There is the like intimated in that mention of the beast's recovery of his power in Dan. xi. 45, where it is added, '*yet* he shall come to his end;' as importing the greatness of that work, and the utter unlikelihood of it, now when he shall have gained his power so settledly again. That *yet* comes in there as that *yet* in the 2d Psalm does: '*Yet* I have set my king on my holy hill of Sion,' maugre all the opposition and rage of the Gentiles and Pharisees; though they have so far prevailed as to crucify him, *yet* I have set my Son as king on Sion, and raised up him and his cause again to prevail.

And I therefore incline to think, that that song of the whore, mentioned ver. 7 of the 17th chapter, is uttered by her as during this her merry time at last; when she and her friends rejoice so, and make merry during these three years and a half, ver. 10 of this 11th chapter; when suddenly after it she is to be ruined. Yea, I believe that the cruelties which upon this recovery of her power she may now at last exercise, according to her manner in former ages, may be the means to revive the memory of all her former slaughters, and so to provoke God and men, as for this her last bloodshed, to bring upon her the blood of all the prophets and martyrs before shed; even as the blood of Christ at last brought upon the Jews the blood of all from Abel, to provoke God to ruin Jerusalem. That as the ten tribes were enraged against the Benjamites, with eagerness to root them out, because of their great victory at first got over themselves; so may the Protestant party be whetted on by these fresh killings of the saints, which may revive the memory of all the former, otherwise apt to be forgotten, to do execution upon these their enemies without all mercy. And so shall be fulfilled what is said, chap. xiii., 'He that killeth with the sword must be killed by the sword.' They shall reward her as she had rewarded them just before, as chap. xvii. 6.

And whereas it is alleged, that this being but one particular war against the witnesses, why should it be alone mentioned at last as some way peculiar, if it were such as Antichrist had commonly made upon the saints all his former days, which are mentioned chap. xiii.? The angel would not have recorded it thus alone by itself, if it had not been a different war from those former ones which the beast made against these witnesses.

The answer is, that it follows not that this is not such a kind of war and prevailing as formerly Antichrist had. For this, though such as the former, is thus particularly and alone mentioned, merely for this respect, because it is the last of them all, and so as a signal to shew the time of Antichrist's ending, and to make known the wonderful dealing of God, both with his church and with his enemies; that after so great a victory by it obtained against the beast, he should notwithstanding thus prevail over it again, and have power to do for this space of time, even as in former ages; when thinking himself as secure as ever, that then he should for ever be overthrown: the wonder of this deserved to be made a sign, and that this war of all other should particularly be instanced in.

Then again, add to this, that it is that last, great, and eminent suffering of the church,—namely, of the European churches,—and therefore it, of all others, may be ordained to be the sorest. These witnesses do now die to rise, and so to die no more, as Christ did not after his resurrection, Rom. vi. 9, but to enter into their glory, as Christ also did. I have observed that those last afflictions, which are the immediate forerunners of the greatest happiness and good, are still the sharpest. So it was with Christ himself; so with all Christians in their last conflict with death, the king of fears, who yet is the porter to let them into heaven; and so it is with the church in her persecutions. The Egyptian bondage was sorest at the last. 'And,' says Paul, 'God hath set forth us apostles last, as it were appointed unto death,' 1 Cor. iv. 9, alluding to those gladiators or fencers in the Roman games, the last of whom, there being three sorts that used to come upon the stage, were appointed not to go off; but to fight it out till they were killed, they being ordinarily either slaves or else malefactors. The greatest persecution that ever the church had under heathenish Rome was that last one under Dioclesian, and the fifth seal. And therefore all the former martyrdoms of the saints

by that state, during the times of the former seals, do, with a general cry of their blood, come but then in, when as that the cruellest of all the former was come. And yet that was not the last neither of those persecutions that the church ever was to have; for it is there told those saints that they had other brethren yet to be killed. But here these witnesses are to rise and die no more; for as they died as Christ did, so they shall rise as Christ did.

Yea, and further; you may observe, that this is now mentioned not only alone, and above all other conquests over the saints, but also as the very epitome of all their former sufferings during the whole time of the witnesses' prophecy. And therefore in the very time of the duration hereof—namely, three days and a half—it is set forth as bearing the proportion of a compendium of the whole time of their prophesying and suffering, which was for three years and a half, or 1260 days. As in like manner Christ's sufferings, unto which the allusion here is, were all summed up in his death, which is therefore put for all his sufferings. When therefore it came to a 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?' then he was heard and delivered from what he feared. And so in this last brunt of the church, when you shall hear the like voice uttered by it, know then that delivery is near.

We may also further consider, that now the beast hath been so chafed by these witnesses' prophesying, and hath had so many vials emptied upon him and his company, they will thereby be so enraged, when once they shall get the victory and power into their hands, that surely 'in their rage they will be cruel,' as was said of Reuben. And the angel in Daniel, chap. xi. 44, expressly attributes this his last invasion of the churches unto his rage for their opposing him by this northern reformation, which in these kingdoms hath been the occasion of it. 'Therefore,' says he, 'he shall go forth with great fury to destroy, and utterly to make away many.' So that nothing but blood and cruelty will be in their hearts. And therefore if God restrain not their spirits, or cut them short by an almighty work of his power, this last must needs come to be far the sorest of all former persecutions.

Add unto this, that in chap. xvii. 6 the whore, the city of vice, is presented as she shall be just before her ruin; and this, as 'drunk with the blood of the saints.' Which unto me seems to argue, that drunkenness now at last shall be added to that her thirst of blood, which, by her being scorched with fire by these witnesses, hath been increased. I know it may be said that it is spoken of her in her relation to her former bloody martyrings of the saints. But that vision being made of her as just before her fall, (for, ver. 1, John says, that 'one of the seven angels of the vials'—and as it is conjectured by interpreters, the fifth, because he it is that pours out his vial upon the seat of the beast, the whore—'shewed him the judgment of the great whore, with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication,' &c., that is, in so many ages fore-passed; so that he presented her in her old and last days,) and that then she appears so drunk, makes me fear that it is by reason she was new come out from her cups of blood; and that now at last (after these * years for her to sleep in) some fresh cup, some new draught, shall make her tipsy again, that so she may be surprised *somno vinoque sepulta*, buried in sleep and drunkenness, as Babylon was; which will be the greater judgment and confusion unto her.

But yet, whether it shall be thus or no, I dare not nor cannot certainly and peremptorily determine. For on the other side, how God may 'restrain

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their wrath, and cut short their spirits,' as the Psalmist speaks, we know not. Yea, notwithstanding all their rage, malice, and spirit of revenge, yet how far their own wisdom and policy may move them of themselves to forbear the full execution of that vigour which their power gives them opportunity of, we know not. For when their victory is gotten, they may use it more moderately; especially in a respect to that Protestant party, which, though outwardly overcome by them, yet they cannot but in their hearts and consciences continue firm unto the cause of these witnesses. The light of the gospel hath took such a deep impression on men's spirits, as it cannot be extinguished, nor they be brought so suddenly to embrace Popery as the truth. And as the Pharisees, 'for fear of the people,' forbore many attempts against Christ, so may these for fear of these tongues, kindreds, and nations here mentioned, which are in heart inclined to the Protestant cause, forbear the extremity of their rage, though for the present they have the power; especially considering that they may wait for, and promise to themselves, some after age and time when their power shall more perfectly be recovered and settled, and men's consciences quieted in Popish ways, and when the adverse Protestant party shall be brought low and diminished. And so they may come to forbear and defer their full revenge so long, until this limited and short time of their full power, namely, their three years and a half, be expired, and out of date sooner than they dreamed of. Which may prevent and hinder the execution of their cruel intentions to 'destroy and utterly make away many.'

And we have experience of the wisdom of this generation of men, who love easy and gradual conquests. And their own experience hath and doth teach them that the martyring and butchering of the saints hath still advanced the cause of the Protestant religion, and branded theirs with blood and cruelty, as a mark of the false and whorish church. And though they be full of malice, which puts them on to use the utmost extremity, yet their wisdom, having some further mischievous end, may keep down the rage of that their malice, even as in Julian the Apostate, who sinned against the Holy Ghost, it did. For he seeing that martyrdoms did tend rather to add unto and increase the church than to diminish it, and knowing that martyrdom would procure to those that suffered it a fairer crown of glory, out of envy, therefore, and a witty malice, he would make no edicts for the killing of the Christians, but rather used ways of subtlety, by laying snares and temptations to draw men from the truth, and to shipwreck their consciences; and so with his profane hands to paddle in the blood of their souls—a sweeter victory to him—rather than of their bodies, and to triumph over them in their falls from the truth, rather than in their deaths. And to that end he invented another way to mischief and diminish them, by denying them schools of learning and the use of books, and suffered none of the Christians to bear any office, either in war or peace.

Moreover, there may be insinuated some mitigation of this rage of these Gentiles in the pursuing this their last victory, in that which follows the before-cited place in Daniel; where although it be said that he shall go forth in such fury and rage, and with an intent to root out many, yet all his prevailing is in the issue and success expressed but by this, that 'he shall plant his tabernacle upon the glorious holy mountain.' Which may imply, that although his intention is utterly to destroy, yet for the execution of it no more shall be done than getting a possession again in the church, and a planting his tabernacle, his power and throne, therein; which

is therefore called a tabernacle, because it must presently be pulled down again.

The event only must declare how far this prevailing shall succeed. In the meantime, we have cause to fear, and to prepare for, the worst; both from the sins of the witnesses in yielding too far unto the superstitious of Rome, and in suffering some of those superstitions to be left in their churches, by the overflowing of the Romish sea, as we see much filth useth to be left on the shore by the overflowing of the ocean, and from many other sins of theirs, as carnal-gospelling, worldly-mindedness, &c., and also from their base yielding up the outward court, and deserting the cause. For, as the angel in Daniel says, many among them shall do wickedly.

Now to conclude this point. That whereto my last and utmost thoughts and hopes concerning this matter do chiefly incline and sway me is, to think that it will be such a time with the church as that under Julian was; and that haply that persecution of his was a kind of type of this: that being the last prevailing of heathenism, as this of Popery. Julian abstained from extremity of cruelty, in respect of blood, especially at the first; but having the power in his hands, he endeavoured, by crafty means, to undo and extinguish religion, by denying the Christians the use of schools of literature, and books, &c., as I before told you; and rather shewed his malice in flouting and jeering of them than in killing them; and studied snares for their consciences, setting up his own image, with the idols of the heathen gods round about it, in the Forum or market-place: that so in doing reverence to his image, they might seem to reverence the gods; and refusing to bow towards these false gods, they might be accused as denying reverence to the emperor. Which course, in the end, was the cause of much bloodshed, though by no public edict of his made, as formerly by other emperors. And the people knowing his hate unto the Christians, they fell upon them in divers parts of the empire, and persecuted them even unto death.

Now for this prevailing to come, I think that through many temptations and snares laid, together with cruelties inflicted, it may prove worse than death and martyrdom itself. And it may perhaps be eminently rather an hour of temptation and trial, than of the blackness and darkness of martyrdom unto the generality of believers, though haply accompanied with the martyrdom of many; and therefore the Gentiles are also said to kill these witnesses. These times are like to be (as Paul to Timothy hath it, 2 Epist. iii. 1) *καιροί ζαλεποί*, difficult times, rather than bloody times, the apostle there speaking of the *last* days, as in his first epistle, chap. iv. 1, he speaks of the *latter* days of Popery. And these are called difficult times, because of the cunning and subtlety that shall be used to ensnare men, and the temptations laid for them; and yet they may be stained with much blood also.

Yet so as however this we may be sure of, that many shall survive this war, and only be made white and tried, (as it is in Daniel.) Which is the rather to be hoped, because so sudden a resurrection of so great a multitude, as chap. xix. 1 are mentioned, who shall possess that glorious state of a church described in that chapter, ver. 1-10, after that three years and a half once ended, is not likely to arise merely out of a succession of new converts; but is probably to be made up of the same persons surviving and outriding that great storm.

SECTION VI.

Of that concomitant of the witnesses' killing: the nations seeing their dead bodies, and not suffering them to be put in graves.—Several senses given

of it: whether taken as an office of favour or an injury; and whether to be understood of friends or enemies, discussed.

Now for that particular clause that follows, that 'those of the nations, tongues, and kindreds, should see their dead bodies lie, and not suffer them to be put in graves,' which is interpreted in a way of favour to the witnesses; although I think their lying dead to be meant in a metaphorical and allusive sense, yet it is exceedingly doubtful unto me whether or no this clause be not to be taken *in malam partem*, in the worser sense, as rather expressing inhumanity by this metaphor than kindness and love. And this seems to me to be the meaning of it, whether those of the nations, tongues, and kindreds, be taken for friends or for enemies; and so to have been here added further to represent unto us the extreme misery and desperate calamity into which these witnesses shall be brought, in this their time of trial.

1. If these nations, &c., be meant of enemies, this phrase, 'they saw, and suffered not,' &c., doth imply their feeding their eyes with this sight, and making it a spectacle of delight and joy unto them. For to see or view a thing, when the sights are of this nature, is in such a sense used in Scripture, and implies that the thing seen is made a spectacle and gazingstock; and in the seers and beholders it imports derision and triumph. Thus in Christ's sufferings, unto which the allusion is, they are said to come out to 'see him and to mock at him.' And, Psalm xxii. 8, 'All they that see me do mock at me,' says the prophet there in Christ's name. And in the 109th Psalm, ver. 25, 'They saw me,' says Christ there,—for of him is that psalm made,—'and shaked their heads,' &c.

And thus seeing is usually mentioned in this sense, when any judgment is executed, to shew how the opposite party comes forth, and sees it, and rejoiceth at it. Thus when judgments are executed on the wicked, 'the righteous shall see and laugh at him,' Psalm lii. 6. So, Isa. lxvi. 24, 'They shall look upon the carcases of them that have transgressed against God; which shall become an abhorring unto all flesh.'

And so that other phrase that follows, 'and they shall not suffer them to be put in graves,' may also import a height of inhumanity. For, Psalm lxxix. 3, when that like miserable desolation of the temple, and slaughter of the saints, be it either that of Antiochus, the type of this, as some think it meant, or that of the Babylonish captivity, as others, this aggravation is there added unto their slaughter, that 'there was none to bury them.' Yea, and that here it should rather be taken in such a bad sense, appears by this, that their killing being an allusion unto Christ's passion, this circumstance is therefore mentioned, as heightening the suffering of the witnesses above that of Christ's, in this respect. For though his lying in the grave, as endured by him, is accounted a part of his humiliation, yet it is noted as a work of humanity in Pilate, to suffer his body to be taken down from the cross, and laid in a grave; and especially in Joseph of Arimathea, who begged it to that end, and afterward honourably entombed it. This was an office of the greatest charity, and therefore recorded; which this prophecy notes out as that which should be wanting in these nations and tongues here, whether they be friends or enemies. And—

2. If they be taken for friends unto these witnesses, and as such among those nations, tongues, and kindreds as are in heart of the same religion with them, and who do in heart respect and love them, as the people did Christ; the query then will be, Whether this their not suffering them to be buried be a friendly office? I confess, indeed, they seem to be some distinct company from those their enemies, who do so rejoice over them, ver. 14, and

some special company also of the nations, and tongues, and kindreds. For it is not said that *all* nations, kindreds, and tongues, &c., as in the 13th chapter, when Popery was in its first height undiscovered, it is said that Antichrist had power over *all* nations and tongues, &c. Nor is it said *the* nations, &c., but *they* of the nations, or *some* of the nations,—*ἐκ τῶν λαῶν καὶ φυλῶν καὶ γλωσσῶν καὶ ἰθῶν*, &c.,—and not *all* in those kindreds, and peoples, and nations, among whom these witnesses are. And so the phrase of speech serves fitly to note out a contradistinct, special party or company; even the Protestant party, who are not in all nations; neither are they all universally Protestants in those nations where the gospel is preached and professed. But only some nations are Protestants, and but some in and of those nations. And so the mention of them here may come in to shew what part they should play in this tragedy.

For this killing the witnesses falling out in an age when so many among the nations do in heart still continue of the same religion with the witnesses, the inquiry would be, What will they do? Will they endure it when it shall come to such extremity? Will they not put to their hand to help the witnesses of their own religion? No, says the angel here; 'they shall see their dead bodies, and not suffer them to be put in graves.'

1. It is said, 'They shall see their dead bodies lie in the street,' or public market-place, as the word may also signify. Which their so public lying in such a place notes out the greatest scorn put upon them by their enemies that may be. And yet these behold them as friends that have no heart to help them, and so will not once stir to relieve them, but like standers-by and mere lookers-on are shy, and list not to intermeddle in their killing, one way nor other. They stand aloof off, as men use to do from malefactors executed, although they be friends and well-willers to them; or as men that pass by and go on the other side of the street, when they see a dead carcase lying before them. Thus the phrase *seeing them* is also used in Scripture, and particularly in this book. For thus when the wheel is turned about, and after this Rome's turn comes to be burnt, her friends, 'the kings of the earth,' that shall in heart still cleave unto her, are described as standers aloof off, and spectators that 'see her smoke,' as Abraham did the smoke of Sodom, so chap. xviii. 9, 10, 18. And thus, it may be, those of the peoples, kindreds, tongues, and nations who have taken part with these witnesses formerly, shall now not dare to do it, but stand afar off, as it were, and pass by and see them killed, and not have hearts to help them. This the phrase *seeing them* may import.

Or further, it may be said, that those of the peoples, kindreds, &c., should see them, in that these witnesses should be driven out among those peoples, nations, &c., and should fly unto them for refuge and help.

2. And so, in the second place, that which follows may come in as a further degree of inhumanity, which these, their false friends, should shew to them, which shall be added unto the indignities put upon them by their enemies, so to make the calamity and distress of these witnesses the more complete; namely, that these, their friends of the Protestant party, should be so far overcome and prevailed upon by the power and dread of the Papists, that they shall deny these witnesses all help and shelter which they shall seek for, and all those common offices of friendship and humanity which might be expected from them. Those that are friends use to bury the dead bodies of those whose lives they could not rescue out of the hands of their common enemies; but these here shall be so far from helping the witnesses, that they 'shall not suffer them to be buried' among them, or 'to be laid in graves,

which are here metaphorically put for resting-places, where they might be sheltered from the shame, contempt, and indignities imposed on them by their insulting enemies, who now were complete victors over them.

And thus the allusion herein may be unto the sufferings of Christ, who, though he had a great party of the people for him, crying, 'Hosanna in the highest!' yet those very Jews were so far prevailed upon by the Pharisees, when they once had Christ down in their power, as to cry with the rest, 'Crucify him, crucify him!' and to run out in troops to see him executed. So Luke xxiii. 35: 'The people,' says the Evangelist, 'stood beholding him; and the rulers also with them derided him.' The people that before had rejoiced in his ministry now take part with the Pharisees, his enemies. And even so, it is to be feared, shall the Protestant party, overawed with the power and tyranny of Rome, which shall have power to tread down them also, comply with her against the witnesses; though not so far as to have their hands in their blood, yet so far as not to suffer them to be put in graves, and to be harboured amongst them or by them; so far as thus negatively to be against the witnesses, as not to shew any office of kindness in relieving them.

And so this their inhumanity is, after the manner of men, (who use to perform this as a common office of humanity, to put dead men's bodies into graves,) expressed unto us by this contrary carriage of theirs, that they suffered not their bodies to be put in graves: a metaphorical speech it is.

And particularly; the allusion here is made unto the putting the carcases of dead men into graves; which, you know, is an honour and a shelter to them, and, indeed, all the office of kindness that lies in the power of friends to afford them. And so kindness unto men in that dead condition is by this here fitly expressed. Now therefore, when these witnesses are deposed from their station, and haply banished from forth the nation in which they lived, which haply is their death here meant, and cast forth with the highest contempt, and persecuted with the greatest malice of their enemies; and shall come to those of other peoples, nations, and tongues, who are of their own religion and party, for succour and shelter from these indignities, and base usages from their enemies, so to find rest to themselves,—who are now, in respect of that active life of witnessing by prophecy, laid by the walls speechless, and as dead,—and to have only a harbour among them, (which unto those that are among strangers of another language, is but of the nature of a grave,) and a place of rest, where, at best, they cannot so much be said to live, as to lie still in quiet, as men dead;—when they shall seek but thus much, and shall not obtain it, these nations and kindreds who refuse it them may justly be said not to suffer their dead bodies to be laid in graves. Which yet to perform for them were but a common favour of humanity, and, by the law of nations, to be imparted unto banished strangers, especially to those of their own religion.

And we see it hath hitherto been allowed the witnesses flying out of England, by the Low Countries; and to the Protestants flying out of Germany, by the English. And so, in Queen Mary's days, the English professors found graves at least, some at Geneva, some in Germany, and others elsewhere; where they lay quietly enjoying their consciences, though put by that active life of prophesying which before that they lived in and enjoyed in King Edward's reign. But now such shall be the surpassing misery of these three last years and a half, above what in former times, and so potent the prevalency of the Popish faction, and such their vigilancy to stop all holes of refuge against these witnesses, that they seeking only for graves among these

states of their own party and religion, which formerly they had permitted them, shall yet be refused it by these nations, tongues, and kindreds, who shall so inhumanly be carried on against their own principles, as not to suffer them to have such graves among them; namely, a condition of harbour, rest, and quiet.

And further; because this shall be done with a prohibition to the contrary, therefore it is thus expressed, that 'they *suffered* not their dead bodies to be laid in graves;' that is, by edicts prohibiting any of the banished witnesses to have harbour among them. And although this phrase, putting their dead bodies in graves, may seem improper to express oppressed men's flying for shelter, because to be put in a grave is a passive phrase in respect of them that are dead, and imports a thing done by others; we must therefore still remember that this is a metaphorical speech, and so a civil death, and civilly lying dead, are here to be understood. For these witnesses, many of them, are not to be killed with a death natural, as they are men, but with a civil death, as they are witnesses; and so may seek for shelter as men when they are dead as witnesses, which shelter in this allusion is called a grave. And because dead men cannot bury themselves, therefore, according to the metaphor of men dead, the Holy Ghost expresseth their seeking a place of rest by their being put into graves; so passively expressing it. For how else, speaking of them under the notion of dead men, could it be expressed? It is but τὸ πρέπον *figuræ*; the decorum of following the metaphor taken up required this, and no other kind of expression. The like unto which is usual in Scripture phrase, and in all other languages. Which putting the witnesses into graves, in this sense taken, these their friends shall yet not suffer or permit.

And thus, as it may be mentioned, to note out the inhumanity and cowardice of their friends; so withal, the great misery and desperate calamity of the church in this their last being subdued: which will prove worse than ever any before it, in that now they shall have no sanctuary, no safe retiring place to rest in throughout all Europe, which shall in this respect universally become the jurisdiction of the great city; so some interpret that word *πλατεία*, street. It shall not now be, as at other times it hath been, that 'when they were persecuted in one city, they might flee to another,' and there have quiet and safety. But the jurisdiction of the Popish party shall so far now prevail in Protestant states, if any such remain, as they shall not dare to receive and protect the oppressed witnesses, seeking a refuge and a harbour amongst them, but shall rather prohibit them so doing. Which in this allusion is spoken in opposition unto that humanity and charity in Joseph of Arimathea, who honourably laid Christ's body in a grave, when yet he had not power to hinder his crucifying.

And that even the Protestant party may turn thus inhuman towards the witnesses, the unfaithful carriage of many Protestant states towards their neighbours and brethren, now whilst this war is but begun against the witnesses, may give us cause to fear and suspect.

How hath the Lutheran party in Germany complied and took part with the Popish for the ruin of the Calvinists? And it were happy for other states, professing the Calvin religion, if they could wash their hands of the blood of the churches, not only not assisted, but even betrayed by them.

Thus I have proposed another different interpretation from that formerly given, by way of mitigation of this extremity; yet leaving both it and the other unto the event to determine, and to the reader to judge of.

SECTION VII.

Of the universality of this slaughter.—Whether reaching to all churches reformed, and in them to all professors, or only to eminent witnesses.—That some one may be more eminently designed.—What is meant by the street of the city, &c.

III. The next query may be concerning the generality or universality of the extent of this slaughter: how far it may reach; as—

1. Whether to all sorts of professors of religion, or whether to eminent persons in the church only?

Now for that, it may seem principally to be of witnesses; that is, those that are eminently such. It is probable that the purest and best professors will be singled out to a duel or single combat, as it were. The Gentiles before this had the outward court of carnal professors more easily given up unto them; but among these truly godly ones, they find serious and stiff opposers, that will never be brought to yield unto them. And thus the Popish party themselves do both see and find—namely, that the godly of the Protestants are their only real enemies, and those who still put the great bars and impeachments to their plots, and that are the great stakes in the hedge of the church, which stand in the gap against their irruptions. And these are they who only by their lives and profession do torment the ungodly, as you have it, ver. 10; who therefore rejoice for their victory over them. And therefore this is not like to be a massacre of all sorts of professors at large, as was that in Paris, anno 1572; but a particular combat and set battle against the sincere witnesses only, whom their enemies have been taught to know and distinguish from others, by the fire they have shot into their consciences, as ver. 5. Thus in Antiochus's three years and a half, the type of this, the persecution fell especially upon those that were teachers and instructors of others; so Dan. xi. 35. And thus will this do.

Only let me add this: that these witnesses being the golden candlesticks also, as may seem by ver. 4, therefore a scattering of them—namely, of the purer churches—will be joined with it. And if their olive-trees be felled and removed, if their prophets and rulers be scattered, themselves then must needs be scattered. 'Smite the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered,' as Christ spake of himself and his disciples; which smiting of his there—namely, at his passion—is here alluded unto.

2. But a second query may be. Whether this killing will be over all the reformed churches, and so generally of the witnesses in all Protestant states and kingdoms? Graserus, a judicious Lutheran divine, thinks that it will be universal, and that this is the angel's very scope here, thus particularly to design out this last killing, as herein differing from all other former ones, that it should at once be a general and total eclipse of true churches for three years and a half. And so, says he, *quod hactenus per partes impleri nunquam desiit, jam plenariè et universaliter perficietur*; that is, that persecution which in some place or other hath never ceased, and so by parts hath been fulfilled at several times, that shall now at once more fully and universally be accomplished. And I must confess, that the treading down the outward court, and the sins of all churches, so great and so general in all, do universally threaten this. And it may be part of the drift of that speech which we have explained, that 'those of the peoples, kindreds, tongues, and nations, should see their dead bodies lie in the street,' or jurisdiction, 'of the great city;' as importing, that generally, in all those nations where witnesses

are to be found, they shall be killed; and so, by that means, they should all have opportunity to view and see their dead bodies.

This I deny not, but think it may be the event, more or less. Yet, however, I believe that some one kingdom or state will more eminently be made *sedes belli*, the field of this battle, the shambles of this slaughter.

And one reason hereof is, because where the witnesses rise from this their dead condition, there is an earthquake joined with it, which shakes 'the tenth part of the city;' that is, as I take it, and shall afterwards give my reason for it, one of those ten European kingdoms that have given up their power unto the beast, shall now in this slaughter begin to fall from and cease to be a part of the city, or to belong to the jurisdiction of Rome any longer, under which, for the space of these three years and a half, it had been. Now that falling away of the tenth kingdom, being joined with these witnesses' rising again, it would argue that accident of the earthquake to fall out for the especial help and furtherance of the witnesses' rising, who are in or do belong unto that kingdom, or tenth part of the city. Some one particular state or kingdom shall assist the witnesses in it in their rising and ascending into heaven; and shall revenge their slaughter by 'killing seven thousand names of men,' who were their enemies, and had been executioners of them in their fore-passed slaughter. Now, if their resurrection and ascension be in some one part of the ten kingdoms made more eminently glorious, and so the special privilege of the witnesses belonging unto that tenth part; then one would think, that the killing or slaughter of them should also be in that tenth part of the city more conspicuous than in the rest. For in this suffering, whereof Christ's passion is propounded the type, those that suffer most with him shall rise and enter into this their glory spoken of, which is to be answerably proportioned to their suffering. If, therefore, the glory that follows seems to be more peculiar to one tenth part, the suffering foregoing it would also seem to have been more peculiar to that tenth part likewise, and the main shock of the storm to have fallen there; though haply all the heavens may be covered with black, and all churches feel some drops and sprinklings of it.

It hath also somewhat moved me, that the place where they are said to lie dead is called *πλατεία*, the street, not streets, of the great city, as noting out some one eminent place or street of that city, or some state belonging to the jurisdiction of Rome; so comparing the jurisdiction and power of Rome through and over all Europe unto a city, and the kingdoms and states of it unto several streets. And so some one state or kingdom is this same *πλατεία τῆς πόλεως*, this same street of that city. I know what critics say, that this is *numerus singularis pro plurali*—street for streets; but the elegance of the allusion seems better made up by taking it for some one place of the city, by this slaughter made the market-place, and, as it were, the shambles therein, more eminently than the rest of the streets.

And thus also that former interpretation of those of the peoples, kindreds, &c., they being taken as meant of the Protestant party of other nations round about; and their seeing, &c., to be their knowing and taking notice of this slaughter, as standers-by, aloof off; and their not suffering them to be put in graves, to be their prohibiting them a sanctuary and resting-place among them, when they fled unto them for help: that interpretation, I say, is made more clear by this, that the slaughter falling more eminently upon some one part or kingdom, the rest of the kingdoms and nations about it do deny them of that kingdom shelter, and a grave to hide their heads in, when from thence they flee unto them and seek it at their hands.

And if in this last combat the witnesses be singled out as the one party, and by witnesses be meant only such faithful Christians and professors as do, in respect of their godliness and sincerity, hold forth an eminent testimony and witness, above that which others of the crowd of common professors do; and so not men of learning, but of holiness and zeal, are they who are here said to be the real tormenters of these their enemies; then surely in that part of the reformed churches where such witnesses are chiefly found, who do continue eminently to hold forth such a kind of powerful testimony as holy men, (for this is a testimony of holiness, not of learning,) their forefathers, who were killed before them for the same cause, have done,—surely there especially will be the seat of this war, and the field where this combat is to be fought.

Now then, look generally over almost all the reformed churches, and how few of such witnesses, with difference from the common crowd, do appear amongst them; the fire, the heat of those godly men, their first reformers, which is the thing that should torment those enemies at last, being gone, and the light only remaining, which gives but a faint, cold, and dull testimony, and which these enemies do therefore despise. Only in the witnesses of Great Britain both the light and heat of religion have been kept up and increased; and among them only hath the profession of the power of godliness been continued, with difference from the crowd of common professors. And, according to what appears in view, more of such true witnesses, now in these last days, wherein this slaughter is to fall out, are to be found in it, and belonging unto it, than in all the reformed churches besides; and that according to the testimony which they of those churches, who in these times of scattering have come hither for refuge, have and do give.

And surely the place of this killing the witnesses must be where most witnesses are. And so that kingdom may be designed more than any other; as in which also more eminently are found those last sort of champions for the beast, who receive only the number of his name, who yet shall be the chief executioners of this last slaughter, and who are to be overcome last of all the beast's company, before the fifth vial on the seat of the beast, as chap. xvi. tells us.

Add unto this, this conjecture upon Dan. xi. 45, which chapter, from ver. 36, hath Graserus excellently, and Mr Mede, in his *Discourse of Demons*, upon 1 Tim. iv. 1, 2, applied unto the Pope, who is that king there mentioned, and whom Antiochus, whose story is contained in the former part of the chapter, typified out. But the larger interpretation and application of all, from ver. 36, I leave to be fetched from them, and shall only mention my own conjecture, as supposing their interpretation good, upon the last verses, unto the purpose in hand. It is evident that the angel's scope there is, as I find others to acknowledge, to shew the issue of the beast's last expedition against the reformed churches, after their reformation and before his end; and so to denote out this last war here prophesied of—namely, Antichrist's 'accomplishing to scatter the power of the holy people,' as before hath been at large related.

