

(Ancient City of Palmyra)

A
NEW HISTORY
OF THE
HOLY BIBLE,
FROM THE
BEGINNING OF THE WORLD,
TO THE
ESTABLISHMENT OF CHRISTIANITY.

WITH
ANSWERS to most of the Controverted Questions,
Dissertations upon the most remarkable Passages,
and a Connection of Profane History all along.

To which are added,
NOTES, explaining difficult Texts, rectifying Mistransla-
tions, and reconciling seeming Contradictions.

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The whole illustrated with proper Maps and Sculptures.

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T H E H I S T O R Y O F T H E B I B L E.

B O O K VI. Continued.

C H A P. III.

*From the Siege of Samaria by Benhadad, to the death of Uz-
ziah King of Judah.*

T H E H I S T O R Y.

Notwithstanding the great service which the pro-
phet Elisha had done Benhadad king of Syria, in ^{A. M. 3001, &c. Ant. Chriſt.}
curing Naaman, the general of his forces, of a ^{1003, &c.}
confirmed leprosy, he still continued his enmity ^{from}
against Israel. Having raised an army, with a purpose to ^{Kings viii. to the end}
besiege Samaria, he opened the campaign with stratagems ^{of 2 Chron.}
of war ; and, in hopes of surprizing Jehoram's troops, laid
here and there some ambuscades, which Elisha, by his spi-
rit of prophecy, found out, and all along gave the king
of Israel a timely intelligence of them. Benhadad at first <sup>Elisha's ex-
ploits a-
gainst Ben-
hadad king
of Syria.</sup>
suspected that his counsels were betrayed ; but when he was
informed, by † one of his officers, that Elisha (who was
then

† It is not to be doubted, but that Naaman, upon his return from
Samaria, spread the fame of Elisha so much in the court of Syria,
that some of the great men there might have the curiosity to make
a farther inquiry concerning him ; and, being informed by several

A. M.
3001, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1003, &c.
from
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then at Dothan, a small city in the half tribe of Manasseh, and not far from Samaria) must certainly have been at the bottom of all this, he sent a strong detachment to seize him, and invested the city that night.

On the morrow, when Elisha's servant saw the enemy surrounding the town, and knew of no forces to oppose them, † he expressed his fear and concern to his master; but, upon his master's prayer, * his eyes were opened, and he beheld a multitude of horses, and fiery chariots standing in array, and prepared to protect them; while (as his master continued his prayer) the men that beleagured the town were struck with blindness: so that, by the prophet's persuading them that they were out of their way, and had mistaken the place they were bound to, they were led, in this bewildered condition, into the very midst of Samaria, where, at the prophet's request, God opened their eyes again to show them the danger they were in.

Jehoram, finding so great a number of the enemy lying at his mercy, would have gladly put them to the sword; but Elisha by all means dissuaded him from it; alleging, that as he would scarce be so cruel as to kill in cold blood, even prisoners that were taken in war, much less should he touch those who were brought into his hands by the providence of God; and therefore he rather advised him to

of his miraculous works, they might thence conclude, that he could tell the greatest secrets, as well as perform such wonders as were related of him; and that therefore, in all probability, he was the person who gave the king of Israel intelligence of all the schemes that had been contrived to intrap him; *Patrick's Commentary*.

† This young man, it is supposeable, had been but a little while with his master, no longer than since Gehazi's dismissal, and therefore perhaps had not yet seen any great experiments of his power to work miracles; or, if he had, the great and imminent danger he thought his master in, (for, in all probability, he had learned from the people of the town, that this vast body of men were come to apprehend him only), might well be allowed to raise his fear, and shake his faith; *Poole's Annotations*.

* It must be allowed, that angels, whether they be purely spiritual, or (as others think) clothed with some material form, cannot be seen by mortal eyes; and therefore, as Elisha himself, without a peculiar vouchsafement of God, could not discern the heavenly host, which, at this time, encamped about him; so he requests of God, that, for the removal of his fears, and the confirmation of his faith, his servant might be indulged the same privilege; *Le Clerc's Commentary*.

treat them with all manner of civility *, and let them go ; which accordingly the king did.

But, how signal soever this piece of service and generosity to Benhadad was, it did not prevail with him to relinquish the old grudge and malice which he had conceived against Israel : For, not long after, he laid close siege to Samaria, and reduced the city to such distress, that an ass's head was sold * for fourscore pieces of silver, and † three quarters of a pint of pulse, for five.

Nay,

A. M.
3001, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1003, &c.
from
1 Kings viii,
to the end
of 2 Chron.

* Though, according to the rigour of the laws of arms, a conqueror is at liberty to put whatever enemies fall into his hands, if he pleases, to the sword ; yet the laws of humanity and compassion, of honour and good nature, should always restrain us from treating with the utmost severity such as surrender themselves, and implore our mercy ; for so says the Tragedian, *quod non vetat lex, hoc vetat fieri pudor* ; Senec. Troad. So the philosopher, *Æqui bonæque natura parcere etiam captivis jubet* ; Senec. De clement. lib. i. c. xviii. And so the divine, *Hostem pugnantem necessitas perimat, non voluntas* : *Sicut bellanti et resistenti violentia readuur, ita victo et capto misericordia jam debetur*. Aug. ad Bonit. ep. i. But besides the humanity and charity of the thing, there was this prudence and policy in the kind treatment of the Syrians, that, by this means their hearts might be mollified towards the Israelites, that upon their return, they might become, as it were, so many preachers of the power and greatness of the God of Israel, and not only be afraid themselves, but dissuade others likewise from opposing a people that had so invincible a protector ; Calmet's Commentary ; and Pool's Annotations.

* If we reckon these pieces of silver, or shekels, at fifteen pence a-piece, they come to five pound sterling ; a vast price for that which had on it so little meat, and that unclean, according to the law, Lev. xi. 26. In times of famine, however, and extreme necessity, the Jews themselves were absolved from the observation of the law ; nor do there want instances in history where other people, upon the same occasion, have been reduced to the like distress, if what Plutarch (in the life of Artaxerxes) tells us, be true, viz. that in that prince's war with the Caducii, an ass's head could scarce have been purchased at the price of sixty drachms, i. e. two pounds and five shillings of our money ; Calmet's Commentary ; and Prideaux's Connection, in the preface.

† What we, in this place, call *pulse*, our translation has rendered *doves dung* ; but interpreters have been at a great loss to devise, upon what account the inhabitants of Samaria should be obliged to buy

A. M.
3001, etc.
Ant. Christ.
1003, etc.
from
1 Kings viii.
to the end
of 2 Chron.

Nay, to that extremity was the famine come, that even mothers were constrained to eat their own children; which when the king understood, † from the information of one who had been constrained to do it, he rent his cloaths, and, in

buy so small a quantity of it (for a cab was the least measure the Jews had for dry things) at so dear a rate. For food, for salt, for firing, for dunging their lands within the walls, several interpreters have severally applied it: But, upon a small examination, it will appear, that none of these uses could suit with the circumstances of a city so closely besieged as Samaria was. The Talmudists suppose that they have found out the true solution, by translating the term in the original by *crop of doves*; for they affirm, that several people in Samaria kept many doves, to bring them provisions from the country, which were wont to disgorge what they picked up, so that their owners might sell it at a dear rate: But who can imagine, that so great a number of doves, as were necessary for this purpose, should be suffered to live in a city so pinched with famine; that doves should be so docile, and well trained up, as to bring to their masters whatever they had ranged for; or, that, in a country in a manner covered with the enemy, who had altogether foraged and laid it waste, there should be found any nourishment at all? The learned Bochart therefore has not only solidly confuted these wild opinions, but has likewise farther observed, that the Arabians gave the name of *doves dung*, or *sparrows dung*, to two several things; 1st, to a kind of moss that grows on trees, or stony ground; and, 2dly, to a sort of pease or pulse, which was very common in Judea, as may be seen in 2 Sam. xvii. 28.; and therefore he concludes, that the word *Cherphonim* may very well denote *vetches*, or *pulse*: And, for the confirmation of this, some travellers have told us, that at Grand Cairo, and Damascus, there are magazines, where they constantly fry this kind of grain, which those who go in pilgrimage buy and take with them, as part of the provision for their journey; *Hieroz. part. 2. lib. 1. c. 7.*; and an *essay towards a new translation*.

† The story, as it is represented in Scripture, is very affecting. And, as the King of Israel was passing by upon the wall, there cried a woman unto him, saying, Help, my Lord; O King. And he said, If the Lord do not help thee, whence shall I help thee? Out of the barn-floor, or out of the wine-press? And the King

in a fit of rage, vowed to be revenged. of Elisha, whom he took to be the cause of all this calamity; and to this purpose sent an officer to take off his head, whilst himself followed after to see the execution done.

Elisha, by the spirit of prophecy, had notice of this wicked design against his life; and having acquainted † the company with it, desired them to secure the doors, that the officer might not be admitted until the king came. When the

A. M.
3007, etc.
Ant. Chris.
1003, etc.
from
Kings viii.
to the end
of 2 Chron.

King said unto her, What aileth thee? And she answered, This woman said unto me, Give thy son, that we may eat him to day, and we will eat my son to-morrow; so we boiled my son, and did eat him; and I said unto her the next day, Give thy son, that we may eat him, and she hath bid her son, 2 Kings vi. 26. &c. A shocking story this! And a terrible effect of the divine vengeance, which Moses had long before told the Israelites would fall upon them, Deut. xxviii. 53. if they rebelled against God; which, at two other times besides this, viz. at the siege of Jerusalem under Nebuchadnezzar, Ezek. v. 10. and at that under Titus the Roman general, came likewise to pass; for therein Josephus gives us a very dolorous account of a lady of distinction, who, out of extremity of hunger, was forced to eat the very child that sucked at her breast; *The wars of the Jews, lib. vii. c. 8.*

† The words in the text are, *And Elisha sat in his house, and the elders sat with him,* 2 Kings vi. 32. where, by *his house*, some interpreters understand the *school*, where the sons of the prophets met to be instructed; and, by *the elders*, his chief *scholars*, who under his instruction, applied themselves to the study of divine things. But as we frequently read in Ezekiel, of the elders of Israel sitting before the prophet to hear him, chap. viii. 1. and xiv. 1. we cannot see why the elders, in this place likewise, may not denote some good and godly men, who bore office either in the court, camp, or city, as it seems probable by the prophet's desiring their help and protection. For, though Jehoram himself was a wicked man, and most of his officers might be forward enough to imitate him, yet we are not to doubt, but that there were some of them, whom Elisha's holy life, and glorious miracles, together with the sundry benefits which the public reaped from his ministry, had won over to God, and to the true religion; and these were here sitting with him, either to receive comfort and counsel from him in this distressed time, or to solicit him to use his power with God for their relief: Which accordingly he did, and in compliance to their request, not out of any fear of the king's threats, (from which he was well assured,

red.

A. M. 3001, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1003, &c.
from
1 Kings viii.
to the end
of 2 Chron.

the king was come; and the prophet was exhorting him to have a little patience, and God would remove this affliction in time, in a raving fit of despair, he replied, "That he would wait God's leisure no longer, but go and worship his father's idols, if they peradventure could deliver him in this necessity." Whereupon the prophet assured him, that, if he would stay but four and twenty hours more, he should see such an alteration in Samaria, that † a measure of flour should be sold for a shekel, and two measures of barley for the same price. This a certain lord (a great favourite of the king's) standing by and hearing, affirmed to be a thing impossible, unless God should rain corn from the clouds; to whom the prophet only made this short answer, That *himself should see the plenty, but not be permitted to taste of it*; which accordingly came to pass.

And how it was raised.

The people of Samaria, though addicted to idolatry, did nevertheless observe the ceremonial part of the law, and, pursuant to this, had † shut four lepers out of the city; who

red, that God would not fail to deliver him), he pronounced the joyful news, which follows in the beginning of the next chapter;
Pool's Annotations.

† The word *Seah*, which we render *a measure*, was equal to six eabs, and contained (as some think) six quarts, (as others, a peck, and (as others) a peck and two quarts, of our measure. The shekel was much about our three shillings; and to have a peck of fine flour for three shillings at other times would not have been so cheap; but, considering the present situation of things it was wonderfully so; *Le Clerc's Commentary*; and *Pool's Annotations*.

† The Jews are of opinion, that these four lepers were Gehazi, and three of his sons. Persons that were leprous, indeed, were not permitted to converse with other men, and, by the law of Moses, while the Israelites lived in tents, they were to be turned out of the camp, Numb. v. 2, 3. But, after that they came to inhabit cities, it may be questioned, whether they treated them with that rigour; since, in 2 Kings viii. 4. we find Gehazi holding discourse with the king, (which makes against his being one of the four excluded lepers), and giving him a detail of all Elisha's miracles; but this he might do by talking to him at a proper distance. Lepers indeed were carefully avoided, because their distemper, in these hot countries, was thought contagious; but, in the case before us, these four seem to be excluded, not so much upon the account of their distemper,

who lay under the walls, until they were ready to starve. In this condition these poor creatures, consulting what measures they should best take, resolved at last to try the generosity of the enemy, because, at the worst, they could but die; and accordingly, before break of day, went to the camp. When they came thither, to their great surprise, they found no living creature, but only ^{horses and asses.} The tents were standing, and well provided with riches, and all manner of necessaries, but the men were gone: For having been affrighted with a noise in the air, as of an army in full march, and ready to fall upon them, they supposed, that the king of Israel had called to his assistance some foreign powers, († the Hittites or Egyptians), and thereupon leaving the camp, without ever striking their tents, betook themselves to their heels as fast as they could.

A. M.
3001, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1003, &c.
from
1 Kings viii.
to the end
of 2 Chron.

The poor lepers having first satisfied their hunger, and secured some riches to themselves, began to reflect, that while they were thus regaling themselves, and plundering the camp, their countrymen were in danger of starving in the town; and therefore, with all possible haste, returning to the gate, they gave the porter notice of the enemies flight, who went immediately, and sent an account of it in to the king. The king imagining, at first, that this had been a stratagem of the Syrians to draw his people out of the town, and so fall upon them, sent out

per, as because they were useless hands. They could neither fight, nor work in communion with others: They were only *fruges consumere nati*, and were therefore no proper persons in a siege; *Patrick's* and *Calmét's Commentaries*.

† The Hittites in particular lived in Arabia Petræa, to the south of Palestine, and in Solomon's time, (who had some wives likewise out of their country), held a great commerce with him for horses, 1 Kings x. 29. and xi. 1. But under the name of *Hittites*, (as elsewhere under the name of Amorites), the sacred penman seems to comprehend all, or any of the people of Canaan. For though the greatest number of that people were destroyed, yet some of them were spared, and many of them (upon Joshua's coming) fled away, some to remote parts, (as that famous and ancient pillar, in the coasts of Afric, testifies), and others to the countries bordering upon Canaan; where, by reason of the scarcity of inhabitants in those days, finding room enough, they seated themselves, and in process of time, growing numerous and powerful, appointed (according to their ancient manner of government) kings to rule over them; *Pool's Annotations*.

A. M. 3001, etc.
Ant. Christ.
1003, &c.
from
1 Kings viii.
to the end
of 2 Chron.

Hazael
made king
of Syria,
upon mur-
dering his
master Ben-
hadad.

some parties to reconnoitre such places as might be most suspected for ambuscades; but when they returned, they informed him that they could get no sight of the enemy, only they found the roads strewn with arms, and garments, and several bundles of things, which they had dropped (as they supposed) to ease themselves in their flight. Upon hearing of this news, the people rush out of the city in great numbers, and bring in provisions in such quantities, that corn was sold at the price which Elisha mentioned, and at the time which he foretold: And as the incredulous nobleman, who had despised the prophet's prediction, was appointed by the king to guard the gate which led from the city to the camp, the better to prevent disorders, the croud pressed so vehemently upon him, that they trampled him under foot, and killed him, before he had an opportunity to taste any part of that great store which he saw was brought to the market.