Now, when he shall go forth in this his last war, in such fury and rage, with a purpose utterly to destroy, the main event and issue of that expedition of his is made to be this, that 'he shall plant the tabernacle of his palace between the seas, in the glorious holy mountain: yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him.'

The allusion in that phrase, 'the holy mountain,' is to that of Sion, where the temple stood; which therefore, in the usual phrase of the prophets, is often

put to express the true church, which is the mountain of the Lord. This mount, and the temple thereon, was erected in Europe by the northern reformation mentioned ver. 44, which he shall prevail against, and tread down, and place the tents of his throne upon it, or some part of it, again. This Alstedius and others acknowledge to be the meaning of the place. And so it agrees with what this angel, who came here to expound what he had told Daniel, affirms, that the outward court, now at last, was to be given up unto the Gentiles.

That which to Graserus occasioned the greatest puzzle in the interpretation of this verse, was this phrase which is added, to describe the situation of this mountain, *inter maria*, 'between the seas;' that there the Pope should at last replant his ancient throne. He stands wondering why to the mention of Mount Zion, which nakedly, says he, without this addition, had been enough, there should have been subjoined, *between the seas*; which, says he, hath puzzled all interpreters: for Zion stood not between two seas. And therefore, says he, those words must be added by way of difference and distinction from the holy mountain, by the type and name of which the angel had yet expressed the state of the church. And if his scope had been thereby to set forth the church universally throughout Europe, then the bare mention of the holy mountain, as, chap. xiv. 1, it is expressed by, had been sufficient and suitable enough unto so general a scope. But it being with this addition of difference concerning the situation, that it was *between the seas*, or *among the seas*, it therefore must more particularly design out some church or people of God, whose place and habitation is, for the situation of it, thus between the seas, and thereby singled out from the rest.

Luther, he makes it to point out Rome, which is the seat of the beast, which stands in Italy, between the Adriatic and the Tirrhene seas. But his ancient seat, Rome, cannot be here meant; for, ver. 44, he is said to go forth as from that his old seat, and to plant, as noting out this to be a new-gained seat, which was not the ordinary place of his residence, as Rome is.

Graserus gives a touch that Germany may be intended as that place which should again be subdued unto the Pope, as lying between the Baltic and the German Oceans, which it does but very remotely, and only the northern parts of it being bounded with and touching upon those seas.

But I rather fear that these British islands are here intended, in that they so eminently, above all other places of the churches reformed, and with difference also from all others, do stand *between the seas*, even wholly among seas,—*penitus toto divisos orbe Britannos*,—which islands likewise God hath made the eminent seat of the church in these latter days, and which 'he hath loved above all the habitations of Jacob.'

And in that the angel there calls this mountain, in a high and transcendent phrase, yet of further difference, 'the mountain of delights of holiness,' or, as Junius turns it, *mons decoris sancti*, the mountain of holy comeliness; it seems in some way of peculiarity from others, even in that respect also, to note out a place which for holiness should more eminently be God's delight, and comely in his eyes; where he should have a most holy people, and which he should make a land of uprightness, where his majesty and glory should more eminently shine. Which place, notwithstanding, for the trial of the witnesses in it, God shall again give up unto the power of Antichrist, there to plant the tabernacle of his palace or throne, or his clergy, as Graserus reads it; even as Nebuchadnezzar did his throne at Taph-hannes, when he had conquered Egypt, as a sign of that his victory. By the conquest of which kingdoms and regaining them unto him, he shall seem so rooted in his an-

cient power, that in hope of all the rest the whore shall sing, 'I am now no widow,' and that just before her fall. And yet this prevailing is but a preparation to Antichrist's ruin; for it follows there in Daniel, 'Yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him.' Which notes out, as that this is to be done just before his end, so also that that regaining his power should seem so to strengthen him, that he should be, as it were, out of the danger of ruin, and as for ever secure.

But this his sudden victory is but as the planting of a tent or tabernacle in a field, not to stand past three years and a half; though that party and their abettors do in their hopes think they build for eternity. But it being of man's, not God's planting, it shall therefore come to nothing; for 'every plant which the Father plants not shall be rooted up.'

CHAPTER VII.

The rising of the witnesses, from ver. 11 to ver. 15 of the 11th chapter.

SECTION I.

Three things in general observed.—Christ's resurrection the pattern of this.—The proportions between their killing and rising.—This resurrection a shadow of that to come.

I COME now to their rising again, and to those events which do accompany it.

Three things in the general I observe about it:—

I. That the particular circumstances of it are like to those in Christ's resurrection and ascension: this rising of theirs being an allusion to that resurrection of his, as was before said; and Christ mystical being in these last days, when his visible kingdom approacheth, more eminently to be made conformable unto Christ personal, both in his death and resurrection, the last of his acts done on earth before that his kingdom then. Yea, and, for our comfort, although there are some evident characters of likeness to that his last passion mentioned in this their killing here, yet there are more apparent ones of a conformity unto his resurrection in this their rising again. The several particulars whereof will arise to our observation in the explication.—This but in the general.

II. That God hath so recorded the more eminent circumstances of this their resurrection, that they do, as it were, answer unto those more eminent circumstances noted in their killing; and this, as it were, a reward suited and proportioned unto the debasement in the other. For—

1. Then they are said to be killed; and now a spirit of *life* is said to come into them.

2. Then they are said to lie dead in the street; and now they are said to stand upon their feet.

3. Then these their enemies or false-hearted friends are said to see them, either as rejoicing over them, or at leastwise as not helping them; but now at their resurrection it is twice noted and indigitated that their enemies saw them, and that both when they arose and ascended; so ver. 11, 12: both which acts are done in the very face of their enemies, the more to spite and vex them. Yea, and, as Pareus observes, the Greek word for *see* is here changed; for as there it imported that they then saw them with pleasure, so here it intimates that they now behold them with horror.

4. Then their enemies rejoiced over them, but now great fear is said to fall upon their enemies who beheld them.

5. Then they were exposed to such contempt that their bodies were not suffered to be buried, which is a degree of humiliation beyond death; but now, instead of this, they have therefore a further degree of glory put upon

them beyond restoring to life. A voice calls them up to heaven; and they ascend,—that is, to a far more glorious condition than they had before. And—

6. Their enemies are now killed in their stead, as being sacrificed unto them, for their killing them before. Seven thousand of their enemies were slain, ver. 13.

And all this is but to make the parallel of their resurrection and ascension unto that of Christ the more full. For so it was in Christ; the lower he descended, the higher he ascended: Eph. iv. 9, 'Now that he ascended, what is it but that also he first descended into the lower parts of the earth?' And, as Dr Ames hath well observed, the degrees of his exaltation were answerably opposite to the degrees of his humiliation: his rising from the dead being opposed to his death; and his ascension into heaven, to his descent into the grave, and going down to hell, or into the state of death; and his sitting at God's right hand, to his remaining in the grave and in the estate of death.

III. The third thing which in general I observe is, that in this their resurrection there is a forerunning shadow of that last great victory which brings in the kingdom of Christ and of his saints for the thousand years; of the glorious beginning whereof, under the seventh trumpet ensuing, ver. 15, this is ordained to be the dawning.

But the particulars thereof I shall observe, when I have despatched the particular interpretation. It is enough now in general to have observed it.

SECTION II.

The several steps and degrees of their resurrection and ascension.

I. The first step of their resurrection is the 'entering of the spirit of life from God into them;' even as in Christ's resurrection, the coming of his soul into his body was the principle of that his future life. And such a principle this same spirit of life here imports. And so here in this allusion, it notes out their full restoring to their former state, even to that life and power which at any time before their killing they had had. This resurrection here is not to be understood of the resurrection of their natural bodies, which is not to begin till the thousand years, yet it is the resemblance and shadow of it; but it shall be a rising of the persons of these witnesses who shall survive this short storm, or of their successors standing up in their cause. That whereas they were laid as men utterly dead, during these three years and a half, in respect of any active life of prophecy; and partly, it may be, through the discouragements and base fears of their own spirits, they lay too still and quiet, like dead men, and suffered their enemies to carry it, by their not opposing them so boldly as they ought to have done: yet now, a bold and steeled resolution to lie still no longer, together with an active spirit, comes upon them, and they 'stand up upon their feet,' and make head against their enemies, and so, in that sense, are said to rise again from the dead as it were, namely, comparatively to their dejected estate during those three years and a half.

And as for those who were bodily slain by their enemies the Gentiles, during that war and slaughter, they may be said to rise in their successors, who continue to profess the same cause. For the saints are a holy nation and community; and what the next succession doth, through the prayers or sufferings of a former generation, that former generation is said to do, as Isa. lviii. 12; and so John Baptist rose up in the spirit of Elias; and when Christ

preached, they thought John was risen from the dead. And this spirit of life is said to be from God, *ἐκ τοῦ Θεοῦ*, as noting out a more than ordinary hand of God therein, and a special demonstration of his power, such as he put forth when he 'raised up Jesus Christ from the dead,' as Eph. i. 19, and Rom. i. 4. If in anything Christ was 'declared the Son of God with power,' it was in his resurrection from the dead. And such a power shall raise up these witnesses.

II. *They stand upon their feet; that is—*

1. As in their former station or state.

2. As men erect, and taking heart, their cause being just, though before condemned. And—

3. As ready to defend it, and as men able and resolved now to confront their enemies; which strikes a mighty dread into their guilty consciences. 'Great fear fell upon them that saw them;' that is, a disheartenedness and dejection of mind. Their hearts begin to sink and die at the witnesses' first beginning to live; for they see this prophecy, beyond all expectation, fulfilled: that, as Christ foretold he should rise again the third day, so it being generally foretold that these witnesses should rise after three years and a half; which they, as these Pharisees, had slighted: but now, think they, surely the ruin both of us and of our cause will follow. So the hearts of Haman's friends misgave them when they saw him begin to fall before Mordecai. And now may the church well begin to say, 'Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy; when I fall,' and lie in the street, 'I shall arise. . . . Then she that is mine enemy shall see it, and shame shall cover her; . . . and she shall be trodden down as mire in the streets,' never to rise again; as you have it Mic. vii. 8, 10.

Or, it may be, this great fear that is here said to 'fall upon them that saw them,' is meant of those standers-by of the peoples, kindreds, tongues, and nations, that had before seen their dead bodies, but relieved them not, though they were friends unto them; upon whom therefore this great fear and reverence of God and his truth in these witnesses doth fall, so as now to take part with them, and be on their side; being moved thereunto by the marvellous spirit of life and zealous courage, which God, according to the prophecy which before run of them, did now cause to come upon them. The word *ἰεραροῦ* implies a fixed diligent observance and intention of mind; such as, upon seeing a wonderful work of God, we use to have. They see the finger of God in this, and that makes them to fear and dread his power and majesty. For in that sense we often find in Scripture, that, upon some great and eminent deliverance, or work of an almighty and divine power put forth, fear is said to fall upon the beholders; so Jer. xxxiii. 9, and elsewhere.

III. As Christ ascended up to heaven in a cloud, so also these, being called up to heaven by a great voice from thence, saying, 'Come up hither.' Where, by heaven, the place into which they are called, is meant a condition more honourable and glorious than ever they had before, and which, comparatively to their former estate, is a heaven. For now they are about to cast off their sackcloth for ever. And again, as Christ rose to die no more, Rom. vi. 9, so shall these; they shall die no more, as men that ascend to heaven do not. And thus, as Christ said of himself, Luke xxiv. 26, 'It became him to suffer, and so to enter into his glory:' so it may be said of these. So that by heaven here is not simply meant the church, as often in this book it is,—for these that rise are of the true church already, and were so even when they lay dead,—but it is meant of their following condition, which for liberty

and honour shall be as a church in heaven, in comparison to what it was before, which was but as a church on earth.

Thus, *ascending into heaven* is used to express an obtaining of new power, freedom, and glory; as Isa. xiv. 12, 13. And this is done in recompense of that contempt which they lay in before, especially just before, when they lay dead. And indeed, as I take it, the dawning of the glory of the new heaven and new earth approaching begins first in this glorious condition, which the church, after this rising of the witnesses, shall within a while be raised up unto, and quietly enjoy, as those in heaven do, whose state is described, chap. xix., 'I saw a great multitude in heaven,' &c. Of which hereafter.—And thus much of their resurrection and ascension itself.

SECTION III.

The events that accompany their resurrection.

Now further; as there are certain events which accompanied Christ's resurrection, so the like do accompany theirs. When Christ arose, there was an earthquake, which affrighted the soldiers that watched him; and so was there here likewise, as ver. 13.

Now, to explain what is here to be understood by this earthquake:—

1. For the *time* of it; it is said to be at 'the same hour,' namely, with this their resurrection, or beginning to rise; and so may seem to be mentioned as one of the means which did make way for and facilitate this their rising, by removing the impediments of it, and, as it were, rolling the stone away, that so these witnesses might rise from under the power of their enemies; which former obtained power of theirs this earthquake doth scatter and dissolve.

Now whereas their resurrection and ascension are both together mentioned in ver. 11, 12; and then after both comes in the mention of this earthquake, ver. 13, 'There was the same hour,' &c.; yet, as I take it, this follows not that all of them—resurrection, ascension, and earthquake—were at the same time or hour together. For their resurrection and ascension are two distinct degrees of their exaltation, as in Christ they were, and therefore may not so immediately follow one after the other, as in Christ they did not, his ascension being forty days after his resurrection; and yet they are both recorded and set together, because they are things of a kind and sort, as pertaining both of them unto the exaltation of the witnesses. So that for this passage that follows, ver. 13, that 'there was an earthquake the same hour;' it may perhaps not refer to the time of both, namely, their rising and ascension, but unto the beginning of the time of their first rising, as an occurrence that fell out the same hour when this great turn began; or rather, indeed, as the way and means God first used to remove impediments for the setting free of these witnesses, and restoring them unto their former state and life.

2. For the thing itself, and the place where this earthquake shall be, and what shall be the effects of it; this is expressed in what follows: 'the tenth part of the city fell,' and 'of the names of men were slain seven thousand.' Great earthquakes have oft-times shook down cities and buildings, &c., and many men have often perished by them. And such shall be the effects of this here.

SECTION IV.

The fall of the tenth part of the city, what?—Whether thereby be meant the ruin of Rome, the fifth vial?

But the main question is, What is meant by 'the tenth part of the city, and what by 'the names of men?'

Mr Mede thinks, that by the tenth part of the city is meant Rome itself, and its ruin by the fall of that tenth part; as being that which shall fall out immediately upon, or at the same hour with, this rising and ascending of the witnesses; and so to be all one with the fifth vial. And his reason is, because this being an overthrow of the Popish party, who are the enemies of these witnesses, for the beast kills them, it must therefore be reduced to one of the vials: and to which of them but to the fifth? For four are mentioned before, in ver. 5-7, and the sixth seems to be all one with that which follows, ver. 14, when it is said, 'The second woe is past;' and then the seventh vial is all one with the seventh trumpet. And this interpretation he thus makes out:—

Rome, which now is the seat of the beast, being but the tenth part of ancient and imperial Rome, as history and chorography tells us, the scope therefore of the angel here must be, to shew how that relic of Rome, before brought to a tenth part, by the former wars and trumpets, chap. viii., ix., should now wholly and for ever be defaced and overthrown. And so, accordingly, the names of men that are said to be slain, he makes to be those dignities, (haply ecclesiastical dignities, says he,) whereby men are ranked in Italy whilst Rome stands, as cardinals, archbishops, and bishops, &c., the merchants who in Italy have enjoyed so great traffic by reason of this whore's merchandise; these are together, with the fall of the city, to be deposed, and civilly to die, as the witnesses before had done, this seat of the beast now falling into the Protestants' hands. An interpretation learned and ingenious.

But that which hath carried my thoughts to some other distinct event from this, though this ultimately may be intended, hath been the observation of that so different effect, mentioned ver. 13, as wrought upon the hearts of the remnant of those, and so of the same company with them, that are slain with the fall of the city in this earthquake; together with that other contrary effect, which the full and fatal ruin of the seat of the beast, under the fifth vial, is said to have upon the remnant of the beast's company there, as the event of that vial. Here the remnant of men that are not slain are said to be affrighted, and to give glory to the God of heaven; but there, upon the execution of that fifth vial, in the height of it, it is said, 'they gnawed their tongues for pain, and blasphemed the God of heaven because of their torments and their sores, and repented them not of their deeds;' so chap. xvi. 10, 11. Now, if we interpret this their giving glory to God, here in this chapter, in the lowest and most diminishing sense that can be supposed, and as not arising to true repentance; yet at least it implies an acknowledgment of God to his praise, such as Achan made, though haply forced, and out of fear constrained; and if it be so taken, yet it is utterly opposite to blaspheming the God of heaven, which these other, feeling his hand, upon the ruin of Rome, are said to do. This remnant here, chap. xi., being such as were, through fear, drawn in to be of the Popish party, and therefore do now repent.

So that it rather seems to me to be some special occurrence, more nearly and properly belonging unto the witnesses' rising and ascension, as immedi-

ately making way unto them both, in those parts of Europe where the witnesses had chiefly been killed; where, for the helping forward their resurrection, God causeth this earthquake, and mighty commotion of the state of things and of the people's hearts. That whereas through a forced consent and yielding, the Pope's power had again been entertained by that tenth part of the city, for the killing the witnesses; they now do cast off that power, with a mighty commotion and insurrection, and so proceed to ruin the opposite party unto the witnesses, who were the instruments of that former slaughter. Of which party the remnant unslain do, as men affrighted, 'give glory unto God,' and turn back again to embrace the truth, and acknowledge God to be in these witnesses, and in their cause.

So that, although this may and shall end in the ruin of Rome, which is the highest effect of the fifth vial, for this resurrection and ascension of the witnesses are truly the preparation unto it; yet this other passage of the earthquake, &c., that here is said to be the same hour with their rising, is rather to be understood of the means, or thing, making way unto that their resurrection. So that this insurrection, or rising of the people, in the tenth part of the city, which is meant by the earthquake, is the preparation unto their resurrection, which ends in the ruin of Rome; the scope of the Holy Ghost here being to shew what did properly and peculiarly concern the rising of the witnesses, as the means to it: yet so, as still this earthquake here, and fall of the tenth part of the city, are reducible unto that fifth vial, as a degree unto it. And so that fifth vial may also be ultimately intended in this passage recorded of the witnesses' rising, as the preparation unto it. Thus in the interpretation of the vials, I shewed that there may be many sprinklings of the same vial, both long before it come to its ἀκμή and vigour, and also after; all which are, notwithstanding, to be reduced unto that vial of the kind whereof they are, or unto which they are either preparations or appendixes.

Yea, further, the word *city* being taken in a double consideration in this book,—one more strict for the city of Rome itself, another larger for the jurisdiction of that city,—as was before observed; accordingly may the tenth part, both of the one and the other, be here meant, as the one is successively to follow and fall after the other. And so both interpretations may aptly be here intended; the fall of the one being as a degree unto the fall of the other, which is the height of that fifth vial. Unto this I do the more incline, for that such a double scope and aim, in things of equivocal signification, I find the Holy Ghost oftentimes to have in his eye. So in the vials, as I before shewed; and so I believe in this passage and event. So that I exclude not that interpretation of Mr Mede's, but do only join another with it, though I think that may be mainly and ultimately intended.

SECTION V.

More particularly, that by a tenth part of the city is meant one of the ten kingdoms of Europe.—How it is said to fall.—The earthquake in it, what?—The names of men, what? and their killing.

Now to come to a more particular interpretation of this place:—

1. By the *tenth part of the city* I understand, as Mr Brightman before me, some one tenth part of Europe; which, as it all once belonged to the jurisdiction of the city of Rome, and is in this book called ten kingdoms, so now again, upon the Gentiles, or idolatrous Papists, their recovering the outward court, shall now at last, more or less, come under the jurisdiction of that

city; but especially, or at least this tenth part of it here intended, where most faithful witnesses shall be found, and where most of them shall be triumphed over and slain, shall, during these three years and a half, become a part of the city again; and so is called 'a tenth part of the city:' *city* being put here, as it often is in this book, for the extent of the jurisdiction of the city of Rome, which had these ten European kingdoms by charter allotted unto it, chap. xvii., and unto which these kingdoms are a second time to agree to give up their power. In one of which ten, or in the tenth part of the whole, the witnesses shall first begin to rise; and therein shall this earthquake accompany their resurrection. This tenth part of the city may perhaps be all one with that street of the city, mentioned ver. 8.

2. By the *earthquake* here, which is said to be a great one, is meant (as still in this book it is) a great concussion or shaking of states, politic or ecclesiastical, for of either or of both it is used. Thus under the sixth seal, the great alteration wrought in the Roman empire, when it turned from heathenism to Christianity, brought about by the power of Constantine, with the deposing those heathenish emperors, captains, &c., and altering the face of the empire's religion, is called an earthquake, chap. vi. So that the like mighty commotion, with an alteration of the face of things, (either civil or ecclesiastic,) shall fall out in a tenth part of the city, and shall accompany or usher in this rising of the witnesses. Now—

3. By and through this earthquake's falling thus out in a tenth part of the city, this tenth part of it is so shaken that it *falls*,—that is, ceaseth to be a part of the city, or to belong unto its jurisdiction any longer,—or, which is all one, falls off, as we say, from being of the number of those that give their power to the beast. Which if it prove to be any of the Protestant states that should yet again, as was said, embrace the beast's power, and come under his jurisdiction, or, in order to the bringing in again of the Pope's power, should kill these witnesses, and so thereby become a part of that city, and be reckoned as pertaining unto its jurisdiction; yet now revolting from under the power of this city, and recoiling again through this earthquake, it may truly be said to fall,—namely, *qua urbis pars est*, as it is a part of the city, which it before was, but now ceaseth so to be, it now utterly renouncing either to belong to its jurisdiction, or to be of its party any longer. And as earthquakes are from inward motions in the bowels of the earth, so this here may seem to arise from within that kingdom itself; whether through the supreme magistrate's beginning to 'hate the whore,' (as the promise is, chap. xvii.,) or the people's abominating the cruelty and contempt put upon the witnesses and their cause; their consciences having been enlightened in the truth, while themselves were trodden under, as the outward court, by these Gentiles, and so they come to shake off that yoke; and the witnesses having a spirit of life now come into them, these take heart, and join with them and their cause: whether, I say, through the working of either or both of these I cannot determine, but I think through both. For the ruin of the city, unto which this is at least the preparation, is to be effected through God's changing one of the ten kings' hearts so to 'hate the whore,' as to 'eat her flesh, and burn her with fire,' chap. xvii. And this voice speaking unto the witnesses out of heaven, Mr Mede conjectures to be that of supreme authority, with which the people also shall join; for an earthquake certainly notes out a commotion in the people and nations.

4. The effect of this earthquake, and fall of this tenth part of the city, is the *killing seven thousand of the names of men*; so it is in the original.

A phrase which, as thus joining *names* and *men* together, is not so to be found in the whole book of God. By these *names of men* are certainly denoted out those, be it interpreted of whomsoever, that had been the witnesses' enemies, and that had the great agency and hand in killing them, and in subjecting those nations unto the power of the beast.

Mr Mede conceives it to be *ὀνόματα ἀνθρώπων*, *names of men*, for *men of names*, according to the usual phrase of Scripture; as *riches of grace* for *rich grace*, &c.

Now, by men of names, in Scripture, is meant men of office, title, and dignity. So Num. xvi. 2, those two hundred and fifty men, who were princes of the congregation, and in Korah's conspiracy consumed, are called men of name, (so in the Hebrew,) that is, men of title and dignity.

You heard before how the last sort of enemies unto these witnesses, under the fourth vial, were set forth unto us by the type of those very opposers of Moses and Aaron, who were then the two witnesses of the Lord, as was shewn in the exposition of the 5th verse of this chapter. Now as there, in Numbers, the spiritual punishment of many of them, for their enmity against the witnesses, is noted out by that fire which then devoured them: so here a civil punishment falls upon these; for having thus killed these witnesses, themselves are to be killed, haply by being bereft of their names and titles, which are to be rooted out for ever, and condemned to perpetual forgetfulness.

This Mr Mede carries to ecclesiastical dignities under the Papacy, those *Latiales Episcopatus*, &c. And for the number seven thousand, it is an indefinite number, and put for many, as the usual manner of the Scripture is. And certainly, if these names here do prove to be ecclesiastical dignities and titles, the phrase here used fits them and is most proper for them; for they use it of themselves, and when they would in a word or two comprehend all the several ranks and orders of the hierarchical ministry, from the highest to the lowest, which for them particularly to enumerate were too tedious, they involve all in this indefinite expression, 'by what names or titles soever dignified or distinguished.'

Now, as they call their dignities *names*, so the Holy Ghost, you see, calls them *names of men*; that is, merely human, of man's institution, and not of God's. For so are most of their offices themselves, and, in a manner, the names of them all; they being not such names as the Holy Ghost teacheth us to call them by, but such as the canons and constitutions of men have imposed. And this may, indeed, be the true reason why this phrase, used nowhere else, is yet used here, now when the ruin of the Pope's creatures comes to be mentioned; as most fitly, by names of men, denoting forth that evil and error of theirs which is one true cause of their ruin. But now for civil offices and titles, for them to be of man—that is, to have their rise from men—is proper to them, and therefore they are called creations, or ordinances of men, *ἀνθρώπινη κρίσις*, &c., 1 Pet. ii. 13; and this in opposition or distinction unto ecclesiastical offices. Whereas ecclesiastic offices and names should all, for the foundation of the calling and office itself, be of God, and not of men. They are of another building and constitution, although man designs the persons to them, and that, too, in a way of God's appointment. Thus this phrase, *of man*, is used of this sort of offices, and to this very purpose, in other places of Scripture. So when Paul speaks of his office of apostleship, and his being designed to it, Gal. i. 1, he useth this phrase, 'An apostle, neither of man, nor by man;' that is, My office itself is not of man's appointment, nor was I put into it by man,—that is, designed to it by man's choice.

And although that office of his was an extraordinary office, yet other ordinary ministers' offices are divine for the institution of them, and in that respect not of man, though by man (that is, the church) their persons be designed unto those offices. For Christ is Lord of these administrations or offices, as you have it, 1 Cor. xii. 4, 5; and so they hold of him as truly as gifts in the same place are said to do of the Spirit, and operations of the Father. And men are no more to assume to appoint church-offices than they are able to give gifts, or to bless those gifts with operations; and when they do so, they derogate from Christ the Lord as truly as they should from the Holy Ghost, in attempting to bestow upon such as Simon Magus, who desired it, the gifts of the Spirit. No, it is God who hath set *idēra*, (as you have it, ver. 28 of that chapter,) teachers, as well as apostles, in the church. Paul there reckons up ordinary officers as well as extraordinary; for the institution of the one is from God as well as the other.

Now therefore, when the Holy Ghost here speaks of those false names and titles of church-officers which Christ appointed not, he disclaims them from holding of him, but calls them names of men, as being of human creation, whereas they should be only of divine institution. And so being 'plants which God the Father planted not,' they are here said to be 'rooted out' of this one kingdom or state, where, it seems, they had been the causes and authors of all this mischief and cruelty against the witnesses; and which, through the efficacy of their working to uphold their names, had again been become the tenth part of the city, but now, by this earthquake, falls from being any longer under that jurisdiction. And together with it are all those steeples and cathedrals, and all those names and titles that belong thereto, utterly shaken down also, it being a just punishment and reward of their conspiracy against the witnesses, and agency in their killing.

SECTION VI.

What tenth part of Europe, or which of the ten kingdoms, it is most probable that this earthquake and resurrection of the witnesses shall fall out in.

Now, which of these ten kingdoms or of the ten states in Europe, and what tenth part thereof, shall first have this great privilege, as a blessed handsel to the rest that follow, is not hard to conjecture, though it be rashness peremptorily to determine; for God maketh new choice of nations and churches therein beyond the line and reach of our conjectures, and 'his ways are past finding out;' neither can the face of his former proceedings with any of the churches give us any certain and infallible designment which of them he will do most good unto.

I will therefore only cast in such conjectures as, according to the face of the sky in the churches of this present age, do seem to prognosticate where and in what parts this heaven, which the witnesses shall ascend up into, is like first to clear up in, from under these clouds, and from out of this hour of darkness to come upon the world.

1. The saints and churches belonging unto the kingdom of France God hath made a wonder unto me in all his proceedings towards them, first and last, and there would seem some great and special honour reserved for them yet at last. For it is certain that the first light of the gospel, by that first and second angels' preaching, chap. xiv., which laid the foundation of Antichrist's ruin, was out from among them, namely, those of Lyons and other places in France. And they bore and underwent the great heat of that morning of persecution, which was as great, if not greater, than any since.

And besides, the churches of France have ever since had as great a share in persecutions, yea, greater than any other churches. And though it be well-nigh five hundred years since they began first to separate from Antichrist, and they still continue a glorious church unto this day, yet they never had that great honour and privilege, which other churches have been so blessed with, as to have a supreme magistrate professing their religion; but either they have been bloody persecutors and oppressors of them, or else they have apostatised from them. May it not, therefore, be hoped and looked for, that their kings in the end should be of the number of those kings who, as you have it, chap. xvii., are to be wrought on to 'hate the whore,' and to 'burn her with fire;' and so that this voice here, which calls these witnesses, who there have ever prophesied in sackcloth, up to heaven, may proceed from one of their kings; and so, as that kingdom had the first great stroke, so now it should have the honour to have the last great stroke in the ruining of Rome? But yet—

2. If you take a view of the face of the present condition of the saints and churches in Europe, as in this last age, wherein these things are in all likelihood to be fulfilled, it presents itself, together with a prospect into the times past also, and then if you put all together, the churches and saints in Great Britain, and the islands belonging to it, have, in my thoughts and conjectures, (not swayed unto it through affection only, which may betray the judgment, but through a serious and impartial consideration and weighing of things,) more hopeful characters upon them for this glory than any of the other reformed churches; and so appear the likeliest unto me to prove the more eminent stage, both of this great slaughter, and also of the rising and ascension of the witnesses.

(1.) For the ages past, there hath been these three hundred years as glorious a succession of godly witnesses and martyrs as any other nation can produce, as you may collect out of Mr Foxe's *Martyrology*.

(2.) For the last foregoing age, since the times of the Reformation, and for the present one, the marks of these witnesses designed to this slaughter and glory, as in the former part of this chapter you have had them laid forth, appear the liveliest, and, in a manner, only upon them of Great Britain: for—

[1.] There hath God continued the most 'faithful, and called, and chosen,' as they are called, chap. xvii. 14, who are of the Lamb's side, and who are together with him to overcome the kings that shall hate and burn the whore; and, indeed, more of them that hold forth the power of religion with difference from the world, than in all the nine kingdoms besides. And surely, where most of the witnesses are, there will be their most eminent slaughter; and where their greatest slaughter is, there will be their most glorious resurrection and ascension. For all these will certainly be commensurated and proportioned one to the other: magnitude of sufferings to multitude of witnesses; and then greatness of glory unto the greatness of sufferings. Now, that the saints in these kingdoms of Great Britain are like to be the subjects of that slaughter, and those kingdoms made the *street*, or open market-place thereof, I shewed before.