After this miraculous raising of the siege of Samaria, Benhadad was deterred from making any farther attempts upon Israel: Nor do we hear any more of him in the sacred history, until Elisha went to Damascus, the capital of Syria, to execute the order of declaring Hazael king, which was originally given to Elijah his predecessor. The king hearing of his arrival, and being no stranger to his abilities, sent this same Hazael, (who was then become one of his prime ministers), to wait upon him with a very noble present, and to inquire of him, whether he should recover of the sickness which he then laboured under. The prophet told Hazael, that his master might recover, because his distemper was not of itself mortal, but that he was very well assured that he would not: And then, looking steadfastly upon him, he broke out into tears, upon the prospect

† What Benhadad's distemper was, we are nowhere told in Scripture; but it is very evident, that it was not of so desperate a nature, but that he might have recovered of it, had he not had foul play for his life. According to the account of Josephus, it was no more than a fit of melancholy; for "when he came to understand (as he tells us) that all these alarms of chariots and horsemen, that had given such an irreparable rout to him, and his army, were, in truth, only judicial impressions of affliction and terror, without any foundation, he looked upon it as a declaration from heaven against him; and this anxiety of thought made him as sick in the body too as he was in his mind:" *Jewish Antiq. lib. v. c. 2.*

Chap. III. from the building of the Temple, etc.

11

(as he told him) of the * many barbarous calamities which he would bring upon Israel, when once he was advanced to power, as that he would be, because he was assured by divine revelation that he was to be king of Syria. At these words, Hazael's ambition took wing; and therefore returning to his master, he concealed the prophet's answer, and gave him good hopes of his recovery, but the next day took care to prevent it, by * stifling his breath with a thick

A. M.
3001; etc.
Ant. Christ.
1003, etc.
from
1 Kings viii.
to the end
of 2 Chron.

* The particulars are thus enumerated: *I know the evil — that thou wilt do to the children of Israel; their strong holds wilt thou set on fire; their young men wilt thou slay with the sword; and wilt dash their children, and rip up their women with child,* 2 Kings viii. 12. That dashing young children against the stones was one piece of barbarous cruelty which the people of the east were apt to run into, in the prosecution of their wars, is plainly intimated in that passage of the Psalmist's, alluding to the calamities which preceded the Babylonish captivity: *O daughter of Babylon, wasted with misery! Yea, happy shall he be that rewardeth thee, as thou hast served us, Blessed shall he be that taketh thy children, and throweth them against the stones,* Psal. cxxxvii. 8, 9. Nor was this inhuman practice quite out of use among nations that pretended to more politeness: For according to the remains of ancient fame, the Grecians, when they became masters of Troy, were so cruel as to throw Astyanax, Hector's son, a child in his mother's arms, (as Homer represents him), headlong from one of the towers of the city. *The ripping up women with child,* is the highest degree of brutal cruelty; and a cruelty for which there is no occasion, because, kill but the mother, and the child dies of course; and yet it has been often known, that in the heat of execution, this barbarity has been committed. Nay, there is reason to believe, that Hazael, in his war with the Gileadites, 2 Kings x. 32, 33. verified this part of the prophet's prediction concerning him; for what Amos, complaining of his cruelty to these people, calls *threshing Gilead with threshing instruments of iron*, both the Septuagint and Arabic versions read, *he sawed the big-bellied women of Gilead with iron saws*, Le Clerc's and Calmet's Commentaries.

* This he did, that no signs of violence might appear upon him; for had the people, in the least, suspected his being murdered, Hazael would not so easily have acceded to the throne; because (according to the account of Josephus) Benhadad was a man of such reputation among the people of Syria and Damascus, that as his memory was celebrated among them with divine honours, his death, no doubt, had it been known to have been violent,

A. M. 3001, etc. A t. Chris. 1003, etc. from
 thick cloth dipped in water : And as Benhadad had no son of his own, and Hazael was a man of great esteem, especially among the soldiery, he was, without much difficulty, declared his successor.

2 Kings viii. to the end, of 2 Chron. Jehu being anointed king of Israel kills his master Jehoram, and Ahaziah king of Judah.
 The next thing which Elisha did, was to have Jehu appointed king of Israel, pursuant to the order that was given to his master Elijah, and to the divine decree of punishing the house of Ahab for their manifold impieties. Ramoth-Gilead was a place of long dispute between the two crowns of Israel and Syria. Jehoram, king of Israel, had lately had an engagement with Hazael, king of Syria, not far from it, wherein he had received some very dangerous wounds, and was gone down to Jezreel, to be cured of them. His army however † continued the siege under the command of Jehu, who, in the king's absence, acted as captain-general. This Elisha thought was no improper opportunity to execute the orders which were left upon

would have been fully revenged upon the murdurer; *Jewish Antiq. lib. ix. c. 2.* We may observe, however, that history makes mention of some other princes who have died in the same manner that Benhadad did; that the Emperor Tiberius (according to Suetonius) was, in his last sickness, choaked in his bed by a pillow crammed into his mouth, or (as Tacitus has it) was smothered to death under a vast load of bed-cloaths; and that King Demetrius, the son of Philip, (as well as the Emperor Frederick the Second), was hurried out of the world the same way; *Calmet's Commentary.*

† It is supposed by some interpreters, that the city of Ramoth-Gilead was taken by Jehoram, before he departed from it to be cured of his wounds. This they gather from the mention made of the *inner chamber*, 2 Kings ix. 2. the *top of the stairs*, ver. 13. and from that caution which Jehu thinks adviseable, *Let none go forth or escape out of the city*, ver. 15. But these arguments will not do. What we render *out of the city*, does signify, every whit as properly, *from before the city*, i. e. out of the camp or army that is besieging the city. But even, if this be not so, the Israelites might, at this time, have the suburbs, or out-buildings belonging to the city, in their possession, where the general might have his head-quarters, and from whence he might give orders to the piquet-guard, (as we call it), that none should be permitted to move. For had the town been already in their hands, we cannot see why Jehoram should have kept all Israel there; ver. 14. i. e. all the military force of Israel, when a strong garrison would have been sufficient; *Pool's Annotations.*

him

him to do; and therefore † calling one of his minor prophets, he bid him go to Ramoth-Gilead, and † there anoint Jehu, the grandson of Nimshi, as king of Israel, with the utmost secrecy, and then to come away with the utmost expedition. When the prophet came thither, he found the officers in a council of war, and Jehu at the head of them. Desiring therefore to speak with him in private, he did what his instructions were, and reminding the general of the prophecies of Elijah, concerning the utter extinction of the house of Ahab, he enjoined him (now that he was invested with power) to put them in execution.

The officers that were with Jehu, had but a contemptible opinion of the prophet; for persons of this character they looked upon as a * kind of madmen; and yet, when they

A. M.
3001, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1003, &c.
from
1 Kings viii.
to the end
of 2 Chron.

† The Jewish doctors are of opinion, that the prophet whom Elisha sent upon this message, was Jonah; but upon this supposition, he must, at this time, have been a very young man, because Jeroboam the Second (in whose reign Jonah prophesied) did not ascend the throne till about fifty years after this unction of Jehu king of Israel. However this be, it is reasonable to think, that Elisha himself did not go to perform this office, either because he was now grown old, and unfit for such a journey, or because he was a person too well known, and not so proper to be employed in an affair that required secrecy; *Patrick's and Calmet's Commentaries*

† The Jews are of opinion, that none of the kings of Israel were anointed, but those that were of the house of David, and these only, when there was a question about their succession; as Solomon, they say, needed not to have been anointed, had it not been for the faction of Adonijah. But in the case of Jehu, in whom the succession of the kingdom of Israel was to be translated out of the right line of the family of Ahab, into another family which had no right to the kingdom, but merely the appointment of God, there was a necessity for his unction, in order to convey to him a title and to invest him in the actual possession of the kingdom: For if that (which some imagine from 1 Kings xix. 16.) be true, viz. that the prophet Elijah did, before this time, anoint Jehu, that unction did only confer on him a remote right to the kingdom, in the same manner as Samuel's unction did to David, 1 Sam. xvi. 13.; *Patrick's Commentary* and *Pool's Annotations*.

* The officers who were in company with Jehu, might easily perceive, by the habit, and air, and manner of speech of the person who accosted Jehu so boldly, and when he had done his business, vanished so suddenly, that he was a prophet; but then there

A. M. :
3001, etc.
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1003, etc.
from.
2 Kings viii.
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they understood that he had anointed Jehu to be king, they proclaimed him with a general consent, and, with a good body of forces, marched directly to Jezreel, where Jehoram was not yet recovered of his wounds, and whither Ahaziah, king of Judah, was at that time come to visit him. Jehu's intent was to get to Jezreel, before the king could have any intelligence of what had passed at Ramoth-Gilead, and there to surprize and seize him; but a † centinal from the watch-tower perceiving a body of men coming, and, by their hasty march, concluding that it was Jehu who commanded them, apprised the two kings of it; whereupon they got ready their chariots in all haste, and (as the providence of God would have it) met him not far from the vineyard of Naboth, the Jez-

there might be several reasons which might induce men of their profession to have a contemptible opinion of men of that order. The rigid and obscure course of life which the prophets led, their neglect of themselves, and of the things of this world, might pass with them for a kind of insatiation: and the holy exercises to which they devoted themselves, for no more than a religious frenzy. Besides this, the false prophets which they had seen in the court of Ahab, had given just offence; and by their affected gestures, and studied contorsions, (whereby they thought to recommend their crude enthusiasms), made themselves justly ridiculous and contemptible. And therefore, it is no wonder that these officers, at first sight, should censure a true, as they thought they had reason to judge of the false prophet with whom they had been acquainted; especially when we find some leading men in the tribe of Judah treating the prophets of the Lord (as in the case of Ezekiel, chap. xxiii. 30, 31. and of Jeremiah, chap. xxix. 26.) as fools and madmen; and some great names in the Heathen world, looking upon all pretenders to inspiration in no better light; according to that noted passage in Cicero; *Quid habet auctoritatis furor iste, quem divinum vocatis, ut que sapiens non videt, ea videat insanus, et is, qui humanos sensus amisit, divinos affectus sit?* De divinat. lib. ii.

† In time of peace, as well as war, it was customary to have watchmen set on high and eminent places wherever the king was, to prevent his being surprised. Thus David, at Jerusalem, was informed by the watchmen that his sons were escaped from the slaughter of Absalom, when he thought them all lost, 2 Sam. xiii. 34.; and therefore Jehoram, who had an army lying before Ramoth-Gilead, had good reason to keep a watchful eye upon every motion that came, especially from that quarter; *Patrick's and Calmet's Commentaries.*

reelite,

reelite, and perhaps (a) in the place where Naboth was stoned.

A. M.
3001, etc.
Ant. Chriſ.
100, etc.
from
1 Kings viii.
to the end
of 2 Chron.

Upon their first meeting, a few words convinced Jehoram, that Jehu had conspired against him, and was come, in an hostile manner, to avenge † the idolatry and wickedness of his mother Jezebel, whereupon he turned his chariot and fled : but Jehu soon overtook him with a swift arrow, which pierced his heart ; and, when he perceived him sinking in his chariot, he bid an officer that was by, throw him into Naboth's field, which was near at hand, † that the word of the Lord might be fulfilled.

As

(a) 1 Kings xxi. 19.

† The answer which Jehu returns to Jehoram is, — *What peace, so long as the whoredoms of thy mother Jezebel, and her witchcrafts are so many?* 2 Kings ix. 22. *i. e.* whilst her idolatries, wherewith she bewitches the people, are still continued and multiplied. And he upbraids Jehoram with his mother's sins, and not with his own, because hers were more notorious and infamous, and what, by his connivance, he had made his own ; because they were the principal reason why God did inflict, and he was come to execute these judgments ; and because he could find no odious accusations against him, except about the golden calves, which he purposely declined mentioning, because he himself intended to keep them up ; *Pool's Annotations.*

† The words which Jehu seems to quote are these, — *Surely, I have seen yesterday the blood of Naboth, and the blood of his sons, saith the Lord, and I will requite him in this place,* 2 Kings ix. 26. It is to be observed, however, that in all the history of Naboth, (which is recorded in 1 Kings xxi), we find no mention made of the death of his sons ; but it is no unusual thing for the Scripture to supply, in one place that which has been omitted in another. It is not improbable, therefore, that as Naboth was accused of high treason, all his family was involved in his ruin, and all his estate confiscated to the king's exchequer : and what seems to confirm this opinion, is, — That we find Elijah never once putting the king in mind to restore the vineyard to Naboth's children, nor the king, in the time of his repentance, ever once thinking to do it, because, in all human appearance, there were no heirs left. Notwithstanding this, Grotius, and other learned men, have observed, that these words may signify no more than the extreme poverty to which Naboth's family was reduced by the death of their father, and the confiscation of his goods : for, among the Hebrews, say they, all punishments and miseries are called *blood*, Lev. xvii. 4. ; and to take away their estate

A. M. 3001, etc.
Ant. Chriſt.
1003, &c.
from
1 Kings viii.
to the end
of 2 Chron.

As for Ahaziah, he attempted to make his eſcape, but was purſued by a party of Jehu's men, who came up with him at Gur, and, as he was ſitting in his chariot, gave him a mortal wound; ſo that, as ſoon as he reached Megiddo, he died. He was thence removed to Jeruſalem, where he was buried in the royal ſepulchre of his anceſtors, and, after a reign of leſs than two years, was ſucceeded by his mother Athaliah, who uſurped the throne.

Deſtroys Jezebel, the princes of the blood, the relations of Ahaziah, and the prieſts and temple of Baal.

Jehu, in the mean time, made the beſt of his way to Jezreel, where Jezebel, reſolving to keep up her grandeur to the laſt, * painted and dreſſed herſelf in her royal robes, and looking out of her window, upbraided him with his treachery, as he paſſed by, and reminded him of the unhappy fate of Zimri, who ſlew his king and maſter Elan: But without making her any answer, he called to ſome body to throw her out of the window, which † her own eunuchs did,

eſtate upon which they would have lived, was, in effect, to take away their blood; in which is the life of every creature. But this is a little forced; and therefore, we ſhould rather think, that Jehu is here aggravating Ahab's crime, and reckoning the ſons as ſlain with the father, becauſe, by their being deprived of him and of his eſtate, they were, in a manner, in as bad a condition as though they were dead; *Le Clerc's, Patrick's, and Calmet's Commentaries.*

* The words in the original import, *She put her eyes in paint, i. e.* ſhe uſed ſtibium or antimony pulverized, to make her eyes, and eyebrows look black and large, which, in ſeveral countries was accounted a great beauty. The uſe of paint has been of ancient date, and the art of blacking the hair, and beautifying the face, may be indulged the vanity of the female ſex; but it raiſes one's indignation to read of a Sardanapalus painting his eyes and eyebrows; of the ancient Greeks running into the ſame cuſtom; and much more of the martial Romans: but there were ſops in all nations then as well as now

Ille ſupercilium madida fuligine tinctum
Obliqua producit acu, pingitque tremantes
Attollens oculos.

Juv. Sat. ii.

† According to the cuſtom of the eaſtern nations, the buſineſs of thiſ ſort of people was to attend upon queens in their chambers, who by their great fidelity and obſequiouſneſs, gained generally the eſteem, and were admitted to the confidence of thoſe they ſerved, and from thence into places very often of great truſt and profit.

did; so that, by the fall, her † blood stained the walls of the palace, and, when she was upon the pavement, the horses trampled her under foot, and the dogs devoured her body; insomuch, that when Jehu (in † consideration of her quality) ordered some of his servants to go and bury her, they found nothing of her remaining but her skull, feet, and palms of her hands: so punctually was the prophet's prediction fulfilled concerning this wicked and idolatrous woman!