[2.] There God hath eminently stirred up men's hearts to breathe after a further and purer reformation, and measuring of the temple. And they have been put to contend for it more than all the other churches; and this, more or less, ever since the first erection of the English church at Frankfort, in Queen Mary's days. And in the contention about it, and through that bitter persecution for it, they even for this very cause having prophesied in sack-

cloth more apparently than others in other reformed churches, their spirits have increased both in spiritual light and holiness, and in practical knowledge in the ways and works of sanctification, by which the worshippers are to be measured, and also in further and clearer light about the institution and true government of a church, by which the temple and altar are to be measured, more than all the reformed churches besides have done; who, in the quiet enjoyment of much of what these contend to have in a further purity, have run out almost into nothing but an outward court of profession, and a mere form, there being few *priests*, or true worshippers, that, with difference from others, do worship God in power, in spirit, and in truth, that are to be found in the inner temple of their assemblies. And let but the exposition of the six first verses of this chapter be consulted with, and that interpretation given be but impartially applied to the Protestant professors this day in Europe, and how eminently above the rest will the condition of the saints of Great Britain, and their constant conflicts with the beast and his abettors unto this day, be found to fit the measure thereof, and to look more like, and come nearer the life of, that face of things therein presented, than any other, or than all other the reformed European churches since that their first reformation! And—

[3.] That description of those who are to be the eminent opposites of the witnesses in these last days, and the authors of this their slaughter, fits those open and professed enemies of them in those kingdoms also. And there, if anywhere, are found those that 'receive the number of the beast's name;' who, notwithstanding, hitherto have, and may yet for a while, deny his 'character' and disclaim his 'name.' Whom shall we liken this generation unto, or where shall we find similitudes that will suit them, if those descriptions forepassed in this chapter suit them not? Sure I am, if these be not they, they are as like as *ovum ovo*. And these (the 'number of his name') being the beast's last champions,—as appears out of chap. xiii. 17, and chap. xv. 2, and are therefore there mentioned last,—are to hold up the last great quarrel of the beast's cause, and to fight this last combat with the witnesses; and so in this last age to be overcome in open field by them, as their predecessors that had the mark and image of the beast have been overcome by the former generation of witnesses in elder times. And—

[4.] In which of the reformed churches are these 'names of men,' who are to be the killers of the witnesses, and therefore are slain in this earthquake in their revenge, continued but in these kingdoms? And *that* in this otherwise unused phrase, 'by what names or titles soever distinguished!' Which names and titles, and several dignities,—take in all sorts of them, from the highest to the lowest,—in all those kingdoms, may haply be found to amount to 7000, that number being an indefinite kind of number, and taken for more or less, even besides such ministers of parishes and assemblies as have for the substance of their office a warrant from God, though for their usual names, whereby they are called, they retain a name of man's devising. Yea, is not this very thing made the quarrel now, whether their ranks of ministry be names of God or of men? About which the witnesses have, from the very beginning, contended. Yea, is it not the suspicion and general opinion that to continue and to secure these their names they would again introduce Popery? And is not the matter as thus stated the very ground of their quarrel? And hath it not long been the ground of all the opposition against the witnesses and saints in this kingdom,—as of silencing, fining, depriving them, and deposing them from their ministerial charges, &c.,—lest that, as the Pharisees said of Christ, the people's running after the witnesses'

doctrine should endanger their names, credits, and dignities, and so take away their kingdoms? Hereat the quarrel first began, and for that secret cause hath all along been continued, though under other outward pretences. Yea, this is the thing that shall provoke them to the ensnaring slaughter of these witnesses, which now approacheth. They say within their hearts, 'Let us kill' these witnesses, 'and the vineyard will be ours.'

Now, upon all these grounds, how fairly probable does it seem that these occurrences here mentioned, as those that shall attend the resurrection of the witnesses, are to fall out in this tenth part of Europe, and in one or both of these our kingdoms above-mentioned, more eminently than in any other European state or kingdom! And how just were it with God to give up these names of men, who have been the enemies of his witnesses in all times since the Reformation, to receive at last the number of the beast's name, and under his name and power to become in the end the killers of these witnesses, and his trained band, and leaders in this his last war! And how wonderful and wise a dispensation of God will it be towards his own in these kingdoms, to have reserved the utter extirpation of these names of men, though so long while contended for, unto such a time and occasion as this! And that after they shall first have done this feat and exploit for the beast, in killing the witnesses, they should then be sacrificed as Baal's priests were by Elias; even when these witnesses, whom they so persecuted, shall rise, and die no more; and so by this means, the ruin of these their enemies should be made the witnesses' triumph, and the removing them out of the way by this earthquake made the foundation of their ascension into heaven: after which the work of measuring the temple, by these Samaritans interrupted, shall go forward in the hands of Joshua and Zerubbabel; and the people, who before were afraid of these hinderers of the work, shall now begin to cry, 'Grace, grace, unto it;' and so the rearing of these purer churches shall be upon the rubbish of this Samaritan mountain, the false church.

And if the fifth vial be also aimed at in this earthquake, and the fall of Rome, the seat of the beast, as ultimately I think it is, then how comely will it be, and suitable with the long expectation of God's witnesses and holy ones, that the ruin of these episcopal 'seas,' and seats of those that shall do Antichrist such service, should fall out with, or be a preparative unto, the fall of that great bishop's *see*, as I said in expounding the fifth vial, and both to go down together, as alike pertaining to the same building of man's, not God's!

[5.] And lastly, if this prove the issue of God's dealings with these kingdoms, how gloriously shall God thereby acquit himself in the conclusion of all his dispensations towards them! For to see two such contrary streams running so strongly one against another in the same channel, hath indeed caused a wonderment in the godly-wise of this last age, what God means to do, and what end he means to make with England. This is that which is now the great expectation of the churches there, how equally God means to proceed, both towards them that fear him therein, and also towards the opposite party that are and have been there. For it is strange, even to a miracle, to see how God upholds in the same state two such contrary factions and parties: one, of his own people, rising higher and higher in spiritual light, and in opposition to superstition, and breathing after further purity of holiness and perfection of public worship; and together with this, at the same time, another strong party looking towards Rome, and increasing in superstition, darkness, and an impudent outfacing the light of truth, and that then when it shineth hottest and clearest on them. Now, for the all-

wise God, who professeth to have this art and skill, to 'preserve the righteous, and reserve the wicked unto punishment,' as Peter speaks; for him now at last to come off so gloriously, what more equal, and so more likely dispensation, than to run this course chalked out here in this chapter, both towards the one and the other party in that kingdom, and which, according to the course of his dealings throughout the Scriptures, though this prophecy had not been left us in this chapter concerning these very times, the godly-wise might have hoped God most probably might intend to take!

SECTION VII.

How this their resurrection and ascension is a forerunning shadow of the restitution of all things at the coming of Christ's kingdom.

Now further; concerning this great privilege and honour thus first befalling some one tenth part of Europe, let me add this unto all that hath been said of it, to make it appear yet the more glorious: That this resurrection of the witnesses seems to be the beginning of the first great turn of things in the church hastening to the New Jerusalem; and so the very first dawning of the kingdom of Christ approaching, and of the final restitution of the church's liberty from under the yoke of Antichrist. When Christ arose, as these witnesses here do, his disciples then asked him whether he would at that time restore Israel. He denies not that it should be done; only he tells them it was not for them then to know the seasons. But now the time of that restitution approaching, the rising of these witnesses, which beareth the true resemblance of his, is here mentioned as the signal of that restitution which, chap. xx., is called 'the first resurrection;' of which, I say, this is the forerunning shadow. And, indeed, thus have the writers of all ages since Christ understood it. For when they speak of that day, and the signs of it, you shall generally find it among the ancients that this killing of the two witnesses and their rising, though indeed it hath by them been interpreted of Enoch and Elias, are made the forerunning signs of the approach of that joyful day of Christ's kingdom, which they called the day of judgment.

And, I confess, I have thought that the true reason why this particular occurrence, though falling out but in a tenth part of Europe, is here made mention of, rather than other occurrences which are like to fall out with it or after it, as the ruin of Rome, which in itself is a greater one, is because that this one passage should have more fitness to become a sign—which to give is the scope of the Holy Ghost in this chapter—of the approaching of the New Jerusalem, to come under the seventh trumpet, than any other occurrence; it being not only the first step of the restauration of the church after Antichrist's last scattering of it,—which shall for ever after go on and increase until the full restitution of all things,—it is not only, I say, the first turn of the stream after that last low ebb, the waters whereof shall rise and increase till it be full sea and never ebb again, (these witnesses now rising, as Christ did, never to die again, but to cast off their sackcloth for ever,) but further also, in many particulars, the liveliest picture and model of that great restauration of all things which is to come, above any other passage; and so is singled out as a forerunning type and resemblance of it.

This great restoring of all things, of which we speak, is to begin with the seventh vial,—which, as was said, is all one with the seventh trumpet,—when 'old things are to be done away, and all to be made new.' Now, as then there is said to be 'a great earthquake,' and that 'such a one as never was

since men were upon the earth,' chap. xvi. 18; so here there is said to be a great earthquake also. And as the effect of that earthquake is the dividing the remainder of Babylon into three parts, and the falling of the cities of the nations, ver. 19 of that 16th chapter; so here the effect of this earthquake is the falling of a tenth part of the city, and the slaying of these names of men. And as that is ushered in with a resurrection, which, chap. xx. 5, 6, is called 'the first resurrection,'—that is, the first physical rising of the bodies of the saints,—so this also hath a resurrection (though not natural and physical, yet metaphorical) of dead witnesses unto a better life than ever they had before. So wonderful a work and change is this to be, that it shall be even as 'life from the dead,' as the apostle speaks of the conversion of the Jews.

And again, as then after that resurrection there is a new heaven and a new earth, so here there is an ascending into a heaven. So glorious shall the condition of these witnesses be, in comparison of what it was before, that it shall justly be counted a heaven, if compared with their former best condition before their killing.

Thus among the Gentiles will God give one instance, as a small scheme, type, and shadow of this his kingdom, to confirm the faith of the saints in it, and that, as is most probable, in those churches of Europe which he means chiefly to make partakers afterwards of this his New Jerusalem under the seventh trumpet.

SECTION VIII.

An interpretation of that clause, ver. 14, 'The second woe is past.'—A reconciling some difficulties about it.

There remains nothing now in this chapter to be expounded, excepting this clause which follows, ver. 14, 'The second woe is past; and, behold, the third cometh quickly;' which is the close of the sixth trumpet. For the three last trumpets being called three woes, chap. viii. 13, when the fifth trumpet had done sounding, it is said, chap. ix. 12, 'One woe is past; and, behold, there come two woes more,' &c. And now when the sixth trumpet's time of ending comes, it is said, 'The second woe is past,' &c.; which is all one as to have said, The sixth trumpet, and the woe of it, do here determine, or at least begin to determine and end.

Now, the sixth trumpet being the empire and tyranny of the Turk, and the sixth vial being that great and deadly blow that shall be given that empire, to make way for the kingdom of the Jews, the 'kings of the east,' mentioned in that vial, hence Mr Mede interprets this passing away of the second woe to be the very sixth vial, as this fall of the tenth part of the city he makes to be the fifth vial. Which if it be so, the difficulty to me, which I see not so clearly by him reconciled, is, that this passing away of the second woe, as it is here recorded, seemeth, for the time of it, to fall out together with this resurrection and earthquake, and with the ascension of the witnesses and fall of the tenth part of the city, and all these to determine and end, as it were, in one common period. For as soon as the Holy Ghost had made the narration of all these, he concludes with this, 'The second woe is past.' And then, he making the fifth vial to be the period of the Pope's reign, and the witnesses' ceasing to prophesy in sackcloth to be at their rising, and at the fall of the tenth part of the city; how then can the passing away of the second woe, if it be the sixth vial, be imagined to fall out at the same time with these, seeing the vials, as well as the seals and trumpets, do fall out successively each after other? And though

not in equal or alike distances of time each from other, as Napier would have it, yet all of them in some distance, as is most likely; and it is certain it hath held so in all the rest.

Now, to reconcile this difficulty:—

1. Either the fifth and sixth vial shall fall out altogether about the same time; and so the conversion of the Jews and rising of the European witnesses fall out together as preparations unto them both: which I confess unto me seems not altogether improbable. For that passage in Dan. xiii. 1, compared with the last verse of chap. xi., would seem to imply as much. In which last verse the angel had spoke of the end of the reign of Antichrist; and in the 1st verse of the following 12th chapter he speaks of the Jews being delivered from their greatest time of trouble, which is to befall them from the Turk upon their first conversion: and he seems there to make them both to be at the same time, or at least so near each other that the distance is not considerable. For he expressly says, 'At that time shall Michael stand up, to deliver thy people;' so he calls the Jews by way of distinction from the Gentile Christians, as being of Daniel's nation. Or else—

2. Whereas there are two things here mentioned concerning these witnesses—

(1.) Their rising, accompanied with this earthquake; and—

(2.) Their ascension into heaven, which must needs fall out after their resurrection: it may be, that as Christ's ascension was forty days after his resurrection, so this their ascension, though mentioned immediately next their resurrection, may be some space of years after, when their enemies are removed, and all obstacles and impediments out of the way; then they have a heaven granted them, and a voice calling them up thither. And so it may come to pass that this ascension of theirs may not be until the sixth vial, though their rising were before the fifth vial, and a preparation unto it. But—

3. And lastly, to solve all these doubts: it may be, that the only scope and drift of the angel in bringing in this clause, 'The second woe is past,' here, ver. 14, was not so much thereby to denote the exact common period or instant of time for all these occurrences mentioned, or to shew how the sixth vial and the end of the sixth trumpet shall, for the time of them, be together with this earthquake, &c.; but rather, whereas the Turkish tyranny was one part of the second woe upon the eastern Christians, spoken of chap. ix., and the treading down the outward court of carnal Protestants by the Papists, and killing their witnesses, another second part of that second woe, that therefore now, when he had related and put them both together, then he comes in with this speech, 'The second woe is past;' that is, I have now fully declared what a woe God will bring both on the eastern Christians, and also on the European and western Christians; and these two do complete and perfect the story of the second woe, and do also belong unto the story of the sixth trumpet. Which second woe, consisting of those two parts, I have now fully done withal; and so I pass from it to speak of the third woe, which now 'cometh quickly,' &c. And so this passage seems to be intended rather materially to shew what appertains to the sixth trumpet, than chronologically to shew the expiring of it. And so this great punishment from the Popish Gentiles upon the Protestant party in the west for their sins is fitly cast under the trumpets, and joined to that great plague and punishment on the eastern Christians by the Turk, as a part of the sixth trumpet, and severed from the vials as no part of them: they being to fall only upon the enemies themselves of both these Christian companions—

namely, upon the Pope and the Turk. Thus the Holy Ghost homogeneally putteth together the punishment of carnal Christians, both eastern and western, under the woe of the trumpets; and in like manner involveth those other two grand enemies unto the Christian profession and religion wholly under the punishments and plagues of the seven vials. And so that may be the reason, both why the story of 'treading down the outward court' and of the 'killing of the witnesses' comes in here in chap. xi., though the matter of them belongs unto the book-prophecy; and why also the 'treading the wine-press,' chap. xiv. 20, which is part of the treading the outward court in this 11th chapter, is reckoned as no part of the vials, it being to fall upon the Protestant party. Yet so as with what in the trumpets, what in the vials, God will be sure to meet with all sorts for their sins, and so, by a like just and impartial rule, proceed both towards friends and enemies, without any respect of persons.

But whether of these, or whether any of these, will reach the Holy Ghost's meaning, I leave unto the reader to judge.

I shall, by and by, add a fourth interpretation of that clause, to me as probable as any of these, when I have first cast in a few conjectures about the times of the fulfilling of these things, which I reserved to the last, as the closure and *coronis* of this long discourse: because many things already delivered in this interpretation do fall in to strengthen the conjectures concerning the precise time of the falling out of these so great occurrences.

SECTION IX.

The conclusion of this discourse.—The conjectures of some about the time when this killing and rising of the witnesses shall be.

I find two periods of time more eminently pitched upon by writers of this age, according to the diversity of men's conjectures, for great changes in the churches of Christ.

The first is fixed some time between the years 1650 and 1656.

The other upon 1666. Both which periods are not far off to come.

Concerning both of which, as also any other that shall be made upon conjectures out of these prophecies, this general caution must be taken in:—

That in these computations a mistake of a few years may fall out, and the event fall out sooner or later than the time conjectured, by reason that the vulgar account of years from the birth of Christ is uncertainly kept, according to the acknowledgment of chronologers themselves. So Arnobius, at the writing of his Apology, speaks indefinitely of the reckoning of years, how long it was from Christ unto his time: *Tricenti sunt ferme anni*, says he, *aliquid plus vel minus, a quo cœpimus esse Christiani*. And therefore the best chronologers (as Helvicus, &c.) reckon the true account to reach two years further than the vulgar account doth, and so make the year 1650 with us to be in truth 1652; and so of the rest. Others give a larger allowance, namely, of four years. And this indeed is the true reason of that difference about the first period mentioned, namely, between 1650 and 1656; some saying it shall be in '51, some in '52, and some in '56: yet all making the ground of their so fixing it one and the same, only varying about the precise time by reason of several computations and accounts of the years since Christ, as we shall see by and by. And for that second period of 1666, which is made to terminate the date of Antichrist's reign, and is to that purpose understood to be that *number* of 666 made mention of in the last verse of chap. xiii., the first that so interpreted that place was an unknown Eng-

lish writer, anno 1589, who, in a little book dedicated to the church of Rome, first gave this obscure hint of it: 'Yet,' says he, 'two months, two weeks, two days and a half, and thy number 666 shall be fulfilled,' as writing to that church. Which casting up, from 1589, the year his book bare date of, from the printing of it, I found him to aim at 1666. Now, the reason which they give for this interpretation, and why they reckon the beginning of Antichrist's 1260 years, or forty-two months, from Pope Innocent's time, anno 406, I have given upon chap. xiii. And I find Simpson, the Scotch abbreviator of the church's story, to pitch the beginning of the Pope's usurpation over churches in this man's time, who yet had no eye at all unto this interpretation of 666. And, as I remember, Mr Wood, now with God, in his manuscript upon the Revelation, doth also incline to think the year 1666 to be the time of the Pope's downfall; and so also do some others.

That other first period of 1650, or '51, or '56, I find by some to be made the time of the Jews' first call. And by others, that of 1656 to be the time of the expiring of Antichrist's reign, and the fall of the city. The first that I know of that ever pitched upon this term of years was that holy man Hiltenius, the great forerunner of Luther in Germany, and who foretold the very year of Luther's rising after him, to teach the same doctrine that he had done; which Melancthon says he saw written under his own hand. Among other of whose sayings, you shall find this as one of the last recorded in his life, written among the lives of the German divines, by Melchior Adamus: that the year after Christ 1651 shall be the time of the change of this world, and so the beginning of that new world to come. Since him, many others, though haply not from him, have fallen upon this period of 1650. So Finch, in his book of the *Calling of the Jews*, makes it the time when God will leave off, as says he, to scatter his holy people, for then shall the Turks' first declining come, &c.

And the Jews themselves have their eyes upon this very time; for it was a secret communicated to old Mr Forbes by a learned Jew, as Mr Forbes himself related it, not long before his death, that the learnedest Rabbi they had had in the world of late years did pitch upon 1650, or thereabouts, as the utmost time wherein they should expect their Messiah to reveal himself unto their nation; and how he had left this secret with some of his learned friends that came about him when he was on his deathbed to know his judgment about the Messiah.

I find also Mr Mede, in his *Clavis*, to pitch upon 1656, though tacitly and implicitly, yet clearly enough, as the time he most inclined unto for the expiration of Antichrist's kingdom. For in his *Synchronisms*, he makes the first trumpet and the Pope's 1260 days to begin together; and in his *Comment*, he makes the beginning of the first trumpet to be in the year 395. So that, if the reign of Antichrist begins at the year of Christ 395, then his 1260 days or years will end in 1655. And thus there will be so many years from Christ unto the beginning of the new world, as there was from the beginning of the old world until the days of Noah, unto which Christ compares his coming, even 1656 years.

Now the best ground for this opinion that ever I met with, and which I suppose all or most of these have gone upon, is that computation of years given to Daniel, chap. xii. 11 of his prophecy, by this very angel that gave this little book here, and this 11th chapter, by word of mouth, unto John, as was said before. Who there says, that 'from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set

up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days,' or years. The beginning of which account they fix, as I said before, in Julian's time, when was the last time both of the ceasing of the daily sacrifice by him set up, and of setting up heathenish idolatry in the world. Which years, if otherwise they be reckoned from Vespasian and Titus his son's sacking of Jerusalem, were out almost three hundred years ago. His place and account in Daniel, I suppose Hiltenius, the first that pitched on it, had in his eye for the ground of his conjecture. For he was a great studier of Daniel's prophecies, and wrote notes upon them, as in his life you may read. And sure I am that Mr Wood, Finch, and others, do make that the ground of their opinions. And I suppose that most of all these Jews also do the like. And, as was said before, the reason why some do so uncertainly pitch upon 1651, others '52, others '55, and others '56, is the variation and uncertainty of the account of years since Julian's time, when and how long he reigned: some pitching his reign in the year 361, some in 363, and others in 365.

Now I shall only shew how both these periods—namely, of 1650 or '56, and 1666—may be reconciled, and how they both may stand together.

The fifth vial, as hath been said, had two gradual accomplishments of it; whereof the one is a preparation to the other. That vial is emptied, as also are some of the others, by two several pourings forth of two several portions, the one of the top, the other of the dregs of the wrath of God; whereof this 11th chapter mentions one, and the 16th chapter the other. The first degree of it begins at the rising of the witnesses, with the fall of the tenth part of the city, as taking the word *city* for the extent of Rome's jurisdiction; which is completed by a second degree of it—namely, the ruin of the city of Rome itself, which is now but a tenth part of the ancient material city of Rome that once flourished: with the ruin of which city itself, the time of Antichrist's reign and kingdom is reckoned to end; it being the full accomplishment and complete effusion of the fifth vial. Now, according to their conjecture, the first of those forementioned periods (namely, 1650 or '56) may prove the time of the first of these two occurrences; and the second (namely, 1666) may be the time for the latter of them. That is, some time between 1650 and 1656 may be the period of the witnesses' killing and the time of their rising, and of the fall of the tenth part of the city, and the earthquake, &c.; and then 1666 may be the designed time for the ruin of Rome itself, and for the witnesses' more glorious ascension into heaven.

You heard, in the beginning of this discourse, that the angel who here gave this 11th chapter is the very same whom we find to have uttered that 12th chapter of Daniel's prophecy, in which he speaks of the end and ruin of Antichrist, chap. xi. 45, and how long his time should be, and his power last to scatter the holy people; and when he should accomplish to scatter them, and after that never hurt them more. This the angel declares, ver. 7 of chap. xii., adding withal, that at or about that time the children of Daniel's people (that is, the Jewish nation) should be called by Michael their prince, (that is, Christ,) ver. 1, and they should be delivered out of the greatest distress, also from the Turkish empire, that ever that nation was in; this you have ver. 1. After which ruin of Antichrist, and calling home of the Jews, should follow the resurrection of the saints, with which Christ's kingdom begins, ver. 2, 3.

Now here, in this 11th chapter of the Revelation, he comes and explains both what that time of Antichrist's reign is,—namely, 1260 years,—and also what that last scattering the power of the holy people by him should be;

even this very killing the witnesses, the signal of its expiring. And then, how the second woe should pass away,—namely, the Turkish tyranny,—and then, under the seventh trumpet, should come the glorious resurrection of the saints and the kingdom of Christ, which Daniel and all the prophets have so much spoken of. Daniel being inquisitive after the times when these things should thus be finished, the angel in ver. 11, 12 gives him two periods, the beginning of the time of both which is to be counted from the ‘ceasing of the daily sacrifice,’—that is, as was before said, from Julian’s time. Now the one of those periods is that of 1290 years, beginning from that his time, and ending between 1650 and 1656. The other is that of 1335 years, beginning from that his time also, and ending between 1690 and 1700. Which two periods, as I understand them, are set as two posts, the one at the beginning and the other at the ending of that whole stage of time which is allotted for the despatch of those great things prophesied of to fall out before the kingdom of Christ. The first (of 1290 years) is mentioned ver. 11, and shews when the first turning of the course of things for the accomplishment of all should begin. The other (of 1335 years) you have in ver. 12, shewing the time of the full and final end and complete accomplishment of all that the angel had foretold. And so that space of time between these two periods (which is forty-five years or thereabouts; for so many years the latter account, ver. 12, adds to the former, ver. 11) is allotted as the time wherein those things prophesied of by him to fall out in the last ages of the world should, each in their order, be accomplished. And so, from the first period, should begin the great turn towards the accomplishment of them, and the immediate preparations thereunto. And in the interim of that intermediate space of time between 1650 or ’56 and 1700 shall follow the orderly performance of those things which are to end and consummate all before the glorious kingdom of Christ. As first, the ruin of Rome, and so the end of Antichrist’s reign; and then the destruction of the Turkish empire; after which shall begin that great resurrection, even at that last period of 1335, falling out about 1700, which is the consummation of all.

Now the question is, what that occurrence should be which the first period of 1290 years, falling out between 1650 and 1656, doth point at, as then either to begin or to be ended? Whether it be then that Antichrist’s time, times, and a half, which the angel had spoken of, ver. 7, should expire; or what else it is that he would have our eyes especially upon in that first period?

It seems unto me, that in the 7th verse of Dan. xii. the angel mentions these two things as distinct, though he names them together. First, for Antichrist’s reign, that it shall be for a time, times, and half a time. And then he adds this second thing also, as a note or sign of the expiring of that his time,—with which all those things foretold besides should begin to be accomplished,—namely, ‘when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people,’ as speaking of this very last and eminent killing of the witnesses; with which all their scattering should end, and for ever be accomplished. Then, namely from that time, shall these things begin in their order to be finished,—namely, Antichrist’s ruin, and the Turkish empire’s destruction, &c. For thus I understand those words, ‘and when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished,’—namely, these two things there prophesied of, even Antichrist’s ruin and the Turk’s; he mentioning this last scattering as the sign or the beginning of the finishing of all. For it is hard to think that all these things should together, and exactly at one time, be finished.

So that indeed, as it seems to me, the angel’s scope in that first period of 1290 years, beginning from Julian’s time, and ending between ’50 and ’56, is not so much to design out the end of Antichrist’s time, times, and half a time, as it is to point out the first turn of things preparing to the kingdom of Christ, which shall begin from this last scattering the holy people, which is all one with this killing of the witnesses here. And so that some time within these forty-five years that are to run out between that time and the end, shall be the expiring of that his time.

And the reasons making me think that Daniel’s first period of 1290 days do rather thus refer to the first turn of things towards the accomplishment of all, which is to begin with this accomplishment of the scattering of the holy people, or slaughter of the witnesses, and so that to be made the eminent occurrence that does periodise these 1290 days, are these:—

1. The angel’s fixing the latter period of 1335 years for the final end of all, and his leaving forty-five years’ space between, doth argue the former to be the *punctum* that begins that time allotted for the accomplishment of these things during that space. So that those forty-five years are indeed the space of time for the fulfilling those great things; whereof Antichrist’s ruin is one, and a great one. And so the ending of those 1290 days is the beginning of these forty-five years, and the expiring of those 1335 years is the ending of these forty-five years, which bring in the thousand years of Christ’s kingdom. For to what end should this space of forty-five years be thus set out and measured, but as to be made famous by being designed for the fulfilling of those things,—namely, the ruin of the Pope, and of the Jews’ enemies, the Turks, in the interim of it,—whereof Daniel had there prophesied?

2. In the 10th verse, immediately before, he had again repeated, and a second time mentioned, this last scattering the holy people; and this as a preface to his answer about the time when it should be that all should be finished. ‘Many,’ says he, ‘shall be made white, and tried, and purified,’ &c., namely, by this their last scattering; and then he subjoins, ver. 11, ‘And from the time that the daily sacrifice is taken away’—that is, from Julian’s time—‘shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days;’ namely, unto the end of this last trial mentioned, even when this scattering the holy people, or killing the witnesses, shall be accomplished. He mentions it thus, on purpose to shew that he makes that killing the witnesses the *terminus ad quem* of his account. You heard before that Antiochus’s three years and a half, spoken of chap. xii. 7, was the type of this three years and a half; and lo, he useth the very same phrase here of this that he had there used of that trial, chap. xi. 35: ‘Many,’ says he, ‘shall then fall, to try them, to purge them, and to make them white.’ Yea, further, I verily believe that one reason why he singleth out Julian’s time as the term or moment from which he reckons, unto this last scattering the witnesses, rather than any other time from which to begin this account, is because that, for the comfort of the church, he was to pitch upon the end of the like scattering unto that of Julian’s, when, as was before observed, Popery should, after the Reformation, prevail again, and the power of the beast make a scattering of the saints, before the final ruin of that power; even as heathenism, after it was purged out of the empire, was then again set up by Julian, with the killing the holy people, by the authority of a heathen emperor, before its final overthrow and extirpation. And so that scattering in Julian’s time was chosen, rather than any other occurrence, as that from which the computation of this time should begin; because, through the likeness of it, it was most suitable to resemble the occurrences about this killing the witnesses, with which this time was to have end.

This being just the like time of trial as that in Julian's days was; and therefore he thus pitcheth upon that. Whereas, had he intended to reckon the Pope's time, times, and a half, and the exact ending of it, he might, and surely rather would, have reckoned from some other more eminent mark suitable unto it, that accompanied his first beginning and rise, rather than this heterogeneal passage of Julian's persecution, which yet is homogeneal with this last slaughter of the witnesses. And—

3. Unto the time of that latter period of 1335 days, ver. 12, when it shall come, he adds a 'Blessed is he that cometh,' &c.; which to me sounds as if the former period had some eminent blessedness also in the beginning or dawning of it, but yet not to be compared with this other which is to follow. And it is as if he had said, Blessed indeed is he that cometh to the end of the 1290 days, when the scattering of the saints shall be accomplished, and when they shall rise, to die no more. But blessed, and thrice blessed, is he that cometh to the other time of forty-five years more; for then begins that first and great resurrection that brings us to Christ's kingdom. And therefore he tells Daniel, 'Thou shalt stand up in thy lot,' &c., even thou as well as others, and shalt enjoy the blessedness of those times. And this speech is, in a manner, all one with that which John useth, when he speaks of the beginning of these thousand years, chap. xx. 6: 'Blessed is he that hath part in the first resurrection.' So that in the first period of 1290 years shall also begin blessed times in comparison of those foregoing; for now the scattering of the holy people by Antichrist is for ever accomplished.

Now then, the angel's scope here in this 11th chapter being to explain that speech of his in Daniel, (for this 11th chapter I take to be as a comment upon that his speech there;) and he, namely the same angel, there mentioning a scattering of the holy people, which should accomplish all, and so be the last of their persecutions; and making the ending of that scattering to be the beginning of that famous and to be noticed time when is to be the finishing of all those great things which are to be done ere Christ's kingdom begins and the glorious resurrection,—namely, the ruin of the Pope and Turk, the preparations unto which are to begin from the end of that scattering;—hence it is that he doth so largely insist on this last and eminent killing of the witnesses here in this chapter, and also upon this their resurrection. For this is placed as the post, or *terminus a quo*, of the race or stadium of those forty-five years wherein those other great things should in their order be accomplished.

And this resurrection and ascension of the witnesses, from under this their last scattering, (they being now to die no more, as Christ did not after he arose,) bearing, as was said, a shadow and type of the resurrection and new heavens to come at the thousand years, and so being a glimpse and scheme of the blessedness then, how fit, in this respect, was the time of this resurrection placed at the first turn of things, hastening to the bringing in that new world, and made the first *punctum* or moment beginning that forty-five years whose end shall be the great resurrection, and the thousand years of Christ's kingdom! So that (to conclude this) that interim of forty-five years is a time which begins with a resurrection, and also ends with a resurrection, and that an infinitely more glorious one; and in the middle course of which time the greatest things are accomplished, as preparations to that kingdom of Christ, that ever were done upon the earth, even the ruin both of the Pope and the Turk.