A. M.
3007, etc.
Ant. Christ.
1003, &c.
from
1 Kings viii.
to the end
of 2 Chron.

Having thus settled himself in a quiet possession of Jezreel, Jehu sent a letter to the nobles, and other great men, † who were at Samaria, and had the care of the princes

fit. It is remarked, however, of Jezebel's eunuchs, that they were far from being faithful to her, to let us see how suddenly countries are wont to change with the fortune of their masters; *Patrick's Commentary.*

† Some of the Jewish doctors look upon this as a punishment, according to the *lex talionis*; for as she had done, so she suffered. She had caused Naboth to be stoned; and now she is condemned to be stoned herself. For there were two ways of stoning, either by throwing stones at malefactors till they had knocked them down and killed them; or by throwing them down upon the stones from an high place, and so dashing them to pieces; *Patrick's Commentary.*

† She was the daughter of Eth-baal King of Tyre; the wife of Ahab, and mother of Jehoram, kings of Israel; the mother-in-law of Jehoram king of Judah; and the aunt of Ahaziah, who was likewise king of Judah; *Calmet's Commentary.*

† The words in the original, which our translation has followed, are, *Jehu wrote letters and sent to Samaria, unto the rulers of Jezreel, to the elders, and to them that brought up Ahab's children*, 2 Kings x. 1. But then the question is, How the rulers of Jezreel came to be at Samaria? Some have imagined indeed a mistake in the transcriber, and that, instead of *Jezreel*, the word should be *Israel*, which is no great variation: But why may we not suppose, that, upon hearing how Jehu had slain Jehoram, the great men of his court might take the children, and, for fear that they should fall into his hands, flee with them to Samaria, as the capital, and strongest place in the kingdom, where they might think of defending themselves against his usurpation, and (as his letters seem to import) of filling, with one of Ahab's family, the vacant throne. It was customary for princes of the blood, in those days, to be brought up in the families of the prime nobility of the nation; and therefore, whatever persons of this quality had these princes under their care, and

A. M.
3001, etc.
Ant. Christ.
1003, etc.
from
1 Kings viii.
to the end
of 2 Chron.

princes of the blood, to chuse out whom they thought the fittest to set upon the throne of Israel: but they being well aware with what intent he did this, and not unacquainted with the fate of the two kings, he had already dispatched, returned him a very submissive answer, wherein they declared themselves entirely at his devotion. This declaration he took the advantage of; so that, in his next message, he commanded them † to send him the heads of all the princes, who † were no less than seventy; and in this likewise being punctually obeyed, without any farther delay, he proceeded

saw the revolution that was like to happen, they might think it the most adviseable way to hasten with them to Samaria, as a place of the most security. Or, for this very reason, Jehoram, when he went against Ramoth-Gilead, might have sent them thither, that they might be under cover from any ill accident that might possibly happen in his war with the king of Syria; *Patrick's Commentary, and Poul's Annotations.*

† Besides the accomplishment of the divine decree, Jehu had this farther design in requesting this cruel service of the rulers and elders, and great men of the nation, *viz.* that thereby he might engage them in the same crime and conspiracy with himself. For, by prevailing with them to murder Ahab's kinsmen in this manner, he tied them to his interest so closely, that if any of the inferior people had designed to oppose his designs, they were, by this means, deprived of any man of figure and distinction to head them; and not only so, but, by this expedient, Jehu thought likewise that he might, in a great measure, justify, at least lessen the odium of his own cruel and perfidious conduct; for this is the sense of his appeal to the people, *Ye be righteous: behold, I have conspired against my master, and slew him; but who slew all these?* 2 Kings x. 9. As if he had said, "I own indeed, that I was
" a great instrument in taking off the late king; but am I more
" culpable than are the friends, the counsellors, the officers of
" Ahab? I pretend not to conceal my fault; but the approbation which the principal men of the nation have given it, in
" taking up arms against the house of Ahab, and the wonderful
" success that has attended this enterprise of mine, are not these
" a certain proof that God has raised me up to execute his decree in this respect? And ought you not to acknowledge, in
" this case, the interposition of his hand?" *Galmet's Commentary.*

† The sacred historian takes care to repeat the number of these princes of the blood in two separate places, (2 Kings x. 1. and

proceeded to extirpate every one that remained of Ahab's family, the great men of his court, and all his friends. For, in his way to Samaria, meeting with some nephews, and other relations of Ahaziah, who, † knowing nothing of these transactions, were going to pay a visit to the court at Samaria, he ordered these likewise (which in all amounted to the number of forty-two) to be slain; and so, (to give a better face to what he did), taking † Jonadab the son of Rechab, a man of great strictness and sobriety of life, into the chariot with him, he proceeded in his journey to Samaria.

A. M.
3001, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1003, etc.
from
1 Kings viii.
to the end
of 2 Chron.

As

and 6.) on purpose to shew the vile spirit of these great men, who could destroy so many royal persons, to whom they were governours, and to whom they owed a just protection and defence: and therefore, it was no more than they deserved, if, when Jehu *slaw all that remained of the house of Ahab, and all his great men, till he left none*, he included in that number (as some imagine) these base, perfidious time-servers; *Patrick's Comment.*

† Jehu must certainly have made wonderful expedition and secrecy in what he did, to have prevented the report (which generally spreads very fast) of what had passed at Jezreel. Two kings and a queen killed, the whole family of Ahab extinct, and a general change and revolution in the state; and yet not a word of this known at Jerusalem, (which was not quite fourscore miles distant from Jezreel), even though Ahaziah the king of Judah, was one of the princes that was slain; *Calmet's Commentary.*

† Several learned men are of opinion, that this Jonadab was not the person who gave the precepts mentioned in Jeremiah, chap. xxxv. to his children, but another of that name, who lived in the days of Jeremiah: for it is not likely, they think, that a man addicted to such a quiet and retired life as he instituted, would have come to meet Jehu; and therefore they rather imagine, that it was some military person of great note and esteem among the populace, whose interest might do Jehu great service, and whose advice in many things he afterwards followed. But why might not Jonadab (how well soever he might love retirement) come, upon this occasion, to congratulate Jehu's zeal against idolatry, and to advise and encourage him to proceed in fulfilling the will of God revealed to him? And the reason is obvious why Jehu might be glad of the countenance and company of such a man, whose known piety would gain him more reverence and respect, than the attendance of any great captain could procure him. But, though Jonadab the son of Rechab

A. M.
3001, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1003, &c.
from
1 Kings viii.
to the end
of 2 Chron.

As soon as he was come to Samaria, he first destroyed all that were left of the house of Ahab in that city, and then, pretending that he designed to offer an uncommon sacrifice

is allowed to be a good man, yet it does not therefore follow, that he revived the ancient rules of the Rechabites (as some are apt to think) upon a religious account, but purely as a matter of policy. The story is this: the Rechabites were of the race of Hobab, or Jethro the Kenite, priest of Midian, and father-in-law to Moses, 1 Chron. ii. 55.; so that the Kenites were Midianites, and the Midianites were dwellers in tents from the beginning; for in this manner Abraham lived while he sojourned in the land of Canaan; and, in imitation of him, the Midianites, who were of his posterity, might do the same. Now, when the children of Hobab, who were all Kenites, were invited by Moses to go along with the people of God into Canaan, they might retain this pastoral manner of life, not only as a badge of the nation from whence they were descended, but as a means likewise to make their habitation more quiet and secure, (in a land where they were strangers), both from the envy of the Jews at home, and the danger of enemies abroad. For, having neither houses nor lands, but tents and cattle only, which they could move upon occasion from place to place, they could not be so subject to hostile invasions. But as, in length of time, these Kenites were tempted, by the more pleasant living of the Israelites, to think of changing this custom of their ancestors, this Jonadab, the son of Rechab, a famous Kenite, and of much esteem and authority among them, took occasion to renew it again, and to bind his posterity to observe it; for which end he forbade the drinking of wine, lest the desire of so delicious a liquor might tempt them to plant vineyards, and build houses, as the Jews did. What authority he had to enforce these arbitrary injunctions, we cannot learn. It is plain, that he laid his posterity under no curse in case of disobedience; on the contrary, we find, that the prophet Jeremiah, chap. xxxv. 2. &c. was directed by God to bring them to an apartment in the temple, to set wine before them, and invite them to drink; which would have been an unworthy action, if they had been under an indispensable obligation of abstaining from it: and, on the other hand, the Rechabites refused it, not because their father laid them under any curse if they disobeyed him, but because he promised, that *they should live many days in the land wherein they were strangers*, if they obeyed his voice, Jer. xxxv. 7.; which promise, being also made to these who *boasted their parents*, Exod. xx. 12. might the more incline them to that strict obedience, for which they are so highly commended

by

fice unto Baal, he issued out a proclamation, commanding all his priests, prophets, and worshippers, upon pain of death, to be present at this great solemnity. They all came; and when they, and they only, (for care was taken, that none of the servants of the Lord should be among them), were met together in Baal's temple, and the * priests in their proper vestments, he commanded his guards to go in, and fall upon them, and kill them all. After this, they ran to the temple of Baal, brake down his image, and the † other images of the like nature, and burnt them publicly. They demolished the temple quite, laid it flat with the ground; and, that the place whereon it stood might in all future ages be looked upon as despicable, they made it a * common jakes.