Yea, further, to make the harmony herein yet more full; this first period

of 1290 days, ending between 1650 and 1656, is made by those who have pitched upon it to be the time for the Jews' first recalling and conversion, and so of the foundation of the declining of the Turkish empire, as I shewed before. And their reason is, because the angel, in the 1st verse of this chapter, makes mention of this their call, as one thing to be accomplished also. But for this see Finch, Brightman, and others. And that may be one reason why he pitcheth on the taking away the Jews' daily sacrifice in Julian's time, as then become abominable unto God, as that eminent mark and post, as it were, at which he would begin this account; even because it was a passage that would more conspicuously occur to the Jews as a mark, in a way of oppositeness, answering that which was to fall out at the ending of this time. For their setting up the daily sacrifice in Julian's time was their last attempt to erect their temple-worship, unto which they, refusing the Messiah, unto this day do so cleave. Which attempt of theirs God from heaven shewed his hand against, by an earthquake overthrowing the foundation of the temple, then by them laid; so more fully fulfilling that prophecy of our Saviour, for not only above-ground, but even under-ground, was there not so much as one stone left upon another. And therefore, when he would hold forth unto them the time when they shall turn unto the Messiah, typified out by that temple and sacrifice, he reckons from the taking away that their daily sacrifice, which was made so remarkable unto them. And because he mentioneth the beginning of a blessed time, blessed in its beginning, both unto Jew and Gentile, of both whom the angel in that 12th of Daniel doth speak, and of the ruin of the enemies of both, which is to be completed by the New Jerusalem, as the accomplishment of all; hence, therefore, this period may also seem to respect the first call of these Jews, as being that which is the preparation unto their kingdom.

And if these two should then at that time fall out together,—namely, this famous resurrection of the European witnesses, and the conversion of the Jews,—how would this reconcile all these opinions together, and shew a further reason why that period of 1290 days was so eminently held forth unto Daniel, as that which was to be made famous by two so glorious resurrections of Jews and Gentiles at once, when the Jews' long scattering, and the witnesses among the Gentiles' last scattering, should both end together! And how harmonious were it that in one day, as it were, the foundations of the New Jerusalem to come, which is to be made up of both, should be thus laid together, and in a glorious resurrection of them both! For such is that revival which these European witnesses here have, from this their death unto life, and is so here reckoned. And such, and no less, shall be the conversion of the Jews; even no other than, as Paul speaks, Rom. xi. 15, a 'rising from the dead.' And thus should the preparations to that glorious kingdom, consisting of both, fall out together at the beginning of these forty-five years; during which interim and space of time the enemies of them both are to be removed out of the world, who only do now stand in the way, and hinder the revealing of Christ and his kingdom, as the Roman empire did the revealing of Antichrist, that man of sin, and his kingdom. And so both these typical resurrections are in the end to be swallowed up by a more real and more glorious resurrection, which shall begin that New Jerusalem and kingdom of Jesus Christ.

And thus may the resurrection of the European witnesses be, as was said, the preparation to the complete pouring out of the fifth vial in the ruining of Rome; even as, on the other side, the conversion of the Jews, which is

their resurrection, is the preparation to the ruin of the Turk, which is the sixth vial. And that the Jews shall be called before the pouring out of the sixth vial, which is said to make way for the 'kings of the east,' chap. xvi.,—that is, for the Jews coming into their own land,—hath long since been the opinion of Mr Brightman and others. And many also do hold, that that call of theirs shall begin forty-five years before the complete erection of the New Jerusalem; and so those forty-five years after that first call of theirs, ere they can obtain the full possession of their promised kingdom, do seem to answer unto those forty-five years which they spent after their coming out of Egypt, ere they got possession of their promised land of Canaan; for so long time it was ere they were settled in it, if you take their forty years in the wilderness, with the time wherein Joshua fought his battles, as himself expressly counts it, Josh. xii. 10. Which forty-five years do begin at the end of the 1290 years; and at the beginning of that time falls out the rising of the witnesses, according to the interpretation formerly given.

And now to give that other interpretation of that clause, 'The second woe is past,' which follows upon this resurrection of the witnesses here, ver. 14, which I before reserved unto this place. 'The second woe is past,' says the angel; 'behold, the third woe cometh quickly.' May there not, in this passage, be tacitly intimated, as the calling of the Jews still useth to be in this book of the Revelation, which is chiefly written for the Gentiles, the foundation of the Turks' ruin by the conversion of the Jews, as being that which was now to fall out together with the resurrection of these witnesses? For the Turkish empire being the second woe or sixth trumpet, with whose fundamental declining beginneth the Jews' call, as Finch and others write of it; why, then, may not the angel's meaning in that clause be, that now, when he had in his narration brought us to the times of the rising of the witnesses, contemporary with which the Jews' calling is to be, which is the first foundation of the second woe's declining, then to pronounce this, 'The second woe is past,' &c., that is, the foundation of the Turks' passing away and ruin is now laid, as is the ruin of Rome in the resurrection of the European witnesses? And surely, then, when the Jews are called, the woe of that Turkish tyranny may be reckoned and accounted of as past, for that the height and bitterness of it is past, although the empire itself may for a while still stand, the woe of it lying in its let and hindrance of the Christian religion, which now among the Jews shall revive in his territories. Yea, in the style of the prophets, and also of this book, when the foundation of the ruin of any state first begins to be laid, when its empire and dominion is past the meridian, and once begins to decline, it is said to be *past*, as you heard before; as when things begin but to be accomplished, they are then said to be finished. Which was the learned observation of Mr Mede upon that passage in chap. xiv., which also I have inserted in the exposition of that place there, when the second angel cried, 'Babylon is fallen,' when yet the first vial was but then begun to be poured out, and the open discovery of Antichrist made. But because at that time his declension and ruin began, he is therefore pronounced as then already *fallen*, though again, afterwards, when his destruction is completed in the ruin of the city itself, his seat, chap. xviii., the same phrase is used. Even as in the prophecy of Isaiah, (which instance Mr Mede also doth there bring,) when the Medes first revolted from the Babylonish monarchy, which was done at the time that Isaiah uttered it, he having many years before prophesied the ruin of it, yet because that revolt was the foundation of Babel's ruin, which was by those Medes, when revolted from

it, to be effected, therefore it is then said by the prophet, Isa. xxi. 9, 'Babylon is fallen,' &c. And so, say I, the meaning of the angel here is, to pronounce the second woe, or the sixth trumpet, or (which is all one) the Turkish empire, to be now past, then when the revolt of the Jews, in their conversion unto Christ, doth first begin; this their revolt being the foundation or preparation unto the passing away of this second woe, and that most truly, in the style of the prophets, in that it now begins to pass, &c. And so the angel goes on to give warning unto us of the third woe's approach, adding, 'The third cometh quickly;' that is, the seventh trumpet, or the New Jerusalem and kingdom of Christ. And both the ending of the beast's reign now shortly follows, together with the ruin of Rome, the foundation of and preparation unto which ruin is laid in the resurrection of the witnesses; and also the sixth vial, or the breaking in pieces of the Turkish empire, is after that to follow, the preparation unto which is the calling of the Jews. And thus this 11th chapter of the Revelation does indeed become a complete comment on that 12th chapter of Daniel, and makes mention of all those things that are therein mentioned, as was at first observed.

Add unto all this, this small observation:—

I observed before, that God did use to fulfil prophecies, and the computations of them, over and over, in several degrees of accomplishment. For instances whereof, I gave this of the 1290 days in Daniel, and this also of these 1260 years of Antichrist's reign, as in like manner those three years and a half of the witnesses' killing, and then their rising again: whereof some gradual accomplishments are already past, at several times in Europe, within the revolution of the century of years last past. And yet I have withal proved that another far greater slaughter of them is yet to come. Now, it may be that the observation of the revolution of time in the hundred years last past, in which the former killings of the witnesses did fall out, may indigitate and put some note upon the time when this great and last slaughter in the revolution of this century of years now running on (since 1600) may fall out. That is, as those partial and smaller killings of particular witnesses fell out in anno 1547 (as did that in Germany, which ended in 1550) and in 1556, (as did that in England in the days of Queen Mary,) so accordingly about the time of the revolution of the same term of a hundred years, now running on in this next age after that, the time of this last killing of the witnesses may also be.

I have long since observed it, though not first to this particular purpose, that the revolution of a hundred years hath produced, especially in these latter days, new motions and alterations in the church, like unto those that fell out a hundred years before. To this purpose that of John Huss is remarkable, who suffering martyrdom at a stake, anno 1417, or thereabouts, *Post centum annos*, &c.,—'After a hundred years,' says he, 'you Papists shall be called to an account.' A speech so memorable among the Bohemians, that they stamped it upon their coins. And accordingly, a hundred years after, anno 1517, did Luther arise, and with him the gospel in Germany. And then again, if we descend to the revolution of the next hundred years, we shall find, and our eyes have seen it, that a hundred years after Luther, about the year 1618, began those notable changes and alterations in Germany which still go on unto this day. From which year 1618 I reckon that the war of the beast against the witnesses, and the Gentiles' treading down the outward court, did begin, and shall still go on till it end in his great slaughter of those

witnesses there. And this happened in an opposite correspondency to what fell out a hundred years before. For as, anno 1517, began Luther's preaching, and the workings towards that reformation that followed, so in anno 1618 began the like workings towards the deformation of the gospel, as I may so call it, which hath gone on with as strange a hand against the church, as that other was carried on with by God for the church. And to those I could add many other instances. So that I confess that I am in like manner suspicious of the revolution of a hundred years from those former mentioned killings of the witnesses in the century last past, lest about the hundredth year from thence should be the time of this other great and last killing of them, as yet to come, and whereof those were but gradual fore-runners.

And it may be that, if England and Scotland, &c., be that tenth part of the city which is to be the eminent stage of this their killing and rising again, as hath been argued, then this period will fall upon the hundred years after that former trial of England. And let me add this, that as upon the rising of England and Scotland began that glorious harvest of blessed times, which lasted till these German wars began; so in this revolution of another hundred years after that time, according to the conjecture held forth, are like to arise unto the church like times of far greater blessedness, if that hold true, that then those forty-five years before spoken of do begin, which are allotted for the accomplishment of all.

But to put a stop unto too much curiosity in these matters: all these notions and conjectures, though as probable as any of this kind usually given, I give up to further light and second considerations, knowing that such have often failed and deceived others; and considering also that in fixing the times and seasons for God's great works of wonder, there is the greatest modesty that may be to be expressed. For if those seventy years' captivity of the Jews in Babylon were so expressly designed out by God, and are now long since expired, and yet when to begin the account of those seventy years is not agreed upon by the learnedest chronologers unto this day; how much more difficult then must it needs be to pitch the certain time of any period before the accomplishment of it?

But, however, let an indefinite warning that these things are approaching, and we within the reach of them, suffice for to move us to prepare for them, which is the only use of knowing them. It may be said of the time of these things, as it is said of the day of death, *Latet hic dies, ut observetur omnis dies*;—The day and year of the accomplishment of these great matters are hid from us, that so each day and year we may be found ready, whenever they shall come upon us, as in this age wherein we live they are likely to do. And although we may think this dismal and black hour of temptation not likely to come so soon, seeing the clouds rise not fast enough so suddenly to overcast the face of the sky with darkness, yet we are to consider that we live now in the extremity of times, when motions and alterations, being so near the centre, become quickest and speediest; and we are at the verge, and, as it were, within the whirl of that great mystery of Christ's kingdom, which will, as a gulf, swallow up all time; and so, the nearer we are unto it, the greater and more sudden changes will Christ make, now hastening to make a full end of all.

And for the Jews' call, which is conjunct with this killing and rising of the witnesses: as it depends not upon ordinary means to effect it, so there are like to be no preparations at all unto it until it comes, as there are not

for things extraordinary; but 'a nation shall bring forth in a day,' as the prophet speaks. And so, in the very year before it, there will be no more outward appearances or probabilities of it than there are now, or than there have been many hundred years since. And therefore our faith need not be put off from this, by the seeing as yet no stirrings or motions at all unto it or towards it. And the truth is, both the killing and rising of the witnesses, and also the calling of the Jews, may fall out sooner than we are aware of.

BRIEF HISTORY OF THE KINGDOM OF CHRIST.

EXTRACTED OUT OF THE BOOK OF THE REVELATION.*

THE Book of the Revelation is a tragi-comical vision of the occurrences of the world through all times and ages; whereof this may truly be the title, 'The story of Christ's kingdom.'

Chap. iv.—The *stage* for this is set up in the 4th chapter; there being a representation of the universal church in all ages set forth, according to the exact pattern of a church visible and instituted, into which all saints on earth should be cast.

Chap. v.—Then the *prologue* follows in the 5th chapter, where is Christ's taking on him the government and kingdom, by 'taking the sealed book,' and thereby undertaking to be God's commissioner, to execute the decrees contained in this book, and to give the vision of it unto John; at which instalment of him into the kingdom, there is a song of praise sung to the Lamb, by the twenty-four elders and four beasts, who are the chorus in this show, with a triumphant assurance and expectation of what will be the happy conclusion of all, that 'we shall reign on earth with him.'

The *scene* or place where all that was acted here in these verses is the Roman empire, and the several dominions of it east and west, called *οικουμένη*, or the whole world.

Then begins the *story* itself to be acted at the 6th chapter. The general argument of which is: That whereas Christ's government was to be executed and seen, (1.) in 'putting down all opposite rule and power' that stands in his way, as Paul speaks, 1 Cor. vi.; and then, (2.) in a visible taking the kingdom to himself and his saints, which makes the fifth monarchy; accordingly here the story of this book *first* shews how Christ puts down all the opposite rule, and power, and dominion whatsoever, in the fourth and last foregoing Roman monarchy, in the several successions and revolutions of it, one after another, till that he hath worn them all out that were ordained to stand up in it. And these many difficulties of his coming to and obtaining

* This tract is merely a Synopsis, or Table of Contents, of the *Exposition of the Revelation*; and is therefore subjoined to it, although the two stand far apart in the original edition of the author's works.—ED.

his kingdom, do exceedingly serve to make the story of it appear glorious. Then—

Secondly, It closeth and endeth in a glorious visible kingdom which Christ on earth sets up, and possesseth peaceably with his saints, as the catastrophe of all.

More particularly, the story is this, according to the several contents of each chapter:—

Chap. vi.—Christ, when he ascends up to heaven, finds the Roman monarchy, whose room he was to possess, stretched over east and west, even over all those parts of the world where he was to seat his church and kingdom; and this wholly in the hands, and under the government and power, of one entire monarch or emperor, and under him altogether heathenish and idolatrous, and subjected wholly to Satan, set up as ‘the god of this world.’ Christ first sets upon the conquest of Satan’s ministry and worship in it; and by the preaching the gospel, overturneth that vast empire as it was heathenish, throws down Satan from his throne and height of glory in it, and brings it into subjection and acknowledgment of him as king, chap. xii., and turns both it and emperors of it Christian in three hundred years. This is the sum of the sixth chapter of the seal-prophecy, and the twelfth chapter of the book-prophecy.

Chap. viii.—But this empire, though turned Christian in outward profession, yet having persecuted his church whilst idolatrous, and after it was Christian, when Arian; therefore, at the prayers of the martyrs slain, mentioned chap. vi. 11, and in vengeance of their blood, chap. viii. 4, he further proceeds to ruin the civil imperial power of it, the empire itself, by the trumpets in the 8th and 9th chapters. And the empire then becoming divided into two, the eastern and western empire, as they were commonly called—

1. He ruins the imperial western state and power in Europe, by the four first trumpets, the wars of the Goths, by four several steps in the 8th chapter. Then—

2. Chap. ix.—He destroys the imperial eastern state, which stood after the other, by two degrees,—first, by the Saracens, then by the Turks,—who are the fifth and sixth trumpets, who possessed all the eastern part to this day; and that is the contents of the 9th chapter. Only, chap. vii., ere ever these trumpets bring these evils on the empire, he seals up a company of a hundred and forty-four thousand Christians in the eastern part, as chap. vii. 2, to be preserved and continued in the true profession of his name, under these two, the sorest and longest, and there called the woe-woe-trumpets, which were to fall upon the eastern part of the empire, in which parts these servants of his there sealed were to lie, as appears, chap. ix. 4. And this their sealing is the sum of the 7th chapter.

Now then that old Roman empire being thus removed in both parts of it, yet still look, as that eastern part of it is left possessed by the Turks, in the 9th chapter; so the western part of it, in Europe, being broken into ten kingdoms by the Goths, they consent to give their power to the beast, the Pope, who so becomes a successor to the western emperor, and possesseth his seat and power, though under another title, and so heals that wound given. And this beast the 13th chapter describes, and gives the vision of his rise, power, time of his reign. And the 17th chapter doth expound and interpret under whose antichristian tyranny—as great as that of Rome heathenish, or of the Turks themselves to Christians—Christ yet preserves another like company of a hundred and forty-four thousand, chap. xiv., even

the like number of virgins who are sealed Christians in the west, as under the tyranny of the Turks and Saracens he had done the like in the east; so himself keeping possession still by his church, preserved under both, of both these parts of the empire, as his inheritance. And this opposite company or a hundred and forty-four thousand Christians, opposite to the whore, there called virgins, and their separation from her and opposition to her, are recorded chap. xiv.

But now these two, the Pope and Turk, both enemies to Christ, thus succeeding in the empire, and sharing the two parts of it between them, Jesus Christ, we see, is still as far off from his designed kingdom as he was before. For Mohammedanism tyranniseth in the one, idolatry overspreads the other, as heathenism had done the empire; and so he hath a new business of it to come unto his kingdom, as difficult as ever.

Chap. xv., xvi.—Therefore Christ hath seven vials, which contain the last plagues, for he means to make this the last act of this long tragi-comedy, to despatch the Pope and Turk, and root them out, even as the seals had done heathenism, and the trumpets had done the empire itself. And the plagues of these vials are the contents of the 15th and 16th chapters.

The first five vials do dissolve and ruin the Pope’s power by degrees in the west; then the sixth vial breaks the power of the Turk in the east; so making way for the Jews, whom he means to bring into fellowship of his kingdom in their own land.

But by these six vials their power and kingdom not being wholly ruined and removed, both Turk and Popish party join, and putting to their utmost forces, and together with them, all opposite kings of the whole world, against the Christians, both east and west, who, whenas the Jews are come in and converted, make up a mighty party in the world; unto the help of whom, against these and all opposite power whatsoever, Christ himself comes, and makes but one work of it, and with his own hand from heaven destroys them. And so ‘it is done,’ as the voice of the last vial is in the 16th chapter.

Chap. xvii.—The 17th chapter is an interpretation who is the beast and whore.

Chap. xviii.—The 18th chapter sings a funeral-song of triumph for this whore’s ruin; after which comes in Christ’s kingdom, the New Jerusalem.

Chap. vii.-ix.—Which new kingdom of his shall be made up of, first, eastern Christians that endured the bondage of the two woe-trumpets, the Saracen and Turks, yet continuing to profess his name; and therefore unto those hundred and forty-four thousand in the 7th chapter, do succeed an innumerable company with palms in their hands, who have the same promises of the New Jerusalem made to them, (the very same that are found mentioned in the 21st chapter,) which shews their interest therein. And—

Secondly, This kingdom of Christ shall be made up of western Christians also, whose hundred and forty-four thousand in the 14th chapter do arise in like manner to an innumerable company: who, after the rejection of the whore, chap. xix. 1-9, are brought in singing in like triumph, decking themselves for the marriage in fine linen. But—

Thirdly, This kingdom of Christ shall be made up especially of Jews, dispersed both east and west, and over all the world; and therefore hath the name from them, the New Jerusalem. With whom—

Fourthly, Come in as attendants of their joy other Gentiles with them, that never had received Christ before: the ‘glory of the Gentiles’ is said to be brought into it.

Chap. xx.-xxii.—And so both east and west, Jew and Gentile, and the fulness of both, comes in, and becomes one fold for a thousand years, under one shepherd, one kingdom under this 'root of David,' their king, King Jesus the conqueror, even as it first was under one heathen idolatrous emperor, when first Christ set himself to conquer it. And so is fulfilled that prophecy of this his kingdom, Isa. lix. 19, where, after the final destruction of all Christ's enemies, foretold ver. 18, 'then,' he says, 'they shall fear his name, from the east unto the west, and the Redeemer shall come unto Sion.' Which words, Rom. xi. 26, Paul interprets of the Jews' final call, and this restauration of the world with them. 'Even so, Lord Jesus, come quickly.'

Chap. v.—In the 5th chapter we have an account of a book with seven seals, which none could open. In this strait comes Christ, and takes upon him the opening and fulfilling of the book, and the decrees therein. At this the chorus fall down and worship.

Ver. 1.—First, What is this book? Many make it the Scriptures. But it is plain it is a book containing the affairs of the world and the church, and God's decrees about it. For upon the opening of every seal he sees a vision containing the matter of the ensuing chapters, the 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th; and when the seals were all taken off, chap. x., John is bidden to eat the book, that he might prophesy again the other part of this prophecy. So as it is this book of the Revelation, and the government of the church and world set forth therein, which Christ takes, and, by taking the book, undertakes to manage and exercise that government, which agrees with what is said at the beginning of this book, Rev. i. 1.

Ver. 2.—A strong angel proclaimeth, 'Who is worthy to loose the seals thereof?' &c. The use of the seals is not simply to shew it cannot be known, as Daniel's sealed book is to shew it could not be known till the end, Dan. xii. 4, but for the further setting out the glory of Christ, who was only able to take the book and to loose the seals. To take the book, first, God causeth a general proclamation to be made to all creatures, as some kings have done for a noble service, promising great reward, as Saul did, 1 Sam. xvii. 26, 27. Secondly, an angel makes it, to shew that none among angels could, and a strong angel, that his voice may reach all creatures. The end of this was, first, to stir up strong desires in John, and all else, to search into the meaning of this prophecy; what he did in the 1st chapter of Revelation, ver. 3, here he provokes unto the same by this proclamation. Secondly, another end of it was to set out the weakness of the creature, that the honour of Christ might appear that he only can do this. It is the manner of God thus to endear mercies to us, as he endeared a wife to Adam. He first brought all creatures to him, that he might first see that there was not a meet help for him among them. So in the work of salvation, he lets the soul try all means first, to run to duties, and to all helps, and then brings it to Christ. So, 1 Cor. i., that the power of God might appear, he first lets the world try their wisdom, and then sends the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe, ver. 21, 25. It is a question among the school-men, whether any mere creature could satisfy for sin? Some say they could, and some say it is a needless question. But it is a necessary thing to know that a creature could not; for it glorifies Christ the more, as in the present case it doth that all creatures here were first challenged. And this here is an argument for that also; for if they could not open the book, they could much less have redeemed us, for that is made a greater thing, ver. 9, where they sing that 'Christ was therefore worthy to open the book, because he

had redeemed us.' Heb. x., God was not pleased with the blood of bulls and goats, ver. 5.

Use.—Hence learn we to renounce all kings, priests, and prophets, in comparison of Christ; he is a priest to redeem, and a prophet to teach and reveal the mysteries of God, and he is the king to execute all God's decrees. It is good to go over all the creatures, and to renounce them, and say, I will be saved by none of you. Suppose the work of redemption was yet to work, and God should make this proclamation as here, Find me out a party able to redeem, I'll speak to him; call a council, seek one, (none would be found;) and how should we have howled and wept, as John did here, and say we were undone? And then suppose God should have set out Christ at last. But he would not put you to this plunge; it is the more love shewn by him to find out Christ, and to speak to him himself to die for us, and do it to our hands.

Observe from those words, *Who is worthy?*—It is not simply an act of power to break open the seals, but to have authority by worth; so that which puts the value on Christ's satisfaction was the worth of his person, and so in this act to open the book. A mere creature might have had as much habitual grace, and performed as much duty, but who is worthy? It is the personal worth which did it: 'Such a high priest became us, who is higher than the heavens,'—that is, than the angels,—Heb. x. Secondly, None was found worthy: the word is *none*; it is not restrained to man, no man, but never a reasonable creature, in the heavens angels, nor in earth men.

Neither to look thereon—that is, to look in it to understand it, for else John could and did look on it, ver. 1. Now, to loose the seals and open the book is not simply to know God's mind in his decrees, but to make the vision of them to John, and to execute and fulfil them in times; it is an allusion to those which take a commission, who take it not only to look on it, but to fulfil it. It is a commission sealed, so as this proclamation is in effect, Who shall be able to be God's commissioner to take this book, and make the visions to John, and execute and produce them in their time?

And this appears from chap. vi. 1. Still as the seals are opened by the Lamb, there is a vision made to John of what should be done; therefore the Lamb is presented not simply as one that should take the book, but that hath eyes and horns—eyes of providence, and horns of power to execute. And this agrees with the allusion unto Gen. xlix. 9, 10, where Judah is made a type of Christ, and called a lion's whelp, and the sceptre given him; and is called God's lawgiver, to take his laws from him and execute them, for in that respect it is that Judah is called God's lawgiver, Gen. xlix. 11: not in respect of the giving the laws of God, but in respect of the executive power to see them kept. So Christ here; and he so takes this book as to deliver it to us to execute the decrees of it.

Ver. 4. *And I wept much.*—John weeps. He was called up to heaven to see visions; and now there was a stop: it was to set off the mercy, and to try his heart, and make the joy greater.

Obs. 1.—Our infirmities shall not hinder God's revealing himself, though unbelief may say it will never be; yet Christ will go on to reveal himself, as here to John.

Obs. 2.—God in greatest mercies may make greatest stops, enough to bring to despair; you shall see no hope ere he grants them, so to John here. So in the first works of conversion many times; and so in great works he calls

men to, he may make a stop. John was called to see visions, yet a stop and pause was in his view made.

Obs. 3.—If by John's weeping were meant his praying to God in this stop put, then you see the way to obtain revelations of God is by tears and praying; so Daniel prayed and wept, Dan. x. 2, and then God revealed himself.

John is comforted by a stander-by, (1.) by something to uphold his heart; (2.) by the sight of the Lamb, ver 6.

Obs. 4.—The degrees God uses to comfort his people :—(1.) To let fall something that gives hopes of Christ, to draw the soul to wait; then, (2.) to shew them Christ himself. God might have shewed John the Lamb at first, but first he comforts him by a stander-by; so Job first 'heard by the hearing of the ear, and then his eye saw him.'

Ver. 6.—Christ, the only opener of this book and giver of this prophecy, is diversely expressed :—

1. He is called the 'root of David,' out of Isa. xi. 10. Christ put this riddle to the Pharisees, How David could call him Lord, if he were his son? So how could he be called the root, if he were David's son and a branch of him? The truth is, he is the root of David, and of all the saints; he was the root of his ancestors, the father of his mother. The root of any family in Scripture is put for the eldest son in it, who is as the root of the rest. So, Isa. xiv. 30, 'I will kill thy root with famine,'—that is, thy first-born, the root of thy house,—for in opposition he says, and 'the first-born of the poor shall be fed.' So, Mal. iv. 1, that therefore Christ is the root of David, the meaning is, that he is the 'first-born among all his brethren,' as, Rom. viii., he is called; and, Ps. lxxxix. 27, so God calls David in the type, but intends Christ thereby, when he says, 'I will make him my first-born, higher than the kings of the earth;' and, ver. 29, 'His seed shall endure for ever.' This is to be the root of David. 'He is the first-born of every creature, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named,' Eph. iii. 15.

2. He is called the 'lion of the tribe of Judah;' but why a lion of the tribe of Judah? It is a manifest allusion to the prophecy, Gen. xlix. 9, wherein Judah, as this place shews, is made a type of Christ; and it warrants the application of all there unto Christ.

Judah is called a lion—

(1.) Because out of Judah came all the worthies and lion-like men, Joshua, Othniel, David, all the shadows of Christ; therefore, Gen. xlix. 11, he is called 'an old lion,' as the word is, a courageous, hearty lion: so, 2 Sam. xvii. 10, valiant men are called lions; such was Christ, who 'durst engage his heart to draw near to God,' Jer. xxx. 21.

(2.) Judah had that kingdom whereof a lion is the emblem; therefore sceptre and lawgiver, ver. 10, are attributed to him, so that it is as much as to say, Christ the king by inheritance, as Judah was, hath overcome.

(3.) Judah did take the prey, the land; it was done by the worthies of Judah—Joshua, David; and when, as a lion, they had taken that prey, they couched and had rest, as in Solomon's days, 1 Kings iv. 21, which was also prophesied of, Num. xxiii. 24, 'Behold, they rose up as a great lion, and shall not lie down till he eat the prey;' and Gen. xlix. 9, 'He couched as an old lion; who shall raise him up?' So Christ, when he had led captivity captive, sits down quietly in heaven, couching, as lying in wait till the day of judgment, when he will appear like an old lion that coucheth as if asleep, and then suddenly leaps on the prey. Especially in the latter days, when the gatherings shall be to him, his kingdom shall be as of a lion among beasts; so, Micah v. 8, he prophesies there of Christ's kingdom in the

calling the Jews, and of his birth, ver. 2. Now that kingdom is the scope of this book.

Ver. 6, *And in the midst of the elders stood a lamb as it had been slain.*—John had heard of Christ as a lion, but he sees him as a lamb. So many a poor soul are afraid of him, but when you see him, and come to be acquainted with him, you will find him to be a lamb, and a lamb that hath eyes to run to and fro through the earth for you, and seven horns, not to hurt you but to butt his and your enemies. We have not all lion-like thoughts of Christ; as he hath the heart of a lion, so he hath the meekness of a lamb. You may wonder at this mixture; he is a lamb to you.

1. Why is he called a lamb? It is in allusion to the sacrifices of the old law, which were most of lambs; the ordinary sacrifices were two lambs a day, Num. xxviii. 3. Here he was to represent Christ as a priest; as before, in being called a lion, he was represented as a king; and therefore it follows, 'as it had been slain.'

2. *In the midst of the throne, &c., stood a lamb.*—The Lamb stood nearer than the four beasts, between the throne and the elders, for he is a mediator betwixt his church and God.

3. *As it had been slain.*—That is, *first*, as if he were newly slain, for his blood is fresh continually, as if he were slain to-day; thou seest thy sins, as if they were committed yesterday, and God views Christ's blood as if he were slain yesterday, Heb. ix. 12. *Secondly*, but 'as slain,' to shew he doth not remain slain, but is alive: Chap. i. 18, 'I was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore.'

4. *Stood a lamb.*—Standing, to shew he is ready to help. When Stephen died, he saw Christ standing at God's right hand as ready to receive him. It is also to shew his readiness to intercede.

5. *Having seven horns.*—Horns are put for power to push with; so, Rev. xvii. 12, 'The ten horns are the ten kings.' The seven horns here, all kingly power; seven is a number of perfection, to shew Christ hath power to open the seven seals; and there are seven trumpets and seven vials, and Christ hath seven horns,—that is, power to fulfil all these. Antichrist rises like Christ, and comes with power, Rev. xiii. 11; but what discovers him? He hath but two horns; the church needs not fear him. The Lamb hath horns to vindicate himself of his enemies; fear not kings, though ten kings, he is King of kings; and fear not the devil, who is a roaring lion, for Christ the lion of the tribe of Judah is stronger than he, and will bind him.

6. *And seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.*—The Spirit, not in his personal subsistence, is here meant, but in his instrumental working in gifts and providence, and so is called seven spirits. Before, in chap. iv. 5, the 'seven spirits before the throne' are gifts in the church which are from Christ, for he is the fountain of spiritual gifts, and hath the Spirit without measure; but here, by the seven spirits in Christ is not meant gifts poured out, but eyes of providence sent into the earth, by which he knows and sees all things, in allusion to that, Zech. iv. 10; and it implies the perfect knowledge and providence of Christ to order all affairs on earth for his church; so, 2 Chron. xvi. 9, as before in Zechariah, he did the affairs of the Persian monarch for the building of his church.

Obs.—Christ as man hath both horns and eyes to guide and discern all things here below; his human nature is the instrument of all God's power, all goes through his hands, and all the works of God's providence go all through his sight; he knows all is done in the world.

The next thing is, why Christ should be presented here under these

notions of a lion of the tribe of Judah, and a lamb, and the root of David, rather than any other. He speaks, (1.) In the language of the Old Testament, and of John Baptist, who was under the Old Testament, (who all spake of Christ.) So Luke xxiv. 27, 'Beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them the things concerning himself.' Now Moses called him a lion, Gen. xlix. 9; Isaiah calls him a lamb, chap. liii. 7, and the root of David, chap. xi. 10; and John Baptist calls him the 'Lamb of God which bears the sins of the world.' Now as all other things in this book are set forth in allusion to the Old Testament, so these descriptions of Christ also. (2.) He gives him these titles in relation to the work of redemption, of which mention is made ver. 9. Now to that two things are required:—*First*, A price to God; and so as a lamb 'thou hast redeemed us to God by thy blood,' ver. 9. *Secondly*, Power to deliver us out of the hands of our enemies; so he is 'a lion that overcomes.' (3.) It hath relation especially to the opening this book, and executing the affairs in it; and so these titles are most proper: for—

First, He needed to die for it, and so is presented as a lamb slain; for that price that salvation did cost, each revelation to us must cost as much also. Not simply his being the Son of God, and so knowing the counsels of God written in his decrees, was enough for him to make them known to us; but to reveal this counsel to us, as in a book to be opened to us, he must die; for our sins hindered, and therefore he must die. Hence it is said, 'Thou art worthy to open the book, for thou wast slain,' ver. 9. And so, as a lamb, he is said to take sin away that hindered the revelation to us.

Secondly, As a lion he needed courage to approach God's wrath, break through a consuming fire to his throne to take the book; 'Who hath engaged his heart to draw near to me?' No angel durst have presumed to come so near.

Thirdly, As a lion he needed to overcome death, and rise to execute the contents of this book. A lion, they say, sleeps at first three days when brought forth, and then with the roaring of the old lion is roused, and sleeps the least of any creatures; so Christ rose by the power of his Father to sleep no more.

Fourthly, Being risen, he is set forth, (1.) As a lion of Judah, for in that prophecy, Gen. xlix. 11, as also Psalm lx. 7, Judah, in respect of his kingly office, is called God's lawgiver, not simply in respect of giving the laws,—that Moses, of the tribe of Levi, did,—but because Judah executed them; now because Christ did here take the book of God's decrees, and undertake to execute and fulfil them as God's commissioner, therefore he is in this place most properly in that respect the lion of the tribe of Judah. (2.) He is here set forth as a lamb with seven horns and eyes, in as fit and proper respect to this as might be, as one not fit only to give this prophecy, but to effect the things contained in it by his horns and eyes; and seven horns and seven eyes, to shew his full power to open the seven seals and the seven trumpets, and to pour out the seven vials. Such a prophet never was, who is not barely to reveal things, but to bring them to pass, and make them good. God gave Christ the platform of the occurrences to come, and power and wisdom to order the accomplishment of them.

He is set also forth under both, as a lamb and a lion, to shew his kingly and priestly office: to shew how, by virtue of both, he makes 'us kings and priests,' as they sing, ver. 10, and so they, having his kingdom in their eye, are confirmed in the promise of it by a remembrance of him. As a lamb and a lion thus strong and powerful; as a lamb he purchaseth the revelation of

what concerns the church; as a lamb with horns and eyes, he effects the accomplishment of it. And the sum of this book being to shew how Christ rules the world and his church, till he hath put down all rule, and how he takes the kingdom himself, therefore he is described as a lamb in respect of his quiet governing the affairs of the world and the church until that his kingdom come; and then as a lion, by open force, takes the kingdom and his church as a prey, out of the enemies' jaws, and that by the right of a promised succession from Judah and David; for which cases, those titles of the root of David and lion of Judah do here come in. In a word—

First, This title of his being the root of David, is to shew his right and title to that kingdom he is to receive, of which David and his kingdom was but a type.

Secondly, His being a lamb slain, is to shew both the right and title to that kingdom, and the price by which he purchased this his kingdom, even his blood.

Thirdly, His being a lion, is to shew the power by which he conquers and obtains, and then possesses it. Therefore this heavenly chorus or company here, when they do but see Christ, by taking this book to undertake the accomplishment of this prophecy,—the conclusion of which is his instalment into his kingdom,—they, in the joy and faith of it, cry out beforehand, 'We shall reign on earth,' as looking on all was to go before it as good as already done, and overlooking it all, having this kingdom chiefly in their eye.

Now, from the 8th verse to the end is a doxology, or a giving praise for the Lamb's taking the book, which consists of four parties or companies:—

First, Of twenty-four elders and the beasts; the church of men on earth. They begin and raise the song, ver. 8.

Secondly, Angels; they join and sing after, ver. 11.

Thirdly, Then all creatures come in also, ver. 13.

Fourthly, The beasts, as the leaders, say in the end, *Amen*, and close it, ver. 14.

Obs. 1.—Observe, in the general, that the sons of men are the eminentest praisers of God; they are the precentors in this heavenly choir, and they conclude the song. The reason is, because the highest work God did is the work of redemption, which concerns us, not the angels. For which, yet, the angels praise him in the 2d of Luke, as also here; yea, all the creatures rejoice in our redemption, ver. 13: but still we are the first-fruits, the top leaders. The angels follow; it is not said by them, 'Thou hast redeemed us to God by thy blood:' that concerns us; yet they sing praise.

Obs. 2.—Learn to bless God for his mercy and goodness to others; so, you see, the angels do for us. They cannot sing, as we, with an interest, yet they praise God for it; and this is their highest grace. Canst thou do so? Then comfort thyself, thou hast as good grace as any in the angels.

Obs. 3.—Yet learn to bless God with a sense of thy interest; that will raise thy heart a degree higher, as the church of men are here raised, ver. 9, 10, in their song by their interest. The praisers of the sons of men are described, (1.) having harps; (2.) golden vials. It is an allusion to the Levitical service in the temple, where they had musical instruments, and incense in bowls or vials, which, Zech. xiv. 20, are called 'the bowls of the altar:' not that musical instruments are to be in the worship of God now, no more than incense; but as incense was the type of prayer and praise, Ps. cxli. 2, 'Let my prayer come up before thee as incense,' so these harps are of that spiritual melody, as the apostle calls it, which we make to God in our hearts, even of spiritual songs in Christ, Eph. v. 19. Therefore John

himself interprets the odours or incense here to be the prayers of the saints: their hearts are the golden vials, having faith purer than gold, as Peter speaks, it being the spring of all their prayers; and their harps also are their hearts: *corda et chordæ* are near akin.

And every one is said to have harps; for in public worship all should join: the little strings go to make up a concert as well as the great. Though thou hast but little grace, yet God's worship would not be complete without thee.

And whereas John calls these odours the prayers of the saints, it makes nothing for what the Papists would collect hence, that the saints in heaven offer up the prayers of the saints on earth. For, *first*, this company are, as we said before, the church of men on earth. *Secondly*, these here offer not the prayers of others, but their own; for both themselves make the song, and it is a new one of their own making, and also the benefit they praise God for in it is their own: 'Thou hast redeemed us to God by thy blood.' Those words therefore, 'the prayers of the saints,' are but the interpretation which John adds, and imply but this, that these were saints, and their odours were their prayers.

Ver. 9, *And they sung a new song*.—(1.) You shall find in the Psalms that when David had a new occasion in a further degree to praise God, he says, 'I will sing a new song;' and here was a new occasion given. (2.) *New*, in opposition to the *old* song under the Old Testament, as John xiii. 14, 'I give you a new commandment;' that is, of the gospel, called new in opposition to the commands of the old law. In the 4th chapter of this book, these elders had sung a song for the work of creation, ver. 11; but here they sing for the work of redemption, as ver. 9, which is the eminent work of the New Testament, as creation was of the Old, and therefore it is called a new song. (3.) Here there is a more special reason why they should sing a new song, for the New Jerusalem was in their eye, Christ's kingdom and their kingdom; 'we shall reign on earth,' there all things shall be made new, and therefore their song is new: a new song for the instalment of their new king; thus Ps. xvi. 1, which is a psalm of this kingdom of Christ, as appears ver. 10, 13; that psalm therefore begins, 'O sing to the Lord a new song.'

Obs. 1.—Learn to frame new matter of praise and affections upon every new occasion.

Obs. 2.—We are to bless God for creation and redemption both; to take in the mention of old blessings when we give thanks for new, as a good scribe is said to bring forth of his treasure things new and old: so in thanksgiving we are to sing the old song and the new.

The matter of the song is praise to the Lamb.

First, The person praised is the Lamb; 'Thou art worthy.' In answer to the proclamation, 'Who is worthy?' Thou, and thou alone; for to him, and by him, and for him are all things, Col. i. 16.

Secondly, The things for which they praise him are, (1.) for his death, that he died to redeem; (2.) for his resurrection, intimated in this, 'Thou wast slain:' the one making us priests, the other kings; as follows, ver. 10. And 'to this end Christ died and rose, that he might be lord and king,' Rom. xiv. 9. The word which is translated here *redeemed*, is in the original *bought*.

Ver. 9, *For thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood of every kindred, and people, and tongue, and nation.*

Obs. 1.—That the blood of Christ was paid as a price to God to purchase

our redemption, 1 Cor. vi. 20, 'bought with a price;' and in 1 Tim. ii. he calls it a ransom.

Obs. 2.—That Christ hath not redeemed all men; for it is not every nation and tribe, but out of every nation, the elect only.

Obs. 3.—In that they say Christ is worthy to receive the book because he was slain, it argues this Book of the Revelation is a special fruit of his death, and so should be the more prized by us; before Christ's death, we hear Christ himself say he knew not when the day of judgment should be, but now he is slain, and hath taken this book, he doth, ver. 10.

Ver. 10, *And hast made us unto our God kings and priests, and we shall reign on the earth*.—Christ was before set forth as a lion for a king, so as a lamb for a priest; and both were mentioned to shew the grounds of our being both kings and priests, who shall reign on earth.

Obs. 1.—That this comforted the saints of old, even the consideration of Christ's kingdom on earth; and how peremptory are they, 'We shall reign!' They mention that, because that is the end and scope of the Revelation, the conclusion of this book, when the seals are off and the book finished, and so they have it in their eye; and they seeing Christ undertaking the accomplishment of all in this book, whereof this is the issue, are confirmed in the faith of it.

Obs. 2.—That this kingdom of Christ on earth to come is a far more glorious condition for the saints than what their souls have now in heaven; for these here overlook that condition which yet they were to run through, and their thoughts fly to comfort themselves with this, 'We shall reign on earth.'

Ver. 11.—In this verse come in the other company of the angels singing; who, first, for their *number*, are ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands. In the 7th of Daniel, where the same throne and kingdom of Christ is prophesied of, there is the same number of his guard of angels mentioned.

Obs. 1.—God hath another world of rational creatures, which we see not; and what a story then will the latter day produce!

Obs. 2.—What need we fear when there are so many for us? as 2 Kings vi. 17.

For their *station*; they are behind the elders, &c., yet round about the throne; not so near as the elders, they are the guard of the queen of heaven, the Lamb's wife, the church. Ps. xxxiv. 7, 'Angels encompass round about them that fear him;' and are sent out for their good, Heb. i. 14.

Ver. 12.—The song follows, 'Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive,' &c.

Obs. 1.—Christ, though he were worthy by inheritance, yet he was also worthy by purchase, to receive all these; so the words imply, 'that was slain.'

Obs. 2.—As he hath seven horns and seven eyes, so he hath a sevenfold praise.

Obs. 3.—And because they cannot praise him enough, they heap up words to praise him with.

Obs. 4.—None is worthy to be the king of all the world but only Jesus Christ; and indeed it were too much for any creature. The angels themselves were top-heavy of their glory, which made them reel out of heaven; but Christ hath the Godhead to poise him. No beast is naturally a king of beasts but the lion, says the philosopher; nor none worthy to be king of all creatures but this lion of the tribe of Judah.

The things which they attribute to him are—

First, Power; that is, authority over all: so Christ says, John xvii. 2, 'To me all power is given.'

Secondly, Riches; that is, possession of all creatures: 'all things are his,' and so ours. 2 Cor. viii. 9, 'Christ, who was rich, was made poor;' riches of glory, knowledge, all are his.

Thirdly, Strength, joined with power and authority. Able he is to work anything; not as other kings that have great power and authority, but no more personal strength than other men: he hath therefore seven horns.

Fourthly, Wisdom; and this as large as his power and dominions: he knows all God means to do, and sees all with his own seven eyes; not other men's, as other kings do.

Fifthly, Honour; that respects what all creatures bring in to him: they all adore and bow the knee to him, Phil. ii.

Sixthly, Glory, both in his personal excellencies, and also what his Father gives him; he sits at God's right hand, and with his Father governs, and shall come in his Father's glory, and in his person is the brightness of his glory.

Seventhly, Blessing; which respects that glory which, for his special goodness to them, his saints do give him. Others give honour to Christ,—the devils do,—but not blessing; that the saints only do, for that respects communication of goodness: they only bless him whom he blesseth first.

Obs.—Christ hath all desirable excellencies in him: beauty, glory, honour, esteem, riches, strength, wisdom.

Ver. 13, *And every creature.*—Every creature in its kind shall worship Christ, Phil. ii. Every creature comes in here, because when Christ's kingdom is set up, they shall be renewed, Rom. viii. 19, Ps. xvi. 10, 11; both creatures under the earth, bodies of saints departed, and precious stones, &c.; for all creatures shall be used in a glorious liberty.

The church of men began the song, and these continue it; for it is this mercy to them that is matter of the song, and the instauration of their king; and therefore we are to be stirred up the more to do it in that we see even all the creatures do it, whom it doth not so much concern.

Ver. 14, *And the four beasts said, Amen;* and the elders follow: the officers begin and end.

Amen seems to be an ordinance, a word to be used by officers first, and then by the people; as 1 Cor. xiv. 16.

A DISCOURSE OF CHRIST'S REWARD;

OR,

OF THE GLORY WHICH HE RECEIVES IN HEAVEN,

AS DUE TO THE EXCELLENCY OF HIS PERSON, AND AS THE RECOMPENSE
OF HIS WORK OF REDEMPTION PERFORMED.*

Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.—REV. V. 12.

I DESIGN to give you a particular, as we use to call it, of that estate of glory which was Christ's due, and which our Lord of glory parted with and was emptied of, and compare with each the particulars of his emptied, humbled estate, contrary thereunto.

And for this I might refer unto those inherent glories that were his due, to have broke forth from the first in him, as also those privileges and royalties of his; and so here, upon that argument, set by them his standing out of all these, and emptying himself of them during his humbled estate.

I shall take that royal proclamation of his glories which the holy and blessed angels, his heralds, have made, and take what I find summed up in one cluster, growing on one stalk, or in one verse, Rev. v. 12, 'Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.' That they speak it of him as God-man is clear, in that he is called the Lamb.

But before I enter upon the merits of my design specified, I must remove an objection, that my running over those particulars mentioned will not be pertinent unto the ends and purpose which I even now proposed: for the main argument is, the glories which were his due as God-man before his redemption of us; and the laying down of that glory was the main ingredient of that sacrifice he offered up for his redeeming of us. But the royalties there ascribed as worthy to be given him are what, the angels say, he was worthy of for having redeemed us; for the account they give them

* This fragment—which appears to have been notes for what, in Presbyterian churches, is called a 'table-service,' that is, an address to communicants before partaking of the Lord's Supper—is given in this place, because it is an exposition of a passage in the Book of Revelation; although, so far as the matter of it is concerned, it would more properly fall under another division of the Author's Works. This Discourse closes the Expository portion of Goodwin's Works.—Ed.

hereupon is, as he is the Lamb slain, and not at all as God-man. For the removal of which, and clearing the aptness and meetness of the allegation of these, as suitable in the scope and matter of them unto my forementioned purpose, I premise these answers :—

First, As to that, that the angels should proclaim him worthy of all these because slain, and as the Lamb that was slain, as ver. 9 seems to carry it : suppose that were the scope, yet it is but to declare a superaddition of glory of Christ's, consisting in this, that he should merit by his death what was otherwise naturally due to him in his person, who was slain ; and so a redoubled honour accrue to him upon several titles, that he who in himself, and the dignity of his person, was worthy of all these, should moreover by the merits of his death purchase thereby to be worthy of them also ; and so that although he merited them by his being slain, yet it was but what was his own by another right before due to his person, but now moreover to his actions and sufferings, and how that by them he deserved them also. And so in that one description or character of him both dues are here both involved at once. First, The *Lamb*, noting his person God-man ; and it is his title given his person, now he is in glory, throughout this book. Secondly, The *Lamb that was slain*. Both which, under the same terms in effect, Peter indigates, 1 Pet. i. 19, 'Ye were redeemed with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot ;' where the preciousness of his blood is inferred from the preciousness of his person. (1.) He mentions Christ, whom, in his person, he expressly calls elect and precious in the following chapter, (ii. 6,) and whom he sets forth in his person as a foundation to our faith, and also unto his merit for us, which is the approximate ground of our faith. Then, (2.) he speaks of this glorious person's being sacrificed to death, for his blood there is said to be the price, 'as of a lamb without blemish and without spot,' alluding to the paschal lamb, his type : for, indeed, even the value of that price by his death was founded on the innate worthiness of his person, as to whom all these were due on the pure account thereof ; for his having been slain would not have made him worthy of all these, if his person that was slain had not been worthy of all these before he was slain. Yea, and the angels do mention his death, in this their doxology of praise, chiefly as a description of his person in this sense : that he whose person was the Lamb of God, (God-man,) and further, had been he that was slain, was worthy, &c. ; and of the two it is certain the worthiness of his person far exceeds the merits of his sufferings and actions.

Secondly, The like allegation may be made concerning the manifestative glory of the other two Persons ; for that very glory which is personally due to each Person as God, they are yet proclaimed worthy to receive upon occasion of some special work done by them : and thus it is with Christ here. Thus God the Father, of whom the angels say, chap. vii. 12, 'Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever, Amen : ' all these are his due as he is God ; and yet, chap. iv. 11, he—for of him it is spoken—is proclaimed 'worthy' to receive glory, and honour, &c., 'for thou hast created all things.' Thus it is with Christ for having performed the work of redemption here.

Thirdly, It is true there is a glory given to Christ which wholly relates to the work of redemption alone ; even as to God the Father also, for and upon his work of creation ; who, although he was God, and so almighty, able to create, yet he could not have had the glory of creating or being a creator, unless he had actually created, though in that he is able to create, he might have been entitled to such a power. And so Christ hath this glory given

upon occasion of his being a Redeemer, and that he is a Redeemer ; for he was slain, and without it he had not been a Redeemer ; yet still look, as God receives in and upon the work of creation but the glory of his being God,—the invisible things of God being manifested therein, 'even his eternal power and Godhead,'—so Christ, in receiving the glory of redemption, receives but the acknowledgments of those portions due to him as God-man, now further manifested in that work.

Fourthly, In that he is said 'to receive them' after his being slain, this prejudiceth it not but that they were due to his person before. For not only of God himself the same phrase is used, 'Worthy art thou to receive glory,'—that is, as given from all thy creatures, Rev. iv. 11 ; it is spoken of him that sits on the throne, ver. 10,—but also here, as it is used of Christ, it refers to that actual possession he had taken of glory upon his ascension, which is called his entering into glory after his sufferings : Luke xxiv. 26, 'Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory ?' All which the angels after his ascension thus applaud, and cry *Euge* to. And in respect to this possession then given, and received by him, it is said he was made both Lord and Christ : Acts ii. 34–36, 'The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thy foes thy footstool. Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ ;' which is clearly spoken of his ascension, and yet he was Lord and Christ before. And in the like manner doth the Revelation speak of his entering into possession of the kingdoms of the world : Rev. xi. 17, 'Thou hast taken to thee thy great power.' It was his before ; *his* power as his due, and yet as now but the taker of it ; and therein takes but what is his right into his own hands. And the phrase, *takes to him*, is usually spoken of one that hath newly taken to him a right or due that was detained from him, or out of his own hands, and exercised by others that kept it from him, yet belonging to him ; and so here, when he is declared worthy to have received, &c., and to receive after his suffering, it is to be judged that he doth but take to him what was his. And—

Lastly, That all these were his by inheritance, as being God's natural eldest son, you have expressly, Heb. i. 4, 5, 'Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they. For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee ? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son,' by inheritance, as being eldest son, and the only-begotten of God. Yea, in his very conception, and the union of God-man, he was the Son of God ; and therefore all this royalty or glory was then his due by inheritance : Luke i. 35, 'The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee : therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God ;' called, that is, shall have the name of being God's Son, and therewith all that dignity, power, glory whatsoever, that were due to him that was the only-begotten Son of God, John i. And the angel shews that he should have all these in title as his right and due the first instant of his conception ; all which he yet had not in full and actual possession until he, as now here, was come to heaven.

And therefore that it is here said, 'Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive,' &c., imports not as if he received it only because he was slain ; nor is it any way implied thereby, that it was not his right by personal inheritance, no more than that a king that is a while kept from his right, and

obtains the possession of it by conquest, may not yet be said to have it by inheritance also, yea, and so he holds that to be the surer and better title also. In that very chapter, where his kingly dignity is solemnised, there are these three distinct titles proclaimed of him:—*First*, By inheritance, in that he is called the 'Root of Jesse.' The eminentest and eldest in a family are called the root, or the father of that family: so Isa. xiv. 30. Now, though David was the youngest son, yet, Ps. lxxxix. 27, God said of him, 'I will make him my first-born, higher than the kings of the earth;' who as in that right received the kingdom, to shew that Christ, as God's first-born, should by inheritance receive it also; which is the title I am now a-pleading. *Secondly*, He is called the 'Lion of Judah,' who got the land by conquest; so Joshua, of that tribe, Christ's type. *Thirdly*, 'A Lamb slain,' that bought it with his blood.

This objection being thus removed, and the text thus adapted to my intended purpose, I approach now unto my intended design, which is to set in one view, in two opposite schemes or draughts, these personal excellencies of Christ God-man as it were in one side or page, as in such cases we use to place things opposite or parallel; and the contrary humbled estate in the form of a servant on the opposite page, as being ἀντιρροχία, contrary one to the other.

Concerning these his excellencies and royalties due to his person, I premise but two things in general ere I enter upon the aforesaid particular comparison:—

First, That these perfections he is celebrated for, are in number seven, which is the number of perfection; for they contain a fulness and completeness of perfections, and those personally due to him.

The *second* is, that they are the good and holy angels, who behold his face and the Father's, who do give him the eulogy and praise of them. And the testimony of angels ought to have a mighty impression upon us. You see what a weight is put upon but one angel's testimony that gave Revelation to John, and it is as the seal set to the whole book, Rev. xxii. 16, 'I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify these things.' What then is the testimony of all the holy angels, the whole choir of them? And so it is prefaced to these words in the foregoing 11th verse, 'And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the beasts, and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice, Worthy,' &c. This witness of theirs must therefore have an answerable reverential repute with us, for they must needs be held the most faithful and able witness in this matter. Indeed, above all other creatures, we men redeemed do experimentally feel what he is as he is a Redeemer, and know that, in that respect, better than they. And therefore there is that emphatical difference to be observed in the song of the chorus of men, giving glory to him, Rev. v. 9, 10, 'Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.' Oh, how feelingly do they enlarge upon it! But yet the angels, when they say, 'Worthy is the Lamb that was slain,' though they go no further in their mention of it, yet they speak all this upon their own knowledge, and that a knowledge of sight, and not of obscure faith, as in a glass darkly; for they see his person every day,—1 Tim. iii. 16, 'taken up into glory, seen of angels,'—and seen as now he is in glory, since his taking up; and so are to be valued for the most competent witnesses to this matter of his personal glory, as also for the most faithful and impartial, in that he

is of another nature from theirs: 'He took not the nature of angels.' But yet they are so taken with, and overcome with this glory of his person now it is in their eye, that not only they envy not at this his exaltation as man so far above them, as the evil angels of their own nature do, and for that cause did, that you see on the contrary how they magnify and extol it. You may well and worthily then receive their testimony, as next to that of God himself, and say, in allusion to what John says of God's witness of Christ, 1 John v. 9, 'If ye receive the witness of men, the witness of' angels 'is greater.'

And so I am more immediately arrived at that comparison I promised in each particular of these glories set in opposition against every answerable humiliation, not only emptying of them in Christ's humbled condition, but the perfect contrary brought upon him; and this the holy angels themselves give us occasion, and invite us to do, by saying, 'Worthy is the Lamb that was slain;' they considered, and took in both into the burden of their song.

Let us therefore, as I said before, turn that part of the optic glass that renders the sun in its brightest strength and glory, and then turn the other end that renders it as a small snuff, discoloured, and riding in darkness and blackness; and we may, among other, make this use of it, when you come to the sacrament to celebrate the memory of Christ crucified, take a view of Christ in both. *First*, see him as crowned with glory and honour, as the Apostle speaks they saw him, Heb. ii., sitting on the throne of Majesty on high; and *then* as crowned with thorns, naked, despised, hanging on a tree. You have them both in sight in that one ver. 9: 'We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, by the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour.' And that βραχύ τι, a little lower, understand not of his being, in that he was a man, therefore a little degree lower; but it is spoken of the shortness of the *time* in which he was made lower; for otherwise, as for the lowness itself of condition which he was brought unto, the comparison unto the angels was not sufficiently expressive, it is too high to set it forth; for he was in that respect made lower than any man. 'I am a worm, and no man,' said he, Ps. xxii., that before had said, 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?' And as you consider any part of his debasement, mingle this thought with it, Thus glorious should my Jesus have been at that time, but he gave himself, and all, away for me.

The first attribute is power; that is, *authority*, δύναμις, which is here put for ἐξουσία, as sometimes elsewhere; for here it is distinguished from ισχύς, *strength*, which is another of the particulars that follows. And it is a sure rule in interpreting this place, that each of these seven are distinct from the other, else they observed not the number seven, the number of perfection. And to set out Christ's completeness thereby is his scope, John xvii. 2, 'Thou hast given him power over all flesh;' and, Matt. xxviii., 'All power is given me both in heaven and earth,' even all that power executive, not essential, which God himself means actually to exercise or put forth; all this power is committed to him; as himself at another time saith, John v. 22, 'All judgment is committed to the Son.' And thus as in respect of actual exercise of authority, God's and Christ's power as God-man may be said to be of equal extent,—one God, one Lord, of both whom are all things that are,—so by virtue of this he hath all subject to him, 2 Pet. iii. 22, 'Angels, and authorities, and powers being made subject to him;' so as Christ, by virtue of it, commands whatever is done in this and that other world. You have seen him in his greatness in this respect.

See him now stript of all this: Matt. xx. 25. 'Ye know that the princes

of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them.' Then, ver. 28, he propounds his example, 'The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.' It is as if he had said, The Son of man foretold by Daniel, (as in chap. vii. we find it,) to whom was 'given dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed,' ver. 14. Though it was his right to exercise dominion on these petty constables, who, for such are kings over the nations, yet under him; instead of being over, says he, all these sorts of attendants, I minister to all, and my whole life is a service devoided of all authority but over devils and diseases; but otherwise it is a subjection to all other; and I am not only a servant unto God herein, but am subjected to men. And what was his end in this but to make a price of redemption for us thereof, together with his whole life, and 'to give his life a ransom for many?' He is subject not only to the lawful authority of the Roman empire as then extant, but so he would have been of any state he might have been supposed to live in, which he considered enough then; the exactors of tribute required it of him by Peter, to put him in mind of it, Matt. xvii.* But he declared, in his answer to their demand, himself a king's son; and therefore he says, ver. 26, 'The children of kings are free.' And in those words he speaks to this effect: To give thee, Peter, a demonstration of what authority and dominion I have in this world, I will not pay it out of that ready-money I have, or thou hast by thee, nor will I borrow it of any man, but I will command a fish to pay me tribute, and with that do thou pay Cæsar. So as whilst he subjects himself to this authority, he shews a greater authority himself had, which Cæsar had not. This authority, power, and dominion he gave away, and receded from it; yea, further, he that had authority to command all in heaven and earth, a far larger and superior dominion than Cæsar's reached to, was often put to hide himself, and fly from that authority that sought his life, as if he had not been able to have commanded the preservation of it. Thus when a babe he was forced to go into Egypt for fear of Herod; when come back again, to go into Nazareth for fear of Archelaus; and when come to age, he was so divested and emptied of all power as he was forced to retire into the borders of Canaan, at one time, to hide and skulk, as we say. And again, John iv. 1, 3, 'When therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John, he left Judea, and departed again into Galilee.' And another time, John xi. 53, 54, 'Then from that day forth they took counsel together for to put him to death. Jesus therefore walked no more openly among the Jews; but went thence into a country near to the wilderness, into a city called Ephraim, and there continued with his disciples.' Yea, then when he was to be apprehended by a band of men, he yet considers enough what power and authority he had in heaven for his rescue: Matt. xxvi. 53, 54, 'Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then shall the Scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be? Even then he subjects and empties himself: If I should take this on me, how should the Scriptures be fulfilled? which have said, I must die, and suffer, and thus it must be. So at the bar he suffers himself to be arraigned by authority, and to be smitten by an under-officer, as one that reviled the autho-

* It appears, however, to have been a tax imposed on the Jews by themselves, for the maintenance of the temple-service, that Jesus paid on this occasion.—Ed.

rity which the smiter of him judged he ought to have been subject to, yea, thought much at it that so poor a wretch as he should presume not to do it: John xviii. 22, 'And when he had thus spoken, one of the officers which stood by struck Jesus with the palm of his hand, saying, Answerest thou the high priest so?' As if he should say, Answerest thou, so vile, so mean a wretch as thou art, the high priest so? And he then also considers what was his due, and declares it before them openly at the bar, when they condemned him, as being then, through his own willing emptying himself, in their power. Thus, Matt. xxvi. 64, 'Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless, I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven;' that is, You have me now under, and this is your hour, and you think of me but as of another man subject to you: nevertheless, I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven. What need I say more as to this argument but this, that he to whom all authority in heaven and earth is committed, was accused and condemned, and the cause for which he was condemned was, that he was a rebel and a traitor unto authority?

The second particular glory of which Christ divested himself for us is *riches*, which some refer to those riches of wisdom spoken of, Col. ii; but wisdom we find comes in after; nor are they riches of glory, for they are in like manner summed up in glory, which also follows. But these riches here are attributed to Christ as a king, which is the subject of this chapter; and a kingdom consists, as in authority, so in riches, &c.; and so these riches do import the right of possession unto all things whatsoever—the *jus* or dominion over all creatures, as being his proper goods and chattels. And to this purpose it is said, 'All is yours, for you are Christ's;' so that all are his first and originally, and our right is but a derivation from him. We read that *Wisdom* (that is, Christ) says, Prov. viii. 18, 'Riches and honour are with me.' The earth is full, as of his glory, Isa. vi., for that is spoken of Christ; so of his riches, as Ps. civ. 24. And of Christ it is that it is said, Ps. xxiv. 1, 'The earth is his, and the fulness of it; the world, and they that dwell therein;' it is spoken of Christ, 'that king of glory,' as ver. 8, 10, of whom that psalm is made: for it is he to whom those everlasting doors did open when he ascended, as in the close of that psalm. His riches lie not in chattels only, but in persons also: 'the fulness of the earth, and the inhabitants also,' as in that psalm. The angels here, you see, acknowledge that all riches are his, and therewithal that themselves possess not a foot of ground in heaven but what is Christ's. And if they, the supremest rank of God's creation, are his servants, as that angel acknowledgeth himself to be, Rev. xix., and ministering spirits, Heb. i.,—and servants and ministers about a great king or great person are part of their riches,—then surely all things else must be put into this inventory. Now see the grace, the love of Christ, as the apostle speaks, 2 Cor. viii. 9, 'That though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor.' He emptied himself of the possession of all, and left not himself so much as a hole to hide his head in. He speaks in relation to his outward possession of anything; for his scope in that place was to exhort to giving to others. And this poverty was from his very birth. Consider but how his mother did lie in,—you that are rich, fine dames, you will soon be sensible of this more than others: she lies in in straw, as beasts at best, not in a bed, no, not in a house, but a stable; and the babe himself was laid in a manger. His parents that brought him up from an infant were poor, and such must his accommodations and breeding be. Witness

the offering they made at his bringing to the temple, Luke ii. 24. And after in his life, the world was not amended with him. He lives upon the charity of others, and had but merely wherewith to live. He is made dependent upon women, who themselves have not to give, but out of that their husbands allow them; thus Luke viii. 3; and therein was made a servant; for so is the borrower to the lender, as Solomon speaks. And at his death it continued still to be thus with him. He is fain to commend his mother to another, to John, to keep her when he is gone, having nothing himself to leave her. His clothes, though mean, were not his own to dispose of at that time; but the guards and watchmen that waited him till death cast lots for them before his face; and himself considered it, and laid it to heart, as in Ps. xli., (made of him, and expressing his heart, ver. 9.) It is strange that in the midst of such tortures he then hung in, he should mind this circumstance, so small a one: but we are thereby taught that he considered everything he suffered, as well as every sin of ours he suffered for; and was accordingly afflicted that he that was so great, so rich a person, if he had had his own in his right and due, should be brought to this, and stripped of all, and should have those his mean and worthless clothes to be disposed of before his eyes, in a way of sport, as well as otherwise. This wounded and pierced his heart, as well as that they pierced his hands and his feet, and gave him vinegar to drink, and wagged their heads in scorn; and his poverty, and emptiness of all comforts, and want of all supplies in those respects, he was deeply sensible of. And the psalm begins with, 'Blessed is he that considers the poor;' for he was such, and speaks it as glad that any did consider him in that estate.