A. M.
3001, etc.
Ant. Christ.
1003, &c.
from
1 Kings viii.
to the end
of 2 Chron.

Thus

by God in the place above cited. Upon the whole, therefore, it appears, that Jonadab only renewed what his ancestors had observed long before he was born; and that his authority prevailed among his brethren to continue this form of abstinence for two hundred years after he was dead, not as a matter of religion, but as a mere civil custom; *Patrick's Commentary*; and *Bedford's Scripture-chronology*, lib. vi. c. 2.

* It was the custom of almost all idolaters to be very curious about the external pomp of their ceremonies, wherein, indeed, the chief part of their worship does consist. All the priests of Baal were clothed in fine linen, and their chief priests, no doubt, had some particular ornaments to distinguish them. Baal and Astarte were Phœnician dieties: and therefore, as Silius Italicus, in his description of the priests of Hercules, has given us an account in what manner the Phœnician priests (when in their office) were habited, we have reason from thence to suppose, that the dress of the priests of Baal were much of the same kind.

Nec discolor ulli
Ante aras cultus: velantur corpora lino,
Et Pelusiaco præfulget stamine vertex.
Discinctis mos thura dare, atque è lege parentum
Sacrificam lato vestem distinguere clavo.

† These idolaters, besides the supreme God whom they took Baal to be, worshipped several other lesser gods, whom they call *Baalim*, and whose images were placed in this temple: for it was an ancient custom, (us Servius notes), after the priest had invoked the particular god for whom the sacrifice was intended, to address himself to all the other gods, lest any of them should think themselves neglected; *Patrick's Commentary*.

* The histories of the east furnish us with several examples of princes

A. M. Thus entirely did Jehu destroy the family of Ahab, and
 3001, &c. the worship of Baal in the kingdom of Israel; for which
 Ant. Christ. he was so far approved and rewarded by God, that he en-
 1003, &c. tailed the crown upon his family to the fourth generation :
 from but policy prevailed against religion, and persuaded him to
 1 Kings viii. continue the old idolatry, even when he had destroyed the
 to the end. new. The calves which Jeroboam had set up, he would not
 of 2 Chron. part with : and therefore God, to make him sensible of his
 His idolatry displeasure, stirred up Hazael king of Syria to invade his
 and death. country ; who, having taken several of his frontier towns,
 did thereby open a way to make great ravages in several
 other places of his kingdom, especially in the country be-
 yond Jordan, where the tribes of Manasseh, Gad, and
 Reuben suffered much. In a word, we may say of Jehu,
 that, as his conduct was of a mixed nature, God rewarded
 his obedience, but punished his idolatry ; who, after he
 had reigned eight and twenty years, died, and was buried
 in Samaria, and (without any opposition) was succeeded by
 his son Jehoahaz.

Jehoahaz
 his son suc-
 ceeds ; his
 idolatry,
 unhappy
 reign, and
 death.

Jehoahaz, to preserve the crown of Israel from uniting
 with that of Judah, pursued the same method that his pre-
 decessors had done, in relation to the political worship of
 the golden calves ; so that, during his whole reign, God
 sorely afflicted both him and his people, by delivering him
 into the hands of Hazael, and his son Benhadad, the third
 Syrian king of that name, who reduced him to that low
 ebb, that he had no more than fifty horsemen, ten cha-
 riots, and ten thousand foot soldiers left. At length, thro'
 the many defeats he had received, and the grievous oppres-
 sion under which he laboured, grown weary of life as well
 as government, after a very troublesome reign of seventeen
 years, he died, and was succeeded by his son Joash, a
 prince more fortunate, and not altogether so irreligious as
 his father. But, to inquire a little now into the affairs of
 the kingdom of Judah.

princes inflicting this kind of punishment upon such as were found
 guilty of high-treason, or of contravening the king's commands.
 To this the decree which Darius made in favour of the Jews
 plainly alludes : *Whoever shall alter this word, let timber be pul-
 led down from his house, and, being set up, let him be hanged there-
 on ; and let his house be made a dunghill*, Ezra vi. 11. And, to
 the same purpose, is that threat of Nebuchadnezzar to the ma-
 gicians, &c. *If ye will not make known unto me the dreams, with
 the interpretation thereof, ye shall be cut in pieces, and your houses
 shall be made a dunghill*, Dan. ii. 5.

When

When Athalia, the daughter of Ahab, and wife to Jehoram king of Judah, understood that Jehu had slain her son Ahaziah, being a very ambitious, bloody-minded woman, and resolving to take the government upon herself, † she destroyed all the children that Jehoram had by another wife, and all their offspring, that so she might ascend the throne without any opposition. Jehoshaba, the sister of Ahaziah by the father's side, but not by the mother's, was, at this time, married to Jehoiada, the high priest; and while Athaliah's executioners were murdering the rest, she stole away † Joash, the son of Ahaziah, and kept him, A. M. 3001, &c. Ant. Christ. 1003, &c, from 1 Kings viii. to the end of 2 Chron. Athaliah's usurpation of the crown of Judah, and her miserable end. and

† The consideration of the fate that attended these royal families, is enough to make any one bless Providence, for having been born of a meaner parentage. The whole offspring of Jeroboam, Baasha, and Ahab, kings of Israel, was cut off for their idolatry, so that there was not one left; and the kings of Judah, having contracted an affinity with the house of Ahab, and being by them seduced into the same crime, were so destroyed by three successive massacres, that there was but one left. For, first, Jehoram slew all his brethren; then Jehu slew all his brother's children; and now Athaliah destroys all the rest that her executioners could meet with. Enraged she was to see Ahab's family cut off; and therefore she resolved to do as much by the house of David. As she was one of Ahab's family, she had reason to apprehend that Jehu, who had a commission to extirpate all, would not be long before he called upon her: Her only way, therefore, to secure herself against him, was to usurp the throne; but this, she knew, she could not do without destroying all the royal progeny, who were no wellwishers to the worship of Baal, which she had abetted, and was resolved to maintain; *Pool's Annotations; Patrick's Commentary; and Bedford's Scriptura-chronology, lib. vi. c. 2.*

† Some interpreters are of opinion, that Joash was not the real son of Ahaziah, (in whom the race of Solomon, in a direct line, was extinct), but properly the son of Nathan, and only called Ahaziah's, because he succeeded him in the throne: For had he been Ahaziah's true son, and Athaliah's grandson, why might not she have declared him king, and, during his minority at least, taken the administration into her own hands? But therefore she exercised her cruelty, as they say, in destroying the princes related to Ahaziah, because she was unwilling to have the kingdom go into another branch of David's family. But notwithstanding these reasons, and the authority of those who produce them, in the second books both of Kings and Chronicles, we find this Joash so frequently called the

A. M.
3001, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1003, &c.
from
1 Kings viii.
to the end
of 2 Chron.

and his nurse, concealed * in an apartment of the temple, † for the space of six years.