The third thing instanced in is *wisdom*, which is as large as his authority. He knows all things that are, or fall out within his dominion; which are all things. Kings see not with their own eyes, but the eyes of the Lord run through the whole earth. He knew Paul, where he dwelt, Acts ix., as also that church, Rev. ii. 13, 'I know where thou dwellest,' and so all particulars also; and else, he were not a merciful high priest as man, if he knew not all our particular straits as men. He is the bishop of souls, and knows all his flock himself. As man he shall judge the world, and is ready to do it now, as Peter speaks; and therefore knows all that God hath done, or will do, or all persons to be judged: 'All things are naked before him'—and that *him* is Christ there—'with whom we have to do.'* And all these things he knows, not by the hearsay of angels, that are his messengers sent by him, not to bring him intelligence, but to execute his will; them yet he employs as ministers for his business: but he knows them all in himself, as he did that particular matter then in Mark v. 30.

Now let us see him in his weakness, and emptying himself for a time in this respect. How ignorant was he of many things! As of the day of judgment, and of the fig-tree, &c. Yea, ignorant of letters and learning. This they spake of him that had cause to know him, his kindred that lived in the same place, and therefore name his condition and calling; and they that knew his sisters, Mark vi. 2, 3, spake thus of him, 'From whence hath this man these things? And what wisdom is this which is given to him? Is not this the carpenter,' that hath lived always at his trade, and wrought for us, 'the son of Mary, the brother of James and Joses, and of Judas and Simon? And are not his sisters here with us?'

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* See *Lapide in locum* out of Molina.

CERTAIN SELECT CASES RESOLVED:

SPECIALLY TENDING TO

THE COMFORT OF BELIEVERS IN THEIR CHIEF AND USUAL TEMPTATIONS.

1. THE CASE OF DESERTION; OR, WALKING IN DARKNESS: THE CAUSE AND REMEDIES.
2. HOW TO DISCERN ANSWERS TO OUR PRAYERS.
3. THE CASE RESOLVED, WHETHER AFTER SOUND REPENTANCE A CHILD OF GOD MAY FALL INTO THE SAME SIN!
4. HOW IT IS TO BE UNDERSTOOD THAT EVERY BELIEVER BRINGETH FORTH ALL HIS FRUIT IN CHRIST.
5. HOW TO DISCERN OUR GROWTH IN GRACE.

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A CHILD OF LIGHT WALKING IN DARKNESS;

OR,

A TREATISE

SHEWING

THE CAUSES BY WHICH, THE CASES WHEREIN,
AND THE ENDS FOR WHICH, GOD LEAVES HIS CHILDREN TO
DISTRESS OF CONSCIENCE.

TOGETHER WITH

DIRECTIONS HOW TO WALK SO AS TO COME FORTH OF
SUCH A CONDITION.

WITH OTHER OBSERVATIONS UPON ISAIAH L. 10, 11.

'WHEN HE HIDETH HIS FACE, WHO CAN BEHOLD HIM?' —JOB xxxiv. 29.

HONORATISSIMO DOMINO,

ROBERTO,

DOMINO BROOKE, BARONI BROOKE DE BEAUCHAMP COURT,

HEROI

EXIMII ACUMINIS, SUMMI CANDORIS, PIETATIS AC LITERARUM CULTORI,

FAUTORIQUE, OPELLAM HANC,

LABORANTIS CONSCIENTIE CONSOLATORIAM, IN PERPETUAM

OBSERVANTIAE TESTIMONIUM :

DO. DICO. CONSECRO.

THOMAS GOODWIN.

TO MY MOST HONOURED LORD,

ROBERT,

LORD BROOKE, BARON BROOKE OF BEAUCHAMP COURT,

A HERO,

OF RARE INTELLIGENCE, OF EXTREME CANDOUR,

A CULTIVATOR OF PIETY AND LEARNING HIMSELF, AND A FAVOURER

OF THEM IN OTHERS,

I GIVE, DEDICATE, DEVOTE THIS LITTLE WORK,

DESIGNED TO COMFORT DISTRESSED CONSCIENCES, IN TOKEN OF

UNENDING RESPECT.

THOMAS GOODWIN.

TO THE READER.

THAT which drew these sermons from me, next to thy good, was to right myself. They were first preached eight years since, and some notes thereof were, to say no more, dispersed into the hands of many, to my prejudice. They are here presented as they were preached, with little alteration or addition in method, style, and matter; only, to make up the treatise more complete, I entirely added, against the publishing thereof, that whole discourse about Satan's part and hand in these desertions, beginning at Chap. VI. In handling which, I trust I have not at all incurred that severe increpation of the Apostle against curious speculations about angels, of 'intruding into those things which I have not seen' ground and warrant for in the word. Sure I am, I have endeavoured to follow the school, in their labyrinths herein, no further than I found a clue of Scripture and right reason clearly guiding and warranting my way; without which I account the ways of this old and winding serpent, in his communications to us, to be, as Solomon speaks, 'like the way of a serpent upon a stone,' hidden, and past tracing or finding out. And lest any of the weaker readers, especially those in distress, to whom more speculative and doctrinal discourses, though about things practical, prove usually tedious and unpleasing, should, in reading that piece, be discouraged at the first, my advertisement is, that, if they find that part of the way craggy or tiresome, which I hope they will not, they would divert out of it, and come in again at Chap. XI.; from whence to the end they shall find what is more accommodate to their understanding and conditions, and more practically speaking to their distress. The blessing of Heaven go with it!

THO. GOODWIN.

A CHILD OF LIGHT WALKING IN DARKNESS.

PART I.

Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? Let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God. Behold, all ye that kindle a fire, that compass yourselves about with sparks: walk in the light of your fire, and in the sparks that ye have kindled. This ye shall have of mine hand; ye shall lie down in sorrow.—ISA. L. 10, 11.

The words paraphrased.

WE have in these words a true believer in his *worst*, and natural men in their *best* condition, set forth together unto our view; and withal the power of true faith, as it alone upholdeth him in the saddest hour of darkness that can befall him, opposed unto and compared with the falseness of their presumptuous confidence, in their greatest security; together with the differing supports of either; the one in ver. 10, the other in ver. 11.

First, take a true believer, who hath had the least beam of the 'light of the glory of God, which shines in the face of Christ,' 2 Cor. iv. 6, let in upon his soul, and his heart so taken with that sight as it became eternally divorced from all things here below, and resolved to adventure all his future hopes of comfort and happiness in the enjoyment of that light of God's countenance alone: which that he may enjoy, he feareth to offend the Lord more than hell, and endeavoureth as truly 'to obey the voice of his servants,' as ever he desires to attain unto that happiness. Think with yourselves, what is the worst thing, next to the eternal loss of God, really and indeed, that can be supposed to befall this man. What worse than to have that cranny, through which he first espied that beam, to be as it were clean shut up, the 'light of God's countenance' withdrawn; yea, all light and appearance to him of his own graces withheld and overclouded; the face of heaven so overcast with darkness that neither sunlight nor starlight appeareth to him, so as he hath no light; yea, further, finds his soul beset and besieged round with all the powers of hell and darkness, and the terrors of the Almighty shot into his soul? And he, thus quite left, walking in this darkness, is filled with strong fears and jealousies that God is not his God; nay, questioning whether he ever will be; yea, apprehending, by the wrath he

feels, God to be become his enemy, Psalm lxxvii. 7. All this is set forth to us here as the very estate of one who 'feareth the Lord and obeys him;' and is comprehended in these words, 'that walketh in darkness, and hath no light.' You see him at his worst.

In which forlorn condition, what is there to be found to relieve and support this man? But only one thing, which is here held forth to him, 'the name of the Lord,' for him to trust and stay himself upon; both that name of God, Exod. xxxiv. 6, 'The Lord God, gracious and merciful,' &c., and that name of Christ which is called, Jer. xxiii. 6, 'Jehovah our righteousness.' Both or either of which, he, by the naked hand of faith laying hold upon, may now make use of as of a staff, (as David compares it, Psalm xxiii. 4,) whilst he thus 'walks in darkness,' and 'through the valley of the shadow of death,' safely to trust and stay himself upon, so as in the end to come forth 'to see light in God's light for evermore,' Psalm xxxvi. 9. You see likewise the prop of his soul in this condition.

On the contrary, let us behold, as all are here called to do, the best and most secure of unregenerate men, encompassed about with all means and supports of confidence and comfort, whether of legal righteousness of their own, which these Jews made boast of, together with the addition of all worldly and outward comforts, both which the prophet here compares to fire and sparks, as preserving light and comfort in them. As, (1.) Let their lives and natural dispositions abound with never so many sparks of legal righteousness, which themselves have kindled: for so he compares all those several acts and performances of natural and acquired righteousness, struck out and educed from the powers of natural principles improved, which make a great blaze in a man's own opinion and esteem; which yet, not proceeding from the Holy Ghost baptizing them as with fire and renewing them, nor from internal principles of regeneration, which Christ compares to fire, Mark ix. 49, are all in God's account but as a sacrifice offered up with strange fire, which was forbidden, and are here said to be of their own kindling. And such were the sparks in the light of which these Jews walked, who 'went about to establish their own righteousness,' Rom. x. 3, and with confidence trusted therein, and not on the name of the Lord. And further, (2.) Let those men be surrounded and encompassed about with the greatest splendour of worldly glory, and abound in all those good things this world can afford them,—the comforts whereof, Solomon, Eccles. vii. 6, in like manner compares to a fire of thorns, and the pleasures of it to the crackling of thorns, as here to sparks,—and let them keep never so good fires to warm and cheer themselves withal, lay on as much every day as shall even encompass them about with sparks; and in the light and confidence of both these let them walk for many years, despising that other poor believer that feareth to be found in his own righteousness, and refuseth to be comforted by any of these: yet, let them know, says Christ, who is brought in as the speaker here, that when they have thus walked presumptuously and securely, and even walked themselves weary, as it is Isa. xl. 31, weary of all their own ways and pleasures, as they will be one day; and then at their deathbeds think to lie down and rest them; they shall lie down indeed, says Christ, and their bed shall be of my making and providing,—'This you shall have of my hand; you shall lie down,'—but 'in a bed of sorrow' and despair, in which they shall lie down never to rise again.

CHAPTER I.

The main proposition and subject of this discourse thence deduced: That a child of God may walk in darkness.—That thereby distress of conscience, and desertion in the want of assurance of justification, is meant, proved.

THIS to be the meaning of the words will more fully appear in opening the several propositions to be delivered out of them, whereof the first and principally intended is this: That one who truly fears God, and is obedient to him, may be in a condition of darkness, and have no light; and he may walk many days and years in that condition.

And herein, further to explain the text, and bottom this great point well upon it, and more particularly to discover what the condition of a child of God, thus in darkness, is, we will first inquire what is meant by walking in darkness here in this place.

First, Walking in darkness is taken in 1 John i. 6, for living in sin and ungodliness—in the commission of known sins or omission of known duties, going on in the works of darkness. But so it is not to be taken here; for Christ would not have encouraged such to trust in God, who is light, and there can be no fellowship between him and such darkness, as the Apostle tells us. Nay, the Holy Ghost reproves such as do 'lean on the Lord' and yet transgress, Mic. iii. 11. And besides, the text speaks of such who for their present condition fear God and are obedient to him, which if they thus walked in darkness they could not be said to do. Neither—

Secondly, Is it to be meant of walking in ignorance, as, John xii. 35, it is taken. For one that hath no light, in that sense, can never truly fear God nor obey him: the 'heart that wanteth knowledge is not good,' says Solomon, Prov. xix. 2; and so to walk in darkness is accompanied with walking 'in vanity of mind,' Eph. iv. 17. But—

Thirdly, He means it of discomfiture and sorrow, as often we find in Scripture darkness to be taken, as Eccles. v. 17; as, on the contrary, light, because it is so 'pleasant a thing to behold,' is put for comfort, Eccles. xi. 7. And that so it is taken here is evident by that which is opposed in the next verse, 'Walk ye in your light, yet ye shall lie down in sorrow.' But—

Fourthly, Of what kind of sorrow, and for what? Whether from outward afflictions, or inward distress of mind and conscience; or, to use Solomon's distinction, whether by reason of man's ordinary infirmities, or of a wounded spirit? That is yet in question. And—

First, It is not to be restrained to outward afflictions only, which are called man's infirmities, as being common to man; which arise from things of this world, or from the men of the world; though to walk in darkness is so taken, Isa. lix. 9, and I will not exclude it here. For, in them also, a man's best support is to trust in God; and it is the safest way to interpret Scriptures in the largest sense which the words and coherence will bear. But yet that cannot be the only or principal meaning of it; for besides what is further to

be said to the contrary, he adds withal, 'and hath no light,' that is, no comfort. Now, as philosophers say, *non dantur puræ tenebræ*, there is no pure darkness without some mixture of light; so we may say, there is not mere or utter darkness caused by outward afflictions: no outward affliction can so universally environ the mind, as to shut up all the crannies of it, so that a man should have no light. And besides, God's people, when they walk in the greatest outward darkness, may have, yea, often use to have, most light in their spirits. But here is such an estate spoken of, such a darkness as hath no light in it. Therefore—

Secondly, It is principally to be understood of the want of inward comfort in their spirits, from something that is between God and them; and so meant of that darkness and terrors which accompany the want of the sense of God's favour. And so darkness is elsewhere taken for inward affliction of spirit and mind, and want of light, in point of assurance, that God is a man's God, and of the pardon of a man's sins; so, Ps. lxxxviii. 6, Heman useth this word to express his distress. And the reasons why it is thus to be understood here are—

First, Because the remedy here prescribed is *faith*; to stay himself upon God, and that as upon *his* God; he puts in *his* God, emphatically, because that is the point he is troubled about, and concerning which he is in darkness, and of which he would have such a one to be persuaded. And that is it which faith, which is propounded here as the remedy, doth in the first place and principally look unto, as its primary aim and object.

Secondly, In the foregoing verses he had spoken of justification, whereby God pardons our sins and accepts our persons; the prophet, or Christ in the person of his elect, (as some,) having expressed his assurance of this: 'God is near that justifies me, who shall condemn?' Which words the Apostle, Rom. viii. 32, 33, doth allege in the point of justification, and to express the triumphing assurance of it; and applies them in the name and person of true believers too. But because there might be some poor souls, who, though truly fearing God, yet might want this assurance; and upon the hearing of this might be the more troubled, because not able to express that confidence which he did; therefore he adds, 'Who is among you that feareth the Lord, and walketh in darkness?' &c.: as if he should have said to such, Though you want the comfortable sense and assurance of this, yet be not discouraged; but do you exercise faith, go out of yourselves, rely upon Christ and that mercy which is to be found in God: you may fear God and want it, and you are to trust in God in the want of it.

Thirdly, These words have a relation also to the 4th verse, where he says, as that God had given him this assurance of his own justification, for his own particular comfort, in those immediately foregoing verses to the text, so there, that God had also given him the 'tongue of the learned, to minister a word of comfort in season to him that is weary and heavy laden:' and thereupon, in this verse, he accordingly shews the blessed condition of such persons as are most weary through long walking in darkness; and withal he discovereth to them the way of getting out of this darkness, and recovering comfort again. And in all the word of God there is not a more comfortable and seasonable word to one in such a condition to be found. All which argues it is spoken of inward darkness and trouble of spirit, and that in point of applying justification, and God to be a man's God.

CHAPTER II.

The particulars of the distress contained in these two phrases: walking in darkness; having no light.

THE second thing to be inquired into is, What is the condition of such a one who is thus in darkness, and who hath no light? Which I will so far discover, as the phrases used here will give light into, by the help of other Scriptures.

1. *First*, he is said to have no light. 'Light,' saith the Apostle, Eph. v. 13, 'is that whereby things are made manifest,' that is, to the sense of sight, to which light properly belongs; and as light and faith are here severed, as you see, so sight also is, in 2 Cor. v. 7, distinguished from faith, which is the evidence of things absent and not seen, Heb. xi. 1. When, therefore, here he says he hath no light, the meaning is, he wants all present sensible testimonies of God's favour to him; he sees nothing that may give sensible present witness of it to him. God's favour, and his own graces, and all the sensible tokens and evidences thereof, which are apprehended by spiritual sight, are become all as absent things, as if they were not, or never had been; that light which ordinarily discovers these as present, he is clean deprived of.

To understand this, we must know that God, to help our *faith*, which, as I said before, is distinguished from *sight*, as we now speak of it, vouchsafeth a threefold light to his people, to add assurance and joy to their faith; which is to faith as a back of steel to a bow, to strengthen it, and made to be taken off or put on to it at God's good pleasure.

(1.) *First*, the *immediate light of his countenance*, which is a clear, evident beam and revelation of God's favour, immediately testifying that we are his, which is called the sealing of the Spirit, received after believing, Eph. i. 13; which David desired, and rejoiced in more than in all worldly things, Ps. iv. 6, 'Lord, lift up the light of thy countenance;' in which, more or less, in some glimpses of it, some of God's people have the privilege to walk with joy from day to day: Ps. lxxxix. 15, 'They shall walk in the light of thy countenance; in thy name shall they rejoice all day.' And this is here utterly withdrawn; and it may thus come to pass, that the soul, in regard of any sense or sight of this, may be left in that case that Saul really was left in, 1 Sam. xxviii. 15, 'God is departed from me, and answers me not, neither by prophets nor by dreams;' though with this difference, that God was really departed from Saul, but to these but in their own apprehensions: yet so as, for aught they can see of him, God is departed clean from them; answers them neither by prayer, nor by word, nor by conference; they cannot get one good look from him. Such was Jonah's case, chap. ii. 4, 'I am cast out of thy sight;' that is, he could not get a sight of him,—not one smile, not one glance or cast of his countenance, not a beam of comfort,—and so thought himself cast out. And so he dealt with David often, and sometimes a long time together: Ps. xiii. 1, 'How long wilt thou hide thy face from me?' and,

Ps. lxxxix. 46, 'How long,' &c. ; even so long as David puts God in remembrance, and pleads how short a time in all he had to live, and complains how in much of that time his face had been hid from him, ver. 47. And the like was Heman's case, and this also long, even from his youth up, Ps. lxxxviii. 14, 15. So from Job, chap. xiii. 24. Yea, and from Christ himself, 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?'

But concerning this you will ask, How can this dealing of his stand with his everlasting love, continued notwithstanding to the soul, that he should deal so with one he loves ; but especially how it may stand with the real influence of his grace, powerfully enabling the soul all that while to go on to fear and obey him ?

For the first ; it may stand with his everlasting love, and God may be his God still, as the text tells us ; so, Isa. liv. 8, 'For a moment I have hid my face, but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee.' It is but 'hiding his face,' and concealing his love, as David concealed his love from Absalom, when his bowels yearned towards him. And God takes the liberty that other fathers have, to shut his children out of his presence when he is angry. And it is but 'for a moment,'—that is, in comparison of eternity,—though haply it should be thus with him during a man's whole life ; and he therefore takes liberty to do it, because he hath such an eternity of time to reveal his kindness in ; time enough for kisses and embraces, and to pour forth his love in.

And for the second ; the real gracious influences and effects of his favour may be continued, upholding, strengthening, and carrying on the soul still to obey and fear him, whilst he yet conceals his favour. For, when Christ complained, 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?' when as great an eclipse in regard of the light of God's countenance was upon his spirit as was upon the earth, yet he never more obeyed God, was never stronger supported, than at that time, for then he was obeying to the death. Like as we see that when the sun is eclipsed, though the earth wants the light of it, yet not the influence thereof ; for the metals which are engendered in the bottom of the earth are concocted by the sun ; so as though the light of the sun comes not to them, yet the influence and virtue of it doth, and altereth and changeth them. So doth God's favour visit men's hearts in the power, heat, and vigorous influence of his grace, when the light and comfort of it doth not, but is intercluded. *Deus se communicat, vel quâ beatus, vel quâ sanctus ; quâ beatus, gaudium et gloriam ; quâ sanctus, gratiam : utrumque voluntariè, ideoque non utrumque simul necessario.*

(2.) The second light which God vouchsafeth his people ordinarily to help and eke out their faith, is the *sight and comfort of their own graces, unto which so many promises belong ; as, of their love to his people, fear of his name, desire to obey him.* So that often when the sun is set, yet starlight appears ; that is, though that other, the immediate presence and evidence of his favour, shines not on the soul, yet his graces therein appear, as tokens of that his love : so as the soul knows that there is a sun still, that gives light to these stars, though it sees it not ; as in the night we know that there is a sun in another horizon, because the stars, we see, have their light from it, and we are sure that it will arise again to us.

Now a soul that hath true grace in it, and goes on to obey God, may also want light to see these his graces, and look upon his own heart as empty of all. And as they in the storm, Acts xxvii. 20, so he in temptation may come to have 'neither sunlight nor starlight ;' no light, as in the text. Thus, Isa. lxiii. 17, the church there complains that God had hardened them

from his fear : they were afraid, feeling their hearts so hard, that the fear of God was wanting ; which yet was there, for they complain of the want of it.

(3.) But yet, thirdly, though he want the present light of God's countenance, and the sight of present grace, yet he may have a *comfortable remembrance of what once before he had* still left, and so long is not utterly left in darkness. Therefore further know, that the state of one that fears God and obeys him may be such as he may have no comfortable light or remembrance of what grace, &c., formerly he had, 2 Pet. i. 9. One that hath true grace in him only lacks the exercise of it,—for I take it that place is to be understood of a regenerate man, because he was 'purged from sin,'—and is now said to lack grace because he doth not use it ; for *idem est non habere, et non uti*, a man is said not to have that which he doth not use when he ought to use it, especially in things whose worth lies wholly in use and employment, for it is as good as if he had it not. Now, such a man may fall into such a blindness that he 'cannot see afar off,' and so forgets his former assurance, 'that he was purged from his old sins ;' yea, it may be, calls all into question. Thus David, in Ps. xxx. 6, 7, though his heart was but even now, a little before, 'full of joy' and assurance of God's favour, yet God did but 'hide his face,' and all was gone ; 'I was troubled,' says he. He was thus blind, and could not see what was but a little past him, as it is with men in a mist.

And the reason of these two last assertions is as evident as the experience thereof. For graces in us shine but with a borrowed light, as the stars do, with a light borrowed from the sun. So that unless God will shine secretly, and give light to thy graces, and irradiate them, thy graces will not appear to comfort thee, nor be at all a witness of God's favour to assure thee. For our spirit, that is, our graces, never witness alone ; but if God's Spirit joineth not in testimony therewith, it is silent : 'The Spirit of God witnesseth with our spirits,' Rom. viii. 16. Now therefore, when God hath withdrawn his testimony, then the testimony of our hearts, and of our own graces, hath no force in it.

But you will say, Can a man have the exercise of grace and not know it ? fear God, &c., and not discern it ?

Yes ; and some graces may then be as much exercised in the heart as at any other time. He may fear God as truly and as much as ever, and yet this fear have no light in it to discover itself to him ; it may be in the heart, in *esse et operari*, when not in *cognosci*,—it may have a being and a working there, when not in thy apprehension.

The reason is, because, as the influence of God's favour may be really in the heart, when the sense, sight, and light of it is withdrawn, as was said before ; so the power of grace may in like manner be in the heart when the light and comfort thereof is wanting. And although it is true that every man having the power of reflecting upon his own actions, can discern what thoughts are in him and what affections, and can tell, for the matter of them, what he thinks on, that he puts his trust, and that he is grieved, &c. : but yet so as he may still question whether those thoughts be acts of true and unfeigned faith, and whether those affections of sorrow for sin, &c., be sanctified affections, holy, and genuine, and spiritual affections ; and the reason of the difference is, because though the natural 'spirit which is in a man knows the things of a man,' as the apostle hath it, 1 Cor. ii. 11 (that is, his own thoughts, &c., understanding them physically, as they are acts of a man), yet what is the true goodness of them morally, in discerning this,

the 'spirit of a man is deceitful, and cannot know it,' Jer. xvii. 9, without the supernatural light of the Spirit of God, who as he is the giver and actor of that grace in us, so 'is given of God that we might know the things which are given us of God,' 1 Cor. ii. 12. 'Light is sown for the righteous, and joy for the upright,' says the Psalmist. Grace, and the exercise of it, is the seed which they continually scatter; but light and joy is the crop that is to be reaped. The seed often lies hid long, though it will come up in the end. Thus light or joy may be severed from grace; and the comfort of it from the power of it.

2. Secondly, let us further consider the other phrase, and what is intimated thereby to be his condition, when, as it is said, he walks in darkness:—

(1.) First, to walk in darkness implies to be in doubt whither to go; so John xii. 35, 'He that walks in darkness knows not whither he goes.' And thus the soul of one that fears God may be filled with doubts whether God will ever be merciful to him, yea or no, and not know what God means to do with him, whether he shall go to heaven or hell. Ps. lxxvii. 7–9, 'Will the Lord be merciful?' which speeches are spoken doubtingly; for, ver. 10, he says, 'this was his infirmity,' to call this into question. So Heman, Ps. lxxxviii. 5, 6, 11, 12: he thought himself as one that was in hell, 'free among the dead,' that is, as one admitted free into the company of them there, ver. 5; free of that company, as you use to say, and of the number of those 'whom God no more remembered:' in such darkness was he, ver. 6. And to raise him out of that condition was a thing he doubted whether God would ever do, ver. 10–12: 'Wilt thou shew wonders to the dead? shall thy wonders be declared in the grave?' that is, Did God ever shew mercy to one that was in the same state that they in hell are in? which is my state now; yea, so as to be out of hope. So Lam. iii. 18, 'My hope is perished from the Lord.'

(2.) Secondly, those in darkness are apt to stumble at everything. So Isa. lix. 10; one effect of darkness, mentioned there, is to 'stumble at noon-day.' So take a soul that is left in darkness, and it will stumble at all it hears out of the word, either in conference or at sermons; all it reads, all promises it meets with, it is more discouraged by them. Oh, think they, that there should be such glorious promises, and not belong to us! Such a one misapplies and misinterprets all God's dealings and the Scriptures against himself, and 'refuseth comfort,' as Ps. lxxvii. 2; yea, and, as at the 3d verse, when he 'remembers God, he is troubled.'

(3.) Thirdly, darkness is exceeding terrible and full of horror. When children are in the dark, they think they see fearful sights; it is therefore called the 'horror of darkness,' Gen. xv. 12. So his soul here may be filled with fears and terrors from God's wrath, and of God's being an enemy to him. Heman was almost distracted and out of his wits with terrors, Ps. lxxxviii. 15. So the church thought, Lam. iii. 1; yea, and concluded it for certain that God was her enemy: 'Surely he is turned against me,' ver. 3.

CHAPTER III.

The efficient causes of this distress.—First, the Spirit; whether he hath any hand therein, and how far.

HAVING thus explicated and proved this, that this doth and may befall one who truly fears the Lord, for the more full clearing of it I will further shew—

I. The efficient causes;

II. The cases wherein;

III. The ends for which, God leaves his children in such distresses.

I. For the efficient causes of this so woeful, desperate, dark condition of God's child; they are three which have a hand in it:—

1. God's Spirit.

2. A man's own guilty and fearful heart.

3. Satan.

1. For God's Spirit. Although he hath a hand in some part of this disquietness, yet we must take heed how we put upon him any of those doubts and desperate fears and conclusions whereby the child of God calls his state into question. For the Spirit is not the direct efficient, or positive cause of them.

And to this end we may consider that known place, Rom. viii. 15, 'Ye have not received the spirit of bondage to fear again, but the spirit of adoption;' the right understanding of which will also prevent an objection. For some have alleged this place, as if the child of God, after he had once the Spirit, sealing adoption to him, could never after fall into apprehension of bondage—that is, into fears of eternal damnation—any more, or of being bound over for hell; and that this can befall him but once, and that at his first conversion.

But if we mark the words well, the Apostle affirmeth not that fears of bondage can never befall God's child again, but his scope is to shew that the Spirit which we have received, having been once become the spirit of adoption, that Spirit is never after again the spirit of bondage to us, nor the cause of such fears. Indeed, at first conversion, and before he did witness adoption, he then revealed our estate to us to be an estate of bondage; which he then doth in love, to drive us out of it; and then indeed he was a 'spirit of bondage:' to which he hath reference when he says, 'to fear again,' because he was once such to them, and such the Holy Ghost then might be, and then witness to them that their estates were damnable; for then it was a truth, in that they had lived in an estate of bondage, whereunto damnation was immediately due; and had they died in it, had certainly fallen upon them. But when once, by making a man a son, he hath become the spirit of adoption to him, then if ever he should put him into such apprehensions and fears again, he should witness an untruth. Therefore, for the comfort of them and all believers, he tells them that he never crosseth nor reverseth his testimony of adoption, but his office is to be ready as a witness to seal

to it. But yet, though the judge doth not condemn any more, yet the jailor may trouble and affright us, and our own hearts may condemn us, 1 John iii. 21. God may give Satan leave to cast us into prison, to clap bolts upon us again, and to become a lying spirit of bondage to us, as he became a lying spirit in the mouth of Ahab's prophets; and he may give up our hearts to be fettered with 'the cords of our own sins,' Prov. v. 22, and to be ensnared with its own inventions, and fears, and jealousies.

For a more distinct understanding of this, to manifest how it comes to pass that all this befalls God's child, I will shew how far the Holy Ghost proceedeth in it, and puts forth his hand towards it; and what Satan's work is, where he strikes in, and our own hearts, to work further and deeper distress than the Holy Ghost by himself alone intended. For unto these three several hands is the whole to be ascribed, and the works of God's Spirit, and his concurrence therein, carefully to be severed from Satan's, as light from darkness at the first.

Thus far, then, the Spirit of God may concur in this darkness that befalls his child:—

(1.) *Privately.* He may suspend his testimony, and the execution of his office of witnessing adoption; he may withdraw his comfortable presence, and hide himself for a moment, and conceal his love, as other fathers will sometimes do; as David did, when yet his heart was towards Absalom. He may not admit him to see his face, he may shut a son out of doors, when yet he doth not cast him off. He may 'retain their sins,' as Christ's expression is, John xx. 23,—that is, call in the patent of his pardon which he had passed under his hand and seal, 'in earth,' that is, in their own consciences; take it out of their hands and custody, and call for it home again into the pardon-office 'in heaven,' Matt. xviii. 18, and there keep it. And also when Satan comes and gives in a false witness and evidence, and our own hearts thereupon likewise condemn us, the Holy Ghost may stand by, as it were, silent, and say nothing to the contrary, but forbear to contradict Satan by any loud testimony or secret rebuking him, as he doth at other times; as Zech. iii. 1, 2.

(2.) *Positively.* He may further proceed:—

[1.] To reveal and represent God as angry with his child for such and such sins formerly committed, and make him sensible thereof; not barely by concealing his love, but by making impressions of his wrath upon his conscience immediately, and not by outward crosses only. Thus, Isa. lvii. 17, 18, God not only 'hid himself and was wroth,'—that is, expressed his wrath by hiding himself,—but 'I smote him and was wroth;' and ver. 16, he contended and was wroth,—that is, fought against him as an enemy, as Isa. lxiii. 10, and this with his wrath upon his spirit. For it follows that the spirit was ready to fail, and the soul which he had made. So as it was the spirit which was the white God shot at and wounded, and that so deep that it was ready to fail and come to nothing: which Solomon calls by way of distinction 'a wounded spirit,' which who can bear? and differenceth it from all other afflictions upon the outward man, which strike the spirit but through the clothes of the body mediately; for, says he, 'the spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity'—that is, all such outward afflictions wherein it suffers but by way of sympathy and compassion. But when the spirit itself is laid bare and naked, and wounded immediately by God's wrath, which only can reach it and wound it, who can bear this? Thus towards Heman, God did not only hide his face from him, Ps. lxxxviii. 14, but 'his fierce wrath went over him,' and 'thy terrors,' says he, 'cut me off,' ver. 16; not wounded him only,

but even cut him off. And such impressions of immediate wrath, as expressions and effects of God's anger, the Holy Ghost may make upon the spirit of his child. For it is a truth that God is angry and wroth with them when they sin; which anger he may make known, not only by dumb signs in outward crosses and effects, but by an immediate witnessing, and plain and express speaking so much to their consciences, and making them to feel so much, by scalding drops of his hot displeasure let fall thereon. And as other fathers shew their anger by whipping the bodies of their children, upon this ground, as says the apostle, because they are the 'fathers of our flesh,' Heb. xii. 9; so, for the like reason, may God shew his anger and chastise his children by lashing their spirits: for he is the 'Father of our spirits,' as he speaks in the same place. And likewise our spirits, and the very 'bones and marrow' of them, do lie 'open and naked to him with whom we have to do;' and his word and Spirit being 'quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword,' are able 'to divide,' and cut even to the 'bones and marrow,' as the same author speaks, Heb. iv. 12, 13. Yet withal, so as when he expresseth his wrath thus upon their consciences, he doth not witness that this is an eternal wrath which he hath conceived against them; for it is but a temporary displeasure, 'it is but for a moment,' as Isaiah speaks, the indignation of a father; nor is it a wrath which revenging justice hath stirred in him, but fatherly affection, Heb. xii. 6. And though the Spirit tells them that God is displeased, yet never that they are accursed; that is a false collection made out of it. Yet—

[2.] The Holy Ghost may proceed yet further herein; so far as to bring forth, and shew him, and shake over him the rod of his eternal wrath, especially when he hath provoked Christ by presumptuous sins already, and to prevent his going on frowardly in the way of his heart. And this, both by presenting to them and setting on all those threatenings, which do hypothetically and conditionally threaten, even to believers, eternal damnation: such as that which we find, Rom. viii. 13, 'If ye live after the flesh, ye,' even you believers, 'shall die;' for there is a truth in all such threatenings, so conditionally propounded, which reacheth God's dearest children, under a condition, and with relation to going on in sin. To stop him and prevent him in which, when he is agoing on frowardly in the way of his heart, the Holy Spirit may bring home such threatenings to him, with respect to such a course as he is entering into, and accordingly stir up the fear of that damnation thus threatened, if he should go on in those sins he hath begun to commit. But to apply threatenings of eternal damnation simply to his person, as that thou shalt die eternally, this the Holy Ghost doth not speak to the heart of a believer, when he is a believer. And again also, the Holy Ghost may represent to him and mind him of all those examples of men in whom, for their going on in sin, 'his soul hath had no pleasure,' Heb. x. 39; and of God's dealings with them,—as how he sware against many of the Israelites, for their provocations of him, 'that they should never enter into his rest;' and how he rejected Esau for the despisal of his birthright,—and all this with this end, to startle and awaken him; and with this intimation, that for such and such sins God might in like manner deal with him. For these and the like examples doth the Spirit of God set before the believing Hebrews, Heb. iii., xii.; and the believing Corinthians, 1 Cor. x. 5–13, to keep them in fearfulness to offend. But to apply any such examples absolutely unto them, so as to say, Thus God intends to do with thee for such and such sins, and that God will never be merciful, this the Holy Ghost doth not speak to a believer's heart.

CHAPTER IV.

How Satan and our hearts increase this darkness by false conclusions from the Spirit's work, illustrated by the like in the illumination of temporaries.—The Spirit's work in both compared.

AND now the Spirit of God having proceeded thus far himself in causing such darkness and terrors of conscience in them that fear him; Satan and their own hearts, unto which he may and doth often further also leave them, may take occasion from these dispensations of the Holy Ghost, which are all holy, righteous, and true, to draw forth false and fearful conclusions against themselves and their estates, and start amazing doubts and fears of their utter want of grace, and lying under the curse and threatenings of eternal wrath at the present, yea, and further, of eternal rejection for the future, and that God will never be merciful; and so lay them lower, and cast them into a further darkness and bondage than the Holy Ghost was cause of, or intended: misinterpreting and perverting all these his righteous proceedings, as interpreting that withdrawing his light and presence, and hiding himself, to be a casting them off, (thus Heman, Ps. lxxxviii. 14;) so, likewise, misconstruing that temporary wrath, chastising and wounding their spirits for the present, to be no other than the impressions and earnest of God's eternal vengeance; and arguing, from their being under wrath, themselves to be children of wrath; and misapplying the application of all those threatenings of eternal damnation made by the Spirit, but in relation and under a condition of such and such courses for the future, to be absolute against their persons, and to speak their present estate. And because such examples of men cast off are presented to them, to shew them what advantage God might take against them; they, mistaking, think they read their own destiny laid before them in them, and conclude that God will deal so with them. And thus the Apostle says of sin, Rom. vii. 11, that 'sin taking occasion by the commandment,'—he misunderstanding the scope of it when a Pharisee,—'it deceived him, and therefore slew him;' and yet 'the commandment is holy, just, and good,' ver. 12. So Satan and our hearts, by occasion of these dealings of the Spirit, which are righteous and true, as himself is, who is the Spirit of truth and leads into truth, do deceive believers, and lay them in their apprehensions 'among the slain, whom God remembereth no more,' as Heman speaks, Ps. lxxxviii. 5.

And as in these, so in other works and dispensations of God's Spirit, it is ordinary for Satan and our hearts to practise the like delusions and false conclusions upon them. To instance in those more common and inferior works of the Spirit on the hearts of men, not as yet savingly regenerated: the Spirit enlightening them, together with impressions of joy, and a taste of sweetness in the promises of the gospel, and of salvation revealed therein, which, under a condition of true repentance and conversion, the Spirit of

God doth make the offer and tender of known unto their hearts. Thus he wrought upon the stony ground, and in the Jews by John's ministry, John v. 35; which light, and taste, and revelation of this conditional proffer, tending in a way unto salvation, by alluring their hearts to seek it, they often through Satan's abuse of this good work, and the self-flattery of their own hearts, do too hastily take to be that grace which accompanies salvation, (*ἐχθόμενα τῆς σωτηρίας*), or which hath salvation annexed to it; from which the Apostle, by that very expression, Heb. vi. 9, doth difference those enlightenings mentioned ver. 4. They thus mistaking these works precursory to grace, even as the Jews mistook John, that was sent but before to prepare the way for Christ, to be that very true Christ that was to come into the world, and misunderstanding the intendment of God's most blessed Spirit in such his dealings, they make up too hasty a conclusion not meant by the Spirit in those premises.

And I instance in these the rather, because these his dispensations of desertion, which we have in hand, towards them already regenerated, and those forementioned visitations towards such as often attain not to regeneration, are in an opposite way of comparison exceeding parallel, and much alike in the dispensations themselves,—as well as in the differing false conclusions which are drawn from either,—and do therefore exceedingly illustrate the one the other; God withdrawing himself as much in their sense from those who are in covenant with him, as he draws near unto and visits their hearts from on high who are as yet strangers to him. The needle of God's favour and love varying as much, that I may so allude, towards hell in their compass who shall be saved, as it doth heavenward in the other, many of whom arrive not thither. For as they are brought nigh to the kingdom of heaven, as Christ told him, Matt. xii. 34; so of true believers it may be said, that their souls do often draw near to hell in their own sense and apprehension, and 'the pains of hell do take hold upon them.' And as the other are enlightened, as Balaam was, so they are left to walk in darkness and see no light; and do taste of that wrath which the law threatens, as those other taste the goodness of that salvation the gospel offereth. God, out of a temporary anger, chastising them for a moment, as with a temporary favour he shineth upon the other. That as they 'for a season rejoice in that light,' John v. 35, so God's dearest children 'may be for a season in much heaviness,' as the Apostle speaks, 1 Pet. i. 6, and 'walk in darkness.' And as the similitude of the dealings themselves runs thus far along in a parallel line of comparison, so it holds in the false apprehensions which Satan and our hearts do make out of both. And the cause of the mistake in each is also alike. For God's dealings with those temporary believers being so like to those dealings towards such as receive a state of adoption from him, they thence too hastily conclude their acceptance unto life. And, on the contrary, God's dealings with these temporary despairers, as I may so call them, being so like in their sense to his proceedings with those he cuts off for ever, they, in like manner, as hastily conclude ('I said in my haste,' says David) their eternal rejection. Only in the issue they prove unlike: these desertions tending but to the present discomfort of true believers through their frailty; but in the other, through their own willing neglect, their enlightenings turn to their destruction.

So as, to conclude, we must warily sever the work of God's Spirit herein from that of Satan and our own hearts, not attributing such desperate conclusions to the Spirit. Thus that depth of sorrow wherewith that humbled

Corinthian was well-nigh 'swallowed up,' 2 Cor. ii. 7, is ascribed unto Satan, when, ver. 11, it is made and termed one of his devices, which word doth in part refer to the Corinthian's sorrow. Thus David also imputes that his questioning, Ps. lxxvii., 'whether God would be merciful' to him, ver. 7, unto his own heart; 'this is my infirmity,' says he, ver. 10. So as the blame herein is to be divided between Satan and our hearts.—To speak more particularly of either.

CHAPTER V.

How our own hearts are the causes of this darkness.—The principles therein which are the causes of it.

2. THAT our own hearts should be the causes and producers of such distress and darkness, when the Holy Ghost thus deals with us, is at all no wonder; because—

(1.) As we are creatures, there is such a weakness and infirmity in us, as David speaks; by reason of which, if God doth but hide himself and withdraw his presence, which supporteth us in comfort, as in being, we are ready presently to fall into these fears of ourselves. The Psalmist saith of all the creatures, 'Thou hidest thy face, and they are troubled,' Ps. civ. 29; and this by reason of their weakness and dependence upon God. And no less, but far greater, is the dependence of the new creature upon God's face and presence; that it cannot be alone and bear up itself, but it fails if God hide himself, as Isaiah speaks, chap. lvii. Especially now in this life, during the infancy thereof, whilst it is a child, as God speaks of Ephraim, Hos. xi. 1; then it cannot stand or go alone, unless God 'bear it up in his arms, and teach it to go,' as he speaks there, ver. 1-3. And then also, as children left alone in the dark are afraid of bugbears, and they know not what, and are apt to stumble and fall, which is by reason of their weakness; so is it with the new creature in its childhood here in this life. It was my infirmity, says David; and again, 'Thou didst hide thy face, and I was troubled,' Ps. xxx. 7.

There is not only such a weakness in us as we are creatures; but—

(2.) Also an innate darkness in our spirits as we are sinful creatures. Since the fall, our hearts of themselves are nothing but darkness, and therefore no wonder if when God but draws the curtains, and shuts up the light from us, that our hearts should engender and conceive such horrid fears and doubts. Thus, in 2 Cor. iv. 6, the Apostle compareth this native darkness of our hearts unto that chaos and lump of darkness which, at the first creation, covered the face of the deep, when he says that 'God, who commanded light to shine out of darkness,'—he referreth to the first creation, Gen. i. 1, 2,—'hath shined into our hearts,' even of us apostles, 'to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.' So that no longer than God continues to shine, either the light of comfort or of grace, no longer do our hearts, even of us believers, retain light in them. And if at any time he withhold that light of comfort in his face, when yet he continueth an influence of grace, then so far do our hearts presently return to their former darkness; and then doth that vast womb of darkness conceive and form all those fears and doubts within itself. Considering withal that our hearts are a great deep also, so deep in darkness and deceitfulness as no plummet can fathom them; 'deceitful above all things, who can know it?' Jer. xvii. 9. Darkness covereth not the face of this deep only, but it is darkness to the

bottom, throughout darkness. No wonder then, if when the Spirit ceaseth to move upon this deep with beams of light, it cast us into such deeps and darkness as Heman, complaining, speaks of, Ps. lxxxviii. 6, and frameth in itself such hideous apprehensions and desperate conclusions of a man's own estate.

(3.) Especially seeing there is so much strength of carnal and corrupt reason in men, ready to forge and invent strong reasons and arguments to confirm those sad fears and darkened apprehensions; and those drawn from those dealings of God's Spirit mentioned. For as it is said of the Gentiles, that when 'their foolish hearts were darkened,'—that is, when left and given over to their own natural darkness,—'they became vain in their imaginations,' or (as the original hath it) in their reasonings, *λογισμῶς*, Rom. i. 21; and this even in those things which God had clearly revealed in his works to the light of nature, of which that place speaks: so may it be said even of those who have been most enlightened, that their hearts are apt to become much more vain in their reasonings about, and in the judging of their own estates before God, out of his word and dealings with them, if God once leaves them unto darkness. And this that great caveat given to professors, James i. 22, gives to understand, when they are exhorted to take heed that 'in hearing the word' they be not found 'deceiving themselves by false reasonings.' So the original, *παρὰλογίζεσθαι ἑαυτοὺς*, renders it; which is as if we should say, false-reasoning themselves: as we use to say, in a like phrase of speech, befooling themselves. And this is spoken of judging of their own estates, concerning which men are more apt, through the distempers and prejudices of self-love, to make (to speak in that phrase of the Apostle) false syllogisms, and to misconclude, than about any other spiritual truth whatever. And as men that want true faith, the unsound hearers of the word, of whom the Apostle there speaks, are thus apt, through carnal reason misapplying the word they hear, to frame and draw from thence, as he insinuates, multitudes of false reasons to uphold and maintain to themselves a good opinion of their estates: so, on the contrary, in those who have true faith, all that carnal reason, which remains in a great measure unsubdued in them, is as apt to raise and forge as strong objections against the work of faith begun, and as peremptorily to conclude against their present estates by the like misapplication of the word, but especially by misinterpreting God's dealings towards them. And they being sometimes led by sense and reason, whilst they walk in darkness, they are apt to misinterpret God's mind towards them rather by his works and dispensations, which they see and feel, than by his word, which they are to believe. This we see in Gideon, Judges vi., who, because God wrought not miracles, as he had formerly for his people, but had delivered them into their enemies' hands, from thence reasoneth against the message of the angel, (Christ himself,) who had told him, 'The Lord is with thee,' ver. 12. But he objects, 'Oh, my Lord, if the Lord be with us, why then is all this befallen us? Where be all the miracles which our fathers told us of? But now the Lord hath forsaken us,' &c. This we may also see in Asaph, or what other holy penman of the 73d Psalm; his heels were well-nigh tripped up in the dark: 'My feet were almost gone,' says he, ver. 2,—that is, from keeping his 'standing by faith,' as the apostle speaks, Rom. v.,—and this by an argument framed by carnal reason, from God's dispensation of outward prosperity to wicked men, but, on the contrary, 'chastening of him every morning,' with outward afflictions, as the opposition doth there import. And how peremptory is he in his conclusion thence deduced? 'Verily, I have cleansed my heart in vain,' ver. 13; and what reason hath he? 'For all the

day long I have been plagued,' &c., ver. 14. He thought his reason strong and irrefragable, else he would not have been so concludent: 'Verily,' &c. But what would this man have said and thought if he had been in Heman's condition, or in Job's or David's? If in those shallows of outward troubles, which are common to man, his faith could not find footing, but he was well-nigh carried away with the common stream and error of wicked men, to have condemned himself and the 'generation of the righteous,' ver. 15; how would his faith have been overborne 'if all God's waves and billows had gone over him?' as David complains, Psalm xlii. 7. How would he have sunk in Heman's deeps, Psalm lxxxviii.? or in David's, Psalm lxxix. 2, 'I sink in the deep mire, where there is no standing: I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me?' speaking of such 'waters as came in unto his soul,' ver. 1, even the floods of God's immediate wrath breaking in upon his conscience, overflowing the inward man, and not the outward only. How much more peremptorily would he have concluded against himself if this had been his condition? As indeed they, and many others of the generation of God's children have done, when they have lain under and walked in such distresses.

And the reason of all this is as evident as the experience of it:—

[1.] In general; reason is of itself a busy principle, that will be prying into, and making false glosses upon all God's matters as well as our own, and trying its skill in arguing upon all his dealings with us. Thus Jeremiah must needs be reasoning with God about his dispensations towards wicked men, chap. xii. 1, 2; and Job, of his dealings with himself, chap. xiii. 3. And reason being likewise the supreme principle in us by nature, and our highest difference as we are men, therefore no wonder if, when we are left to ourselves to 'walk in darkness,' we 'walk as men,' as the Apostle speaks, 2 Cor. x. 3; and, to use Solomon's words, do lean to our own wisdom, Prov. iii. 5, even because it is our own, and was brought up with us. It is our great Ahithophel, and, as David says of him, 'our guide, with whom we have taken so much sweet counsel' in all our worldly and politic affairs. In which only we should make use of its advice; but we too often take it into the sanctuary with us, and 'walk in company with it into the house of God,' (to allude to what David says there, Psalm lv. 13, 14;) that is, we suffer it to meddle in matters that pertain to the sanctuary, and to debate and conclude of our spiritual and eternal estates, as well as of our temporal. And, which is worse, we are opinionative of its judgment therein: 'I thought,' says Asaph, in that forementioned psalm, 'to know this,' ver. 16,—that is, he thought to have comprehended and reached God's mind, in those his dispensations, by the discussions of reason, and so to have concluded rightly from them; whereas, 'after he had gone into the sanctuary,' ver. 17, with faith alone, and thereby consulted with the word, he confesseth his own wisdom and best reason to have been as ignorant of God's meaning, and of those rules he proceedeth by, in those his dispensations towards his children, 'even as a beast' (ver. 22) is of those principles which men walk by, or the intentions they have in their ways. If reason then, when it is so utterly unskilful and mistaken in the premises, will yet be exercising and trying its faculty in reasoning from them, no wonder if the conclusions thence deduced be so wide and wild; and yet, with Asaph, we think we know this.

[2.] But more particularly; carnal reason is the most desperate enemy to faith of all other principles in man. For until faith be wrought, it is the most supreme principle; but then faith deposeth and subjecteth it, and afterwards doth often contradict it; yea, excludes it, as unskilful in its matters,

from being of its counsel. And so deep and desperate is this enmity against faith, that look, what is the most especial work and business of faith, which is to alter our estates before God, and put us into a state of justification and to assure us of it, therein it shews a more peculiar enmity against faith, by opposing it in that work of it more than in any other. This enmity shews itself both before and after faith is wrought, and the one illustrates the other. For as before faith was wrought, carnal reason shews its opposition, by using the utmost of its strength to persuade a man of the goodness of his estate, though without faith; thereby to prevent the entrance of faith and our seeking after it at all, as not needful to change our estates or to justify us, and thus would keep it wholly out; and therefore, in the first working of faith, the Holy Ghost brings faith in by force of open arms, as a conqueror casting down all those strongholds and reasonings—*λογισμοὺς*, as the word is, 2 Cor. x. 5—which carnal reason had been long a-building and a-fortifying, and so erecteth faith a throne upon the ruins of them all: thus, in like manner, after faith is thus wrought, all that carnal reason which is left unsubdued doth, out of a further revenge of such an overthrow, and with a greater degree of enmity, oppose faith still; only it diverts the war, now mustering up new forces, and turneth all the great ordnance a clean contrary way; namely, to persuade a man, by all the objections it can raise, of the badness of his estate now, as before of the goodness of it; hereby to blaspheme the great work of faith in justifying of us. And also because that, next to justifying us, the office and errand of faith is to settle in our hearts peace with God, and a persuasion of our being in his favour, as Rom. v. 1; therefore doth carnal reason bend the utmost of its power and acumen to persuade upon all occasions, by all the most specious and seeming arguments it can start and suggest, that God is not at peace with us, nor as yet reconciled to us; merely to contradict faith in what is the principal point it would persuade us of.

So that as in men, whilst unregenerate, carnal reason endeavours by false reasonings to preserve a good opinion of their estates in them; in like manner, the very same principle of carnal reason, continuing its opposition to faith, doth as much persuade to a bad opinion of their estates when they are once regenerated.

[3.] And to conclude this; if in any condition that befalls God's child carnal reason hath the advantage and upper ground of faith, it is now when it is in 'the valley of the shadow of death,' as David speaks, when it walks in darkness, and hath no light. A condition that doth afford a most complete topic for carnal reason to frame objections out of; when, in respect of God's dealings with him, there is a seeming conjunction of all bad aspects threatening perdition and destruction; when faith is under so great an eclipse, and is left to fight it out alone in darkness, and hath no second: when, on the contrary, carnal reason and our dark hearts, which are led by sense, are possessed with the sense, the deepest and most exquisite sense, and impressions of (that which the heart is most jealous of) God's sorest wrath and displeasure, and that felt and argued, not mediately and afar off, by consequence from outward afflictions, but immediately from God's own hand. Thou always hast suspected, says carnal reason, that thou wert a child of wrath, and that thou and God were enemies, but now thou findest it put out of question, and that from God's own mouth, 'who speaketh' grievous things 'against thee,' Jer. xxxi. 20: thou hast it also under his own hand, for, lo, 'he writeth bitter things against thee,'—that is, in thy conscience,—as Job speaks, chap. xiii. 26, and 'holdeth thee for an enemy,' ver. 24; and whips

thee with the same rod of his immediate wrath and displeasure wherewith he lasheth those that are cut from his hand, and whom he remembereth no more, but are now in hell, as Heman speaks. A time also this is when this present sense of wrath so distempers, and, to use Heman's words, distracts the mind, that it cannot listen to faith, which speaks of nothing too but of what it sees not; even as the people of Israel could not attend to Moses's message of deliverance, through the anguish of their present bondage, Exod. vi. 9. So as no wonder if then carnal reason be most busy, and takes this advantage to frame and suggest the strongest objections to the soul whilst it is in this distemper.

(4.) Add unto all this, that as there is such strength of corrupt reason which is thus opposite to faith, so that there are many other principles of corrupt affections in the heart which join and take part with carnal reason in all this its opposition against faith, and which set it a-work and do back it as much in persuading God's children that their estates are nought, as in securing men unregenerate that their estates are good; and the hand of self-love, which bribeth and biaseth carnal reason, especially in judging of our estates, is found as deep in the one as in the other;—and this doth yet give further light to this point in hand. For look, as before faith is wrought, self-flattery, which is one branch of self-love, bribeth and setteth carnal reason a-work to plead the goodness of their estates to men unregenerate, and causeth all such false reasons to take with them which tend to persuade them to think well of themselves: so when once faith is wrought, jealousy, and suspiciousness, and incredulity,—which are other as great sprigs of pride and self-love in us as the former, which do begin to sprout and shew themselves when that other is lopped off, and which do grow up together with the work of faith,—these do edge and sharpen the wit of carnal reason to argue and wrangle against the work of faith and grace begun; and all such objections as carnal reason doth find out against it are pleasing and plausible to these corrupt principles, for they are thereby nourished and strengthened.

And the reason why such jealousies and suspicions, &c.—which are such contrary dispositions unto self-flattery, which swayed our opinions of our estates before,—should thus arise and be started up in the heart upon the work of faith, and be apt rather to prevail now after faith, is, [1.] because that in the work of humiliation, which prepares for faith, all those strongholds of carnal reason being demolished which upheld self-flattery, and that false good opinion of a man's estate, and those mountainous thoughts of presumption as then laid low, a man is for ever put out of conceit with himself, as of himself. At which time also, [2.] he was so thoroughly and feelingly convinced of the heinousness of sin, which before he slighted, and of the greatness and multitude of his sins, that he is apt now, instead of presuming as before, to be jealous of God, lest he might have been so provoked as never to pardon him; and is accordingly apt to draw a misinterpretation of all God's dealings with him to strengthen that conceit. And, [3.] having through the same conviction, the infinite error and deceitfulness of his heart before, in flattering him and judging his estate good when it is most accursed, so clearly discovered and discerned, he thereby becomes exceeding jealous, and afraid of erring on that hand still, and so is apt to lend an ear to any doubt and scruple that is suggested. Especially, [4.] he being withal made apprehensive both of that infinite danger to his eternal salvation there may be in nourishing a false opinion of the goodness of his estate, if it should prove otherwise; because such a false conceit keeps a man from saving faith, whereas to cherish the contrary error in judging his estate bad, when it is in truth good, tends

but to his present discomfort : so as he thinks it safer to err on that hand than the other. And, [5.] being also sensible of what transcendent concernment his eternal salvation is of, which he before slighted, this rouseth suspicion, which in all matters of great consequence and moment is always doubting and inquisitive, and also keeps it waking, which before lay asleep. And all these being now startled and stirred up, do not only provoke carnal reason unsatisfiedly to pry into all things that may seem to argue God's disfavour, or the unsoundness of our hearts, but also do give entertainment to, and applaud all such objections as are found out, and makes up too hastily false conclusions from them.

(5.) Last of all, as there are these corrupt principles of carnal reason and suspiciousness in us, to raise and foment these doubts and fears from God's dealing towards us ; so there is an abundance of guilt within us, of our false dealings towards him. And we have consciences, which remain in part defiled, which may further join with all these, and increase our fears and doubtings ; and as we are dark and weak creatures, so guilty creatures also. And this guilt, like the waves of the sea, or the swellings of Jordan, does begin upon these terrible storms from God to rise, and swell, and overflow in our consciences. As in David, Ps. xxxviii., when God's wrath was sore upon him, ver. 1, 2, then also he complains, 'mine iniquities are gone over my head,' ver. 4. There is much guile and falseness of heart, which in those distempers, when our consciences do boil within us, and are stirred and heated to the bottom, doth, like the scum, come up and float aloft. Thus in David, when he was under the rod for his sin of murder, as the guilt of his sin, so the guile of his spirit came up, and he calls for 'truth in the inward parts,' Ps. li. 6. For as his sin, ver. 2, so his falseness of heart was ever before him ; and with an eye to this he spake that speech, Ps. xxxii., Oh, 'blessed is that man in whose spirit is no guile, and to whom the Lord imputeth no sin.' Thus he spake when God had charged upon him the guilt of his sin, and discovered to him the guile of his spirit, ver. 4, 5. And this guile doth oftentimes so appear, that our consciences can hardly discern anything else to be in us ; it lies uppermost, and covers our graces from our view : and like as the chaff, when the wheat is tossed in the fan, comes up to the top, so in these commotions and winnowings of spirit do our corruptions float in our consciences, whilst the graces that are in us lie covered under them out of sight ; and the dark side of our hearts, as of the cloud, is turned towards us, and the light side from us. And indeed there are in the best of us humours enough, which if they be stirred and congregated in our consciences, may alone cast us into these burning fits of trouble and distress ; so as whilst God's Spirit shall withhold from us the light of our own graces, and our own consciences represent to us the guile and corruptions that are in our best performances, our hearts may conclude ourselves hypocrites, as Mr Bradford in some of his letters doth of himself, and others of the saints have done. Yea, so as even our own consciences—which are the only principle now left in us which should take part with and encourage faith, and witness to us, as the office of it is, the goodness of our estates—in this may join with the former corruptions against us, and bring in a false evidence, and pronounce a false judgment. Even conscience itself, which is ordained, as the urine of the body, to shew the estate of the whole, and therefore is accordingly called good or evil as the man's state is, this is apt in such distempers to change and turn colour, and look to a man's own view as foul as the state of a very hypocrite.

And the reason of this is also as evident as is the experience of it. Even

because conscience remains in part defiled in a man that is regenerate ; and though we are 'sprinkled from an evil conscience' in part, yet not wholly : so as though our persons are fully discharged from the guilt of our sins, through the sprinkling of Christ's blood, before God ; yet the sprinkling of that blood upon our consciences, whereby we apprehend this, is imperfect. And the reason is, because this very sprinkling of conscience, whereby it testifies the sprinkling of Christ's blood, and our justification thereby, is but part of the sanctification of conscience, as it is a faculty, whose office and duty is to testify and witness our estates ; and therefore, as the sanctification of all other faculties is imperfect, so of conscience also herein. And hence it is that when God's Spirit forbearth to witness with conscience the goodness of our estates, and ceaseth to embolden and encourage conscience by his presence, and the sprinkling of Christ's blood upon it against the remaining defilement, that then our consciences are as apt to fall into fears, and doubts, and self-condemnings, even as much as, when he withdraws the assistance of his grace, those other faculties are to fall into any other sin. And therefore, as the law of sin in the other members may be up in arms and prevail so far as to lead us captive unto sin ; so may the guilt of sin in our consciences remaining in part defiled, by the same reason prevail against us, and get the upper hand, and lead us captive to fears and doubtings, and cast us into bondage.

CHAPTER VI.

The third efficient cause, Satan.—His special malice in this temptation, commission.—Access to, and advantage over us in this temptation, by reason of the darkness in us.

THUS far our own hearts, upon the Holy Ghost's deserting, become authors unto us of this darkness.

3. But herein believers wrestle not alone with flesh and blood, and the darkness thereof; but do further conflict also with those spiritual wickednesses, the princes of darkness, Eph. vi. 12, about their interest in those heavenly privileges, as the phrase there used, *ἐν τοῖς ἐπουρανίοις*, may be well interpreted; even with Satan and his angels, whom the Apostle compares to 'a roaring lion, that seeks whom he may devour,' 1 Peter v. 8. And like as when 'God makes his natural darkness, and it is night, then the young lions creep forth, and roar after their prey,' as the Psalmist says, Ps. civ. 20, 21: so do these roaring lions, when God hath withdrawn the light of his countenance, and night comes on, and those damps and fogs of jealousies and guilt begin to arise out of a man's own heart; then come these forth, and say, as David's enemies said in his distress, 'Come let us now take him, for God hath forsaken him;' let us now devour him, and swallow him up with sorrow and despair. And as God says of those enemies of his church, Zech. i. 15, 'I was but a little displeased, and they helped forward the affliction;' so when God is angry with his child, and but a little, and doth hide his face but for a moment, yet Satan watcheth that hour of darkness, as Christ calls it, Luke xxii. 53, and joins his power of darkness to this our natural darkness, to cause, if possible, blackness of darkness, even utter despair, in us.