In the seventh year, his uncle Jehoiada, being determined to place him upon the throne of his ancestors, and to this purpose having engaged the priests and Levites, and the leading men in all the parts of the kingdom, in his interest, in a public assembly produced him, and made them take an oath of secrecy and fidelity to him. Then putting himself in a proper posture of defence, † he distributed

son of Ahaziah; the king's son, &c. without any manner of restriction, that we cannot be persuaded to look out for any other father for him,

* Josephus relates this young king's escape and concealment thus:—"Jehoshabath, the sister of Ahaziah, and wife to Jehoiada the high-priest, coming into the palace, found a male child, of about a year old, whose name was Joash, among the dead bodies of the sons of Ahaziah; whom the nurse, it seems, had there laid on purpose to save its life: She therefore conveyed it away to her own lodgings, and thence to the temple, where she took care of it, through the whole six years of Athaliah's reign, without making any one privy to the secret, except her own husband;" who, upon this extraordinary occasion, might dispense with the law, or rather custom, which allowed none but the priests; who officiated, to lodge in the apartments of the temple; *Jewish Antiq. lib. ix. c. 7.*; and *Calmet's Commentary*.

† It is very likely, that Athaliah might imagine that she had slain all, and so think herself secure; or, if she suspected that this one was preserved, she might not think it advisable to make any strict search, least thereby she should alarm the people with the notion, that there was still a son of David's family left, which might be a means to make them uneasy under her government, and desirous of a change: Besides that she might have the vanity to think of being able, in a short time, to secure the crown to herself, in such a manner as that she should not need to fear such a weak competitor; *Pool's Annotations*.

† The captains and other officers, who were admitted to the knowledge of Jehoiada's design, came into the temple unarmed, for fear of giving suspicion: But as David had erected a kind of sacred armoury in one of the apartments of the temple, wherein the weapons, and other trophies which he, and several other generals, had gained from their enemies, and as monuments of their victories, had dedicated them to the Lord, were deposited, Jehoiada took care, upon this occasion, to have this magazine of military provisions opened, so that there was no want of any sort of arms; *Joseph. Antiq. lib. ix. c. 7.*

the

the arms which David had reposit in the temple, among his people, whom he divided into three bodies, one to guard the person of the king, and the other two to secure the gates of the temple. that none might be permitted to enter, (except the priests and Levites, who were to officiate), upon pain of death. After this he brought out the young prince, set the crown on his head, † put the book of the law into his hand, and because his right had been interrupted, anointed him, and with the sound of the trumpet, proclaimed him, which was seconded with the joyful shouts and acclamations of the people.

A. M.
3001, etc.
Ant. Chris.
1003, etc.
from
1 Kings viii.
to the end
of 2 Chron

Athaliah, hearing the noise, made all the haste she could to the temple; but when, to her great surprise, she saw the young king on a throne, which was erected † in an eminent place, and the people and great

† Those who think that the word *Eduth*, which we translate *testimony*, comes from the Hebrew root *Adah*, which signifies, *to clothe, put on, or adorn*, suppose that it was some royal ornament, which the high-priest put upon the king as a mark of regal dignity, at the same time that he placed a crown upon his head; and this ornament they conceive to have been a bracelet, because in the story of the Amalekite, we read, that he brought to David the bracelet that was upon Saul's arm, as well as the crown that was upon his head. But since, in the 17th chapter of Deuteronomy, which treats expressly of the election and duty of a king, there is this injunction given, — *That he should write him a copy of the law in a book, out of that which is before the priests, the Levites.* ver. 18. others (with more probability) have thought, that, at his coronation, a roll, containing a copy of the law, which is frequently called, a testimony, as being a witness of God's will, and mens duty), was put in his hands, which he held, for that time, in the way of a sceptre or truncheon; though others will have it, that when Jehoiada crowned Joash, he laid the book of the law upon his head, to which custom holy Job (chap. xxxi. 35, 36.) as they think, seems to allude, when he wishes, *O that mine adversary had written a book! Surely I would take it upon my shoulder, and bind it as a crown to me?* For the manner among the orientals, when they received a letter from any person they highly respected, was to hold it up to their heads, before they opened it; *Patrick's* and *Calmiet's Commentaries*; and *Pool's Annotations*.

† The words in the text are, — — *And when she looked, behold the king stood by a pillar, as the manner was,* 2 Kings xi. 14. Now there were two famous pillars, which Solo-

A. M.
3001, etc.
Ant. Christ.
1003, etc.
from
1 Kings viii.
to the end.
of 2 Chron.

great men about him rejoicing, she rent her cloaths, and cried out, Treason! But Jehoiada soon silenced her: For having commanded the guards to seize, and carry her out of the temple, and to put all to the sword who should pretend to rescue or assist her, they immediately executed their orders; and taking her out of the sacred ground, brought her, without any opposition, to the stable-gate belonging to the palace, and there slew her.

Joash being thus seated on the throne, by the high-priest's directions, made a covenant with the people, that they should restore the true worship of God, continue in it, and root out all idolatry; and then he made another between himself and the people, viz. that he should govern according to law, and that they should be mindful to obey him. When this was done, the multitude rose, destroyed the temple, demolished the altar, broke down the images, and killed Matan, the priest of Baal, who was then in waiting. After this, Jehoiada abolished some corruptions, which former reigns had introduced, made some reforms in the service of the temple, and then, with all the rulers, and officers, and people, conducted the king to the royal palace, and put him into a quiet possession of the kingdom of Judah.

Joash's
good reign
at first, but
his after de-
clension in-
to idolatry.

Seven years old was Joash, when he began to reign, which was in the seventh year of Jehu king of Israel; and, while he was under his uncle Jehoiada's guidance and direction, he governed the nation very well: But, when

mon erected in the porch of the temple, whereof that on the right hand was called *Jachin*, and that on the left *Boaz*, and were each of them (according to the account we have) eighteen cubits high, 1 Kings vii. 15, 21. Solomon's design, in setting up these two pillars, is generally supposed to have been, in order to represent the pillar of the cloud, and the pillar of fire, which went before the Israelites, and conducted them in the wilderness. The pillar on the right hand represented the pillar of the cloud, and that on the left the pillar of fire; and near one of these pillars, in all probability, the royal throne was erected: Unless we can suppose, that, what is here called a *pillar*, was that brazen scaffold, five cubits long; five broad, and five high, which Solomon made at first upon his dedicating the temple, but was afterwards continued for the king, upon any solemn occasion, to appear upon, and where doubtless there was a throne of state; *Calmet's Commentary*; and *Bedford's Scripture-chronology*, lib. vi. c. 2.

once that good old counsellor died, (who, in the * hundred and thirtieth year of his age, paid the last debt to nature and, in consideration of his many great services done the public, had the honour to be buried in one of the royal sepulchres), he fell into the hands of such persons as were idolaters in their hearts, and they, taking the advantage of his youth, † by their crafty management and insinuations,

A. M.
3061. etc.
Ant. Christ.
1003, &c.
from
1 Kings viii.
to the end
of 2 Chron.

* This the historian takes notice of, as a life remarkably long in those days; and yet our learned Usher has observed, that, in an age not far remote from our time, several men outlived this period. The words of Joseph Scaliger, which he quotes, are to this effect, “ Several persons we could mention, that have lived 120, 125, and 130 years, whom we knew, have seen, and well remember: But, in the year 1584, there was at Paris a miracle of an old man, who bore arms under Lewis XI. and, at the age of 140 years and upwards, had the use of his limbs and faculties entire.” But not a greater miracle was he, than our Thomas Parr, the son of John Parr of Winnington, in the county of Salop, who abode with his father as long as he lived, but, after his decease, married his first wife at the age of 80. With her he lived for the space of two and thirty years, in which time being convicted of adultery with another woman, he did public penance in the church of Alderbury, when he was 105. In his 122d year, he married his second wife, who abode with him as long as he lived: But at length he was brought up to London by the Earl of Arundel and Surrey, in the year 1635, and shown to the King of Great Britain, when he was some months more than 152 years old. Two years after this he died in Arundel-house, and might probably have lived some years longer, had he continued in his native air; *Chronol. sacra*, c. 12.