Now, concerning Satan's working herein, we will, as in the former, more distinctly treat thereof by way of explication of it, (1.) more generally; (2.) more particularly:—

First, in general; (1.) Satan, he hath a special inclination, and a more peculiar malicious desire, to vex and molest the saints with this sort of temptations, of doubts and disquietness that God is not their God; so as all his other temptations unto sin are but as the laying in and barrelling up the gunpowder, and making of the train, for this great plot of blowing up all. He tempteth Peter to deny his Master,—'Satan desires to winnow you,'—but he hath a further reach, a design upon his faith, which Christ foresaw, and therefore did mainly bend his prayer against it; 'but I have prayed that thy faith fail not.' Satan hoped by that gross sin to have drawn him into despair. We may likewise observe how he did place this temptation in the forefront of those three assaults which he made upon Christ; who as in his obedience, so in his temptations, is made a complete example unto us; for he was tempted in all things, that is, with all sorts of temptations, and also like us for the manner, only without sin, Heb. iv. 15. Now he tempted him not only to vain hopes, when he shewed him the glory of the whole world,

and to presumption, to throw himself down headlong from an unwarrantable ground; but first and primarily, to jealousies and distrusts between him and his Father, and between his human nature and the divine. For when Christ had newly received that testimony from all the three Persons,—the Father proclaiming him to be his Son from heaven; the Spirit descending on him at his baptism, it being the special grace and institution of that ordinance to seal up adoption and regeneration,—then comes Satan and tempts him to question that voice, that it might be but a delusion. And Christ's human nature never having done any outward miracle as yet, as appears John ii. 11, he would now have had him take this occasion, in the extremity of his hunger, by commanding stones to become bread, to make trial whether he was the Son of God or no, and hypostatically united to the second Person; which if God should not do for him, then to question his sonship, and think all this to be but a delusion. This was the meaning of it, 'If thou be the Son of God, command these stones to be made bread,' &c.; withal insinuating that God, leaving him even destitute of daily bread, which parents that are evil give unto their children, and not a stone instead of bread, might seem to occasion an *if* whether he was the Son of God or no. The reasons of this are—

[1.] Above all graces in us, he is the greatest enemy to faith; therefore, 1 Thess. iii. 5, the apostle was jealous of Satan in nothing more than in this, lest he had been dealing and tampering with, and perverting their *faith*: 'I sent to know of your faith, lest by some means the tempter hath tempted you;' for faith in God is the greatest enemy unto Satan, it 'quencheth all his darts,' Eph. vi. 16. By 'standing stedfast in which' we 'resist him, so that he flies from us,' 1 Pet. v. 9. As therefore faith is that *τὸ ἐργον*, that work of God and the master-grace, John vi. 29; so despair and doubting is the masterpiece of Satan. And in faith he is envious especially at the joy of our faith, Rom. xv. 13. And as comfort is the most proper work of the Spirit, and most pleasing work to him, so is discomfort and distress the proper work of this evil spirit. And again—

[2.] As he is most opposite to the Holy Spirit, so he delights to blaspheme his work in our hearts to us, by persuading us that all is counterfeit.

[3.] He is called *ἐχθρὸς*, that envious one, and the main object and mark of his envy is this, that God should be our God, who hath cast off him; and therefore, when he sees he cannot separate between God and us really, he will endeavour to cast and raise up jealousies that he is not our God in our apprehensions. He endeavoured to raise jealousies between God and our first parents,—'God knows ye shall be gods,' &c.,—as if God had forbidden them that fruit out of envy towards them of a better condition. And the like he endeavoured between Christ's human nature and the divine, though hypostatically united. And likewise—

[4.] *That God hath given us eternal life, and that life is in his Son.* This being that great truth of the gospel, so as a Christian that believes it not makes God a liar, 1 John v. 10, 11; therefore Satan, being that great liar, opposeth this great truth and our faith therein above all other. His envy at the advancement of our nature in Christ, according to that truth, is thought by some to have been his fall and ruin, so understanding that in John viii. 44, 'He abode not in the truth.' However, he doth now delight to make God a liar to us in our apprehensions, by questioning his promises, and especially to enforce the persuasion thereof out of God's own dealing with us, 'perverting his righteous ways.'

(2.) And secondly, as Satan hath such a desire, so God may give his child up into Satan's hand for a while thus to afflict and terrify his spirit. His

last commission over Job seemeth to extend thus far, for his life only was excepted, Job ii. 6, 'He is in thy hand, only save his life:' and therefore, after that leave given, we hear Job, although never brought to question his estate, yet crying out of terrors, and of the sins of his youth; for Satan then, as he smote his body with boils, so buffeted his spirit. And though Satan hath will of himself, and a desire to it, and power physical enough, and abilities, to inflict this at all times, yet he must further have power moral, or leave and commission from God. And God sometimes gives to Satan power over the sons and daughters of Abraham, Luke xiii. 16, even as well as others; and as their bodies to be vexed by him, so their spirits; and as to provoke them unto sin, so much more to terrify for sin, there being more of punishment than of sin in that. Thus he left David to Satan, to provoke him unto sin, as well as Judas. Therefore that provocation to number the people, as it is imputed to Satan and his malice, 1 Chron. xxi. 1; so also to God and his anger, in giving leave first to Satan, 2 Sam. xxiv. 1. And as an 'evil spirit from the Lord' troubled Saul's mind, 1 Sam. xvi. 14; so a 'messenger of Satan was sent to buffet' Paul's spirit, 2 Cor. xii. 7. Wherein yet God doth no way help Satan with any further power than what as an angel he furnished him with at his creation; nor with any assistance or information of our secret sins against us, to enable him the more to assault us,—this I find not in Scripture,—but permissive power only. Which is either—

[1.] Obtained and given at Satan's motion and request first made; so that phrase, Luke xxii. 31, 'Satan hath requested and petitioned to winnow you,' as that also, Job ii. 3, 'Thou movedst me against him,' doth imply; and as it may seem by singling out and calling forth some one for this combat; as he did him more especially, to whom therefore Christ addresseth that premonition, and the word ἐξήγησάτο implies as much. So also Job was singled out for this duel both by God and Satan. Or else—

[2.] This is done through the ordinance of excommunication and censures of the church duly administered, *clave non errante*, for gross and scandalous sins. The proper inward effect that accompanies that ordinance which casts men out of the church, being inward affliction and distress of conscience by Satan,—which of all afflictions is the greatest punishment, *πειραισία*, as the Apostle calls it, 2 Cor. ii. 6,—thereby to bring a man to repentance. Even as, on the contrary, the special work of baptism, to such as were *fideles adulti* and believers already, was by joy in the Holy Ghost to seal up their adoption and regeneration unto him; as to the eunuch, Acts viii. 39. This we may see in the excommunication of the incestuous Corinthian; whose excommunication is therefore expressed to be 'a delivering him up unto Satan, in the name of the Lord Jesus,' 1 Cor. v. 4, 5; that is, he was to be cast out by a commission from Christ, which going forth in his name, when they published it on earth, he signed it in heaven. Upon which, rightly administered, doth ensue, first, that as the church doth cut them off from communion with them, so God cuts them off from communion with himself, and hides and withdraws the light of his countenance, the witness of his Spirit, and his comfortable presence. And not only so, but 'delivereth them up to Satan,' that being the consequent of it; which therefore, because it implies the former, is put to express the whole proceeding. Which delivery of him unto Satan was not a giving him a commission to carry him on to more sin,—though that often be indeed the effect of it in hypocrites, as in Alexander, 1 Tim. i. 19,—for the end propounded by the Apostle was to 'destroy the flesh,' that is, corruption and the body of sin; and that 'the spirit might be

saved,' ver. 5, that is, that contrary principle of grace which yet remained, but was ready to die, as it is Rev. iii. 2, might be saved and kept from death and destruction: but it was to terrify and afflict his conscience, and to stir up in him the guilt of his sin, with terrors for it, which God sanctifieth to humble and to mortify the flesh. And thus, when that Corinthian was excommunicated, did Satan accordingly deal with him; for in the next epistle, 2 Cor. ii. 7, we find him well-nigh 'swallowed up of sorrow,' which was Satan's doing; for, ver. 11, 'We are not ignorant,' saith the Apostle, in reference partly to this, 'of his devices.' And thus Satan continued still to handle him, even now when he began to be truly humbled, and was a fit subject to receive forgiveness and comfort, ver. 7; when, though he feared God and obeyed him, yet he walked in darkness till the church received him. Or else—

[3.] When this ordinance is not in the case of such sins administered, then God himself, who works without an ordinance sometimes the same effects that with it, doth excommunicate men's spirits from his presence, and gives them up to Satan, by terrors to whip them home to himself. So that God gives him leave to exercise power over both godly men and wicked men, only with this difference: wicked men God gives up unto him as unto their ruler and their head; they are therefore called the 'rulers of the darkness of this world,' Eph. vi. 12, who therefore 'work effectually in the children of disobedience,' Eph. ii. 2; or else as captives to a prince, he taking them 'captive at his will,' 2 Tim. ii. 26, so as they are captived and 'led away,' 1 Cor. xii. 2. But his own, God gives up to him but as prisoners to a jailor, as a magistrate may do his child, to commit him; who hath not a power over his prisoner to do anything with him, but only by appointment for a time, with a limited commission, and therefore cannot put him on the rack or into the dungeon, but when and how far God pleaseth: even as when Satan is said to have 'cast them into prison,' Rev. ii. 10, his commission was but for ten days, and then God rebukes him.

(3.) Satan having thus obtained leave, now to shew how able and powerful he is to work darkness in us, I need not much insist on. His physical and natural power to work upon our spirits, by his creation as he is an angel, is exceeding great. We are a middle sort of creatures between them and beasts; beasts being merely corporeal, they merely spiritual, man between both. 'He made us a little inferior to the angels,' Heb. ii.; though but a little, yet inferior; and in respect of that inferiority, we are exposed to their working and crafty wiles. The great advantage they have hereby over us, the Apostle insinuates when he says, 'We have not to do with flesh and blood, but spiritual wickednesses,' Eph. vi. 12; that is, with spirits, in abilities transcending the power of the flesh and blood; for flesh is used to express weakness when it is thus compared, as here, with spirit: so Isa. xxxi. 3. Therefore they are there also called, as *principalities* for their authority, so *powers* for their natural abilities; and that to work upon us, for it is spoken in that relation. All which power, how great soever in him at his first creation, is now become the power of darkness; and so called because most powerful that way; namely, to cause and work darkness in us. And though he can for a need 'transform himself into an angel of light,' by deluding his deceived enthusiasts with false joys, yet therein he doth but act a part, it is but forced. But to shew himself an angel of darkness, by terrifying and affrighting weak consciences, this is natural now to him; his power lies most in this. Therefore his title further is the 'ruler of darkness;' and also he is called 'that strong man,'—strong, as to keep peace, Luke xi. 21, in those he deceives with

a false peace, so to make war and commotions in us when he is cast out. We are bidden, therefore, to stand upon our guard, and to look that 'we have on the whole armour of God, that we may be able to stand against his wiles,' Eph. vi. 11.

(4.) Only, in the fourth place, though Satan hath never so much power, yet the advantage and exercise of this his power to work those disquietments in us is by reason of that sinful darkness which is in us. We may say, that as unless he had power from above,—that is, from God,—so nor unless he had furtherance from beneath, even from those principles of guilt and darkness in us before-mentioned, he could not disquiet us. 'Satan cometh,' saith Christ, 'but hath nothing in me.' A commission he had, and therefore came; but he had nothing of his image, or of the guilt of any of his works, to work upon in Christ; and therefore could effect nothing at all upon his spirit. That, therefore, which gives him privilege, scope, and matter to work thus upon us is something within us; there being, even in the best, something which doth belong to his jurisdiction, which maketh their spirits fit subjects for his temptations to take upon. In Eph. vi. 12, they are called the 'rulers of the darkness of this world;' and, Col. i. 12, 13, their power is called 'the power of darkness;' so as darkness is his territories, dominion, and jurisdiction: for it is his work and his image, without which he could have no power at all with us.

(5.) But by reason of this remaining darkness he hath a double advantage over us:—

[1.] An advantage of more near, intimate, and immediate access to our spirits, to close with them, to suggest unto them, and to work upon them; and to tempt not only, as one man tempts another, by the outward senses, but by the inward also, which is an exceeding great advantage. And though it is true that, as he is an angel, he hath naturally by creation ability thus to do; yet as he is now a devil and an unclean spirit, were we but perfectly holy, as in innocency, he should be debarred all such near communication to us. To this purpose it may be observed, that in that his temptation of Adam in innocency, he was not permitted, in his first assault, till he had sinned, to come within him to work upon his fancy and affections indiscernibly; but only mediately and externally, by an audible voice in the body of a serpent. And likewise, as touching the second Adam, we read not that he had access to his inward senses and spirit; but only by an external suggestion by voice, and by visible representations; as when he shewed him the glory of the world in visible landscapes of his own making, which were represented to the eye. What else was the reason why he took the advantage of a mountain? If it had been by working on his inward senses, any place would have served for that. But the devil then appeared in a visible shape, and so tempted him, for he would have had him fall down to worship him. *Cæterum malus ille extrinsecus, ac non per cogitationes, Christum adortus est, quemadmodum et Adamum. Nam ne illum quidem per immixtas cogitationes, sed per serpentem impetivit.** Another time we find him crept into one of his apostles, to assault our Saviour by him, Matt. xvi. 23, 'Master, spare thyself,' says he; when therefore Christ says to him, 'Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence to me.' So as still Satan was kept at a distance, and could come no nearer. And that he should yet come thus near to him, made Christ also, in that great temptation in the wilderness, with so much vehemency and indignation at last say to him, 'Avoid, Satan,' Matt. iv. 10, as loathing the nearness of so foul a spirit. For what fellowship,—that is, such thus near,—should light

* Damasc. Ortho. Fidei, lib. iii., cap. 20.

have with this angel of darkness? Nor should he have such more near and inward access to our spirits, but for that darkness in us, by reason of which he thus comes within us; and as darkness mingleth with darkness, so he with our spirits. So that as the light of grace in us begun doth fit us for God's drawing nigh to us, so this darkness, remaining in part unexpelled, exposeth us to Satan's drawing nigh so near as to mingle with our spirits, and, as it were, to become one spirit with us.

[2.] As hereby he hath this advantage of access to get within us, so this darkness in us is also as fit fuel and as tinder to his fiery temptations, that presently enkindleth and inflameth. So as all those effects of the principles of darkness mentioned he can both increase and augment, and so add blackness to that darkness in us. And darkness being his dominion, therefore so much darkness as is in us, so great a party he hath in us to work upon. Hence, therefore, all the effects that he worketh in unregenerate men, who are nothing but darkness, he may work in regenerate men, according to the proportion of the remainder of darkness in them, to a certain degree, and for a limited season; as to delude their reason, falsely accuse and terrify their consciences, &c. Only final despair and revenge against God, which is that sin unto death, this the Apostle excepteth; for having occasionally mentioned that sin, 1 John v. 16, he adds, ver. 18, that 'he that is born of God sinneth not,' that is, not that sin; and he subjoineth, 'but keeps himself that that evil one touch him not,' that is, not with the least infusion of the venom of that sin which is properly *his sin*, John viii. 44, and which he toucheth their spirits with who become the serpent's seed. And therefore all such instances as we find, that shew how he hath wrought on the spirits of carnal men by reason of their total darkness, may be alleged to shew in a proportion what he may also work on regenerate men for a season by reason of their darkness in part remaining: all things happening alike to all.—Thus in general,

CHAPTER VII.

More particularly, how Satan works upon those three principles in us : first, on carnal reason.

SEEING therefore the exercise of his power lies in that darkness which is in us, let us more particularly see how able and powerful he is to work upon those several principles of *carnal reason, guilt of conscience, jealousies and fears.*

First, on *carnal reason*; on which he chiefly worketh in this sort of temptations, the strength whereof lies in false reasonings, wherein, if in anything, he hath the advantage.

1. First, his abilities to forge and invent false reasonings and arguments to overthrow our faith, are, as they must needs be conceived to be, exceeding great: who for this knowledge is called *δαίμων*; as well as Satan for his malice; and for his subtlety in outreaching us, a serpent: who when young, outwitted our first parents; 'he beguiled Eve through his subtlety,' says the Apostle, 2 Cor. xi. 3, then when their reason was not depraved; but now he is grown 'that old serpent,' Rev. xii. 9: and we are become 'children, apt to be tossed to and fro,' Eph. iv. 14. He hath had time enough to improve his knowledge in; a student he is of five thousand years' standing, that hath lost no time, but as he is said to 'accuse day and night,' Rev. xii. 10, so is able to study both day and night; and he hath made it his chief, if not whole study, to enable himself to tempt, and plead against us. It is his trade. Therefore as men are called lawyers or divines from their callings, so he the tempter and the accuser from his employment. And by this his long experience and observation he hath his *νῆματα*, 2 Cor. ii. 11, his set and composed machinations; his *μεθοδεΐας*, Eph. vi. 11, his methods of temptations, which are studied and artificially moulded and ordered; even such systems and methods of them as tutors and professors of arts and sciences have, and do read over again and again to their auditors. The Apostle calls them 'darts,' ver. 16,—and he hath a whole shop and armoury of them ready made and forged,—which, for the acuteness and subtle sophistry that is in them, are called 'depths of Satan,' Rev. ii. 24; which depths, if in any point, are most to be found in this: for he is more especially versed in this great question and dispute, Whether a man be the child of God or no? more than in any other. All other controversies he hath had to deal in but in particular ages, as occasionally they were started; but this hath been the standing controversy of all ages, since God hath had any children on earth: with every one of whom, more or less, he hath at one time or another had solemn disputes about it; so as he knows all the advantages, windings, and turnings in this debate, all the objections and answers, and discussions in it.

And as other controversies, the longer they are on foot, and the further they have been carried along, the more they are enlarged, improved, and grow more subtle; so must this needs also, especially in this latter knowing

age of the world, and by reason also of that seeming near similitude which hypocrisy holds unto the truth and power of grace, which hath fazzled* and entangled this controversy. The objections and difficulties which a believer meets with in beating out a right judgment of his estate, are greater than in any controversy the world ever knew, and afford stranger knots, and require as acute distinctions to dissolve them as the school knows any; and indeed such as, did not the Holy Ghost sometimes cut, sometimes untie them for believers, by witnessing with our spirits that we are the sons of God, bare reason alone could never determine in it. Now Satan, through long experience and observation, hath all these at his fingers' ends, and hath reduced them all to commonplaces long since. He hath still observed and laid up what answers have relieved the spirits of believers in such and such a doubt cast in by him, and then studies a further reply against the next time, or for the next believer he shall have to do with.

2. Secondly, as he hath thus thoroughly studied this controversy, and knows all the windings and false reasonings in it; so withal, by his daily studying and considering men, he knows how best to suit and make use of those reasonings, both to persons and seasons. It is the sole business of those evil spirits to study men; for this end they 'go up and down the earth.' And he hath commonplaces of men, and their several frames and temper of spirit, as well as of temptations; he knows all the several ranks and classes of men in the state of grace; and according to their ranks, with what sort of temptations to encounter them. For men's temptations are 'various and manifold,' 1 Pet. i. 6; even as the gifts and operations of the Spirit are, 1 Cor. xii. 4, 5. Now, he having beaten out this controversy with all sorts, knows how to lay the dispute, how to order, and marshal, and apply objections, and wield his blows with most success and advantage. That as physicians, having observed the several workings of medicines of all sorts, upon several ages and constitutions, and what several issues and effects they have had, do therefore accordingly prescribe and apply several medicines according to the several and differing conditions of their patients, though sick of the same disease. Thus Satan, he by observation finding the hearts of some men 'answering' to some others, 'as face to face in water,' as Solomon says; and withal remembering what reasonings have always taken most with such a sort or strain of Christians, whose corruptions and whose graces were much alike unto those in this or that man he hath now to deal with; accordingly he makes use and application of these reasonings again. The tempers of men's spirits we know are diverse, and so are capable of diversity of suggestions. And again, the operations of grace, as of sin, are various in those several tempers. And God's dealings with and workings upon his children are as various as either. Some he humbleth much, some are led on with comfort; some he works on with a sudden and marvellous light, as if the sun should rise on the sudden at midnight, and on others insensibly and by degrees, as when the dawning steals upon the day; some have had a false and counterfeit work before, some were never enlightened until savingly; and this variety affords rise and occasion for several temptations. So as what kind of work any other Christian hath had is apt to be made an exception to another that wants it. I was never thus humbled, says one; nor I thus comforted, says another; I had a sudden violent work indeed, which came in like a spring-tide, but now the tide is fallen, and my first love abated, says a third; I had some workings and enlightenings heretofore, says another, and I was deceived then, and I may be so now also: and so he hath

* Embarrassed.—Ed.

that vast task set him, to compare a counterfeit work with a true. Thus every several way of working lies open to several exceptions; and as we say that every calling earthly hath its several and proper temptations, so the several ways and manners of effecting this calling heavenly have their several veins and currents of temptations. All which Satan knows, and hath often traced; and accordingly knows how to fit them to men, and to prosecute them the most advantageous way.

So in like manner he takes the compass of every man's knowledge, notions, and apprehensions; according unto which, as our knowledge is more or less, we are also capable of several temptations. Many reasonings and objections, which, like small hail-shot, could not reach or make any dint at all upon men of parts and knowledge, both because they by reason of their knowledge do soar high out of the gun-shot of them, and have also on the 'whole armour of God,' as the apostle speaks, Eph. vi.—that is, are in complete armour, abounding in all faith and knowledge,—yet such reasonings may be fittest to level with at such as are more ignorant, and fly low, and have but some few broken pieces of that armour to defend some parts with. But on the contrary, those other of his great-shot, which he dischargeth on men of knowledge, they would clean fly over the others' heads, and not come near such smaller vessels. All in Thyatira knew not Satan's depths, nor were capable of them, Rev. ii. 24. Thus the ignorance and the want of knowledge of the meaning of the Scriptures, and of the ways of grace chalked forth therein, how doth Satan abuse, to the disquietment of many poor and good souls that want much knowledge, by putting false glosses upon them! How many weak souls do stick in shallows, and are sometimes a long while terrified with gross mistakes, and like small birds are held long under with limed straws of frivolous objections, which great ones fly away with! That great apostle, being a man of knowledge, was not easily taken with such chaff. 'We are not ignorant of his devices,' says he, 2 Cor. ii. 11; and therefore Satan takes another course with him, and comes with downright blows, and falls a-buffeting him, 2 Cor. xii. 7. Thus doth Satan take measure of the bore, as I may so speak, of every man's understanding, and fits them with objections proportionable, in several sizes. And as the Apostle in his sermons prepared milk for babes, but strong meat for strong men, so doth Satan in his temptations apply and suit them to men's notions and apprehensions, still framing objections according to their reading.

3. Thirdly, he is able undiscernibly to communicate all his false reasonings, though never so spiritual, which he doth forge and invent, and that in such a manner as to deceive us by them, and to make them take with us.

(1.) First, he is able not only to put into the heart suggestions and sollicitations unto sensual and worldly objects; such as that into Judas's heart, to betray his Master for money, John xiii. 2, and to tempt married couples severed to incontinency, 1 Cor. vii. 5; but also the most subtle and abstracted reasonings concerning things spiritual, which are utterly remote from sense, he can insinuate and impart according to the measure and capacity of men's apprehensions. Therefore we are said to wrestle with them about things heavenly, and our interest therein is often made the matter of contention and the subject of the question. So that phrase, Eph. vi. 12, *ἐν τοῖς ἰπουραντοῖς*, when it is said, 'We wrestle with spiritual wickednesses in heavenly,' is rather to be understood of heavenly things than of heavenly places; the word signifying rather supercelestial, in the highest heavens, whither, if rendered of places, the devils never came since their fall. And it being used elsewhere for heavenly things, as Heb. viii. 5, and the preposition *ἐν*, or *ἐν,*

being likewise sometimes put to express the object-matter about which a thing is conversant, as Matt. xi. 6, 'Blessed is he that is not offended in me,'—that is, with or about me, and for my sake,—it may congruously be so here meant, as noting to us, that the price, the stake, about which we wrestle with Satan are not things worldly, as honours, riches, and the like, but things heavenly, which concern our souls and estates hereafter.

Now the contention being about heavenly things and spiritual blessings, it cannot be transacted but by reasonings suitable; that is, spiritual false reasonings, abstracted from sense and fancy. And in this respect they are termed spiritual wickednesses, because in such wickednesses they deal and trade in especially, or as much as in those that are sensual; as tempting to unbelief, despair, blasphemy against God, of which sort are all those temptations we have now in hand. And that he is able to convey and suggest such spiritual thoughts and reasonings of what sort soever, appeareth many ways: as by injecting blasphemous thoughts against God, such as do sometimes transcend the wit and capacity of the receiver of them; and is manifest likewise by Saul's prophesying even from the immediate dictating and suggestion of an evil spirit, as is expressly said, 1 Sam. xviii. 10; in the like manner to which haply the Sibyls also prophesied.

But more evident it is in all those damnable heresies which have been broached in all ages, as in the primitive times among the Romans, the broachers whereof are made the emissaries of Satan; therefore, Rom. xvi. 18, he having branded them, unto the Romans, that taught false doctrines among them, and having instructed them against them, he gives this encouragement about them, ver. 20, 'that God should tread down Satan under their feet shortly,' having respect to Satan's work in those errors mentioned, ver. 18, Satan being the main author of them. Thus in the church of Thyatira, those cursed heretics who applauded themselves, and were admired by their followers for the depths and profoundness of their learning, shewn in those heresies they broached: 'depths, as they speak,' Rev. ii. 24. But if they call them depths, says the Apostle, I will call them depths of Satan,—'depths of Satan, as they speak,'—for the devil was the master and the author and suggester of them. So, in after-times, apostasy is ascribed to spirits of error,—that is, devils, which he foretelleth men should give heed unto, 1 Tim. iv. 1,—and to the working of Satan, 2 Thess. ii. 9. It was he that sharpened their wits and pens. Now then, by the same reason, there is no reasoning about our estates, though never so spiritual, but he can suggest it, as well as he did those depths of the heresies to the broachers of them. So as Satan can not only make those false reasonings, which our own hearts forge, more specious and probable, and suggest further confirmations of them, which are enough to add unto this darkness; but he is also able to put in new, which himself invents, of what kind soever they be.

(2.) Secondly, he is not simply able to suggest them, but to insinuate them in such a manner as to take with us and deceive us; yea, and often to set them on with a deep impression. Therefore, in those places forementioned, it is not simply said that there should be spirits which shall suggest errors, but so suggest them as that 'men should give heed unto them.' Thus, 1 Tim. iv. 1, and 2 Thess. ii., where the working of those very same spirits is set forth, ver. 9, it is not only said that they were sent as from God to delude, but with 'strong delusions;' such as should have a strength put into them to prevail, so as that men should believe them. So also, that lying spirit which God sent, and who persuaded Ahab by a lie in the mouths of his false prophets, commission was not simply given to him to suggest a lie,

but so as it should prevail with Ahab; so 2 Chron. xviii. 21, 'And the Lord said, Thou shalt entice him, and thou shalt also prevail.' And as he is thus able, when God gives leave, to delude wicked men's understandings with false reasonings in matters of heresy and false doctrine, by reason of that total darkness that is in them: so he is able, if God give leave, as sometimes he doth, to bring strong delusions upon the minds of God's children also, through false reasonings about their own estates, by reason of that darkness which in part remains in them; by means of which he may work the same effects for a time, and in a certain degree, in a godly man, which in another, as was before observed. Thus the believing Galatians, especially some of them, were so far 'bewitched,' as his word is, as for a time to assent to that great error in point of justification; and this by reason of that folly and darkness which remained in them, as he intimates, when he says, 'O ye foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that you should not obey the truth?' Gal. iii. 1. And if in the very doctrine of justification itself believers were thus for a time deluded, which is rare, then much more may they, and ordinarily are they, misled in the application of faith, in the believing their own personal justification, which is the point in hand.

Only this is to be added here for caution's sake: that it is true that Satan cannot enforce an act of assent to any falsehood upon the understanding of any man. For how then should they 'all have been damned for believing that lie?' 2 Thess. ii. 11, 12; which should not have been unless it were their own sin; which is as true of all other temptations as that. Though Satan put the thought into Judas's heart, John xiii. 2, yet his own conscience owns it wholly as his own act, Matt. xxvii. 4, 'I have sinned,' &c.

Neither yet doth he so immediately concur to produce such an act of assent in us, as God doth when he worketh faith in us; for then God's power and assistance in working good should be no more than Satan's in working evil. *Tentationis potest esse causa efficax, at non peccati; potest necessitare homines ad sentiendum tentationem, non ad consentiendum.*

And yet the Scripture phrases go far in ascribing unto Satan herein, when it says of those that believed not the gospel, that 'the god of this world hath blinded their minds that believe not,' 2 Cor. iv. 4; which notes out a superadded working of blindness unto their own natural blindness. As also when he says that 'the prince of the air is ἐνεργῶν, that works effectually,' &c., Eph. ii. 2. And also that of the Corinthians whilst unregenerate, who as then are said to be 'carried and led away after dumb idols,' 1 Cor. xii. 2. All which phrases would seem to argue, not only a further power of working upon men's judgments than when one man doth endeavour to corrupt and persuade another man in a moral way, (because he suggesteth indiscernibly, and with more frequency and importunity, and holdeth the mind more to the object, and presenteth an army of confirmations at once, and is able so to marshal them as the mind can scarce resist; and puts all these upon the spirit with a violent and imperious affirmation,) but further, also, they would seem to imply some kind of physical working, though not immediately on the spring of the clock, yet upon the wheels and weights of it—I mean the passions in the body and the images in the fancy, though not upon the understanding immediately; all which, what influence they have to sway the judgment and pervert it, experience shews.

4. Fourthly, he is further able to follow and continue his reasonings as occasion is, and to keep up the dispute, and hold out arguments with us, and out-reason us, by putting in new replies to our answers, and so to maintain and manage and carry along the dispute, and to come up with fresh

supplies: which in this respect is called wrestling, Eph. vi. 12, 'We wrestle not with flesh and blood, but principalities and powers;' it being, as the bodily wrestling, transacted by reiterated assaults, and attempts to overcome and get the victory; he, as it were, going about to strike up our heels, as wrestlers do—that is, to take away from under us those reasonings which supported us, by cavilling objections; which kind of spiritual wrestlings how often have we experience of in spiritual agonies! In the hour of temptation believers find conflicts and bandying of disputes, rationally carried along, and pertinent objections brought in against those answers which they secretly meditate of. In which cause, therefore, divines bid men not to dispute with that cunning sophister. Thus many, when death hath approached, have found that they have had their reasonings for their estates, and those evidences they have had recourse unto, taken away and confuted as fast as they have thought of them.

And that Satan hath this dexterity and skill thus to manage such kind of disputes with us, is further evident in the framing of heresies, wherein he assists the contrivers of them with pertinent considerations to back and confirm their notions, in their private meditations, studies, and contrivements. And indeed, if Satan were not able and skilful thus to oppose and reply, these kind of temptations which consist in disputes could not be managed; for otherwise in them Satan disputed with us but as if one of us should reason with a dumb man that can hear, but his answers cannot be known, and so he knows no way what reply to make. Therefore surely Satan hath often some way, more or less, a guess and inkling what may be the answers of the heart again: which, were it otherwise, the glory also which God hath by the victory gotten over Satan in these temptations were much obscured, and Satan's confusion less; for the victory of our faith in these disputes, and the resistance it makes, lies chiefly in those replies which are made, whereby it quencheth all his darts: whereof the devil, when he is once sensible and perceives it, he is confounded; for then, when he is once sensible and apprehensive that he is resisted, doth he fly from us, as the Apostle speaks, James iv. 7, and that of his own accord, as the expression there imports; even as a foiled and disgraced soldier. And this we may see in his carriage in those his temptations of Christ, which were managed by mutual disputes, and wherein the foiling of Satan was by the answers out of Scripture which Christ gave; by which being confounded, 'he left him,' as the text says, Matt. iv. 11, as out of pride, ashamed that he was foiled. So that Satan, some way or other, is able to guess at, and discerns the replies in our hearts to his objections, as well as to make and cast in objections.