† The Jews have a fancy, that the courtiers, who, after the death of Jehoiada, got possession of Joash, flattered him with a conceit, that he himself was worthy of divine honours, who had been brought up in the house of God, a favour that was never granted to a mere man, and that the king's being pleased with this kind of flattery, provoked God to send upon him the calamities we afterwards read of; even as the angel of God smote Herod, for assuming the glory to himself, when the people, in commendation of his oration, said, *That it was the voice of a god, and not of a man*, Acts xii. 22. But this is mere fancy. If the princes of Judah wanted to obtain a toleration from the king for their idol-worship, it would have been highly absurd for them to go about to persuade him, that himself was a god, since they that have the folly to establish their own adoration, are always very jealous of the worship of any

A. M. tions, first obtained a licence for themselves to worship such
 3001, etc. idols as they should think fit, and then proceeded to de-
 Ant. Chris. lude him into the like apostacy.
 1003, etc.

from In the beginning of his reign, he was very solicitous a-
 1 Kings viii. bout the house of God, wherein he had so long,
 to the end. and so happily, been concealed; and, as it was greatly
 of 2 Chron. gone to decay, through the negligence of former princes,
 and the depredation of Athaliah's children, he took no
 small pains to settle revenues, and procure contributions
 for its reparation. † But now, by his connivance at least,
 if not by his own example, men began to forsake the tem-
 ple of the Lord, and to addict themselves to the worship of
 idols, and groves consecrated to false gods; insomuch,
 that the divine vengeance was kindled both against the king
 and people of Judah, whereof they had notice by several
 prophets; but all to no purpose. At length, the Spirit of
 God stirred up Zachariah, the son of Jehoiada the high-
 priest, to remonstrate against the general impiety; which
 he did in such strong terms, that the king was offended at
 his freedom, and, † little remembering the kindness of his
 father

other. Their making obeisance therefore to the king, denotes the
 humble posture wherein they represented their petition, that they
 might not be confined to unnecessary and troublesome jourries, in
 coming to Jerusalem to worship, but he indulged the liberty (which
 their forefathers had) of worshipping God in high places; which
 when they had once obtained, they knew they might then worship
 idols, without observation or disturbance; *Patrick's* and *Calmet's*
Commentaries; and *Pool's Annotations*.

† Jehoiada, the high-priest, is supposed to die in or near the
 three and twentieth year of King Joash's reign, so that Joash might
 be about thirty years old, when the princes of Judah seduced him to
 idolatry: And this makes it the more wonderful, what possibly could
 give occasion to such a shameful change in so advanced an age, un-
 less we can suppose, that the conduct of the priests in imbezzeling
 the money collected for the reparation of the temple, (whereof
 he complains to Jehoiada, 2 Kings xii. 7.), might curdle his tem-
 per, and give him some disgust; *Le Clerc's Commentary*; and
Howell's History, in the notes.

† This sin, besides the contempt of God's prophet, and of
 the sacred place where he was murdered, had an horrid ingra-
 titude in it, since Zachariah was the son of him to whom the
 king owed his life and kingdom, and who himself assisted his
 father

father and mother, to whom he was indebted for his own life, gave orders to destroy the son; so that a band of ruf-
fians, appointed for that purpose, fell upon him, and, in
one of the courts of the temple, stoned him to death, call-
ing upon God to avenge his cause.

And it was not long before the great avenger of all vio-
lence and wrong effectually did it: For, the very next year,
the Syrian army under Hazael passed the Jordan, and,
marching directly to Jerusalem, slew in their way all the
princes and great men that had seduced their king to idola-
try.

Joash was in no condition to make any resistance; and
therefore, to redeem himself from the miseries of a siege,
took all the rich vessels which his ancestors had devoted to
the service of God, and all the gold that was laid up in the
treasures of the temple, (besides what was found in the
royal treasury), and sent it as a present to Hazael, to pre-
vail with him to withdraw his troops. Hazael, for the pre-
sent, might withdraw them: but, † the next year, they
marched again into the territories of Judah; and though

A. M.
3001, etc.
Ant. Christ.
1003, etc.
from
1 K. 19. vs viii.
to the end
of 2 Chron.
Is forely dis-
tressed by
Hazael,
falls into a
distemper,
and dies.

father in his unction, as some think; because it is said, that *Jehoiada*
and his sons anointed him, 2 Chron. xxiii. 11. But if Jehoiada was
high priest, this son is not reckoned among the successors of Aaron,
1 Chron. vi.; and therefore, it is likely that he was a younger son
of that family; for, had he been the eldest, he would have had suf-
ficient authority, without the spirit of prophecy, to have reprov-
ed Joash for his idolatry. Ludovicus Capellus therefore thinks it pro-
bable, that his brother, the high-priest, connived at the king's apo-
stacy, and that this younger brother was inspired by God to reprove
it; which boldness Joash and his courtiers thought they might punish
with some colour, by alledging, that he was not moved to it by the
Spirit of God, but by a rash pragmatikal temper of his own, which
they incited the people to chastise; *Patrick's Commentary*.

† It is highly probable, that, besides the present of gold which
Joash sent Hazael, in order to bribe him to withdraw his army, he
had made him a promise of an annual tribute; and that, upon his re-
fusal to pay it, the Syrian army took the field the next year, and, as
the expression in the text is, *executed judgment upon Joash*, 2 Chron.
xxiv. 24. For (according to the author of the Jewish traditions up-
on the second book of Chronicles) while they killed his children be-
fore his eyes, they upbraided him with the cruel and unjust death of
Zachariah; *Calmet's Commentary*.

Hazael

A. M.
3001, etc.
Ant. Christ
1003, etc.
from
1 Kings viii.
to the end
of 2 Chron.

Amaziah
revenge his
father's
murder,
and over-
comes the
Edomites.

Hazael was not there in person, defeated the forces which Joash sent against them, made great havock in the country, entered Jerusalem, put some of the princes and rulers to the sword, and treated Joash himself with no small indignity and contempt. But this was not all; for no sooner was the Syrian army departed, but the distemper, or rather that complication of distempers, wherewith, some time before, God had afflicted Joash, grew worse and worse; so that being confined to his bed, two of his own servants, Zabad and Jehozabad, conspired against him, and † slew him; who, after a reign of forty years, was succeeded by his son Amaziah, and buried in the city of David, † but not in the royal sepulchres.

Amaziah was five and twenty years old when he began to reign, and, for some time, behaved tolerably well, tho' he followed the example of his ancestors in letting the high places stand, and in suffering the people to offer sacrifice, and burn incense there. † As soon as he found himself settled in the throne, he very justly took revenge of the two traitors that had murdered his father; but † their children he did not touch, because it was contrary to the law, that
children

† These two murderers (mongrel fellows, whose fathers were Jews, but their mothers aliens) perhaps were of his bed-chamber; and, having constant access to the king, might more easily accomplish their design: However, he was so weak and feeble, that he could make no resistance, and had fallen into that contempt and disesteem, that his guards minded not what become of him; *Patrick's Commentary.*

† Though the people could not punish wicked kings for their impieties while they lived, yet they fixed an odium upon their memory when they were dead; whereby they both preserved the sacredness of the supreme power, (as Grotius, *De jure belli et pacis*, lib. I. cap. iii. sect. 16. speaks), and kept kings, in some measure, under awe, for fear of what might befall them after their decease; *Patrick's Commentary.*

† It seems, that these two assassins continued to be men of weight and interest at court, even after they had murdered their king; for his son, we may observe from 2 Kings xiv. 8. retained them in his service for some time, nor durst he venture to execute justice upon them, until he was well settled in his authority, and had divested those of all power who were their friends and abettors; *Patrick's Commentary.*

† In this he acted like a good man, and contrary to the wicked customs of many kingdoms, where, if any one be guilty of high-treason,

children (b) should be put to death for their fathers. About four and fifty years before his accession, the Edomites had revolted, in the reign of Jehoram, from the kingdom of Judah; and therefore having a design to reduce them to their former subjection, he new-modelled and new-officered his army, and upon a general muster, found them to be no less than † three hundred thousand fighting men: But, thinking these too few for his intended expedition, he hired of the king of Israel an hundred thousand more, for whom he † paid him an hundred talents; but, by

A. M.
3001, etc.
Ant. Christ.
1003, etc.
from
1 Kings viii.
to the end
of 2 Chron.

son, not only he, but his children likewise, who are neither conscious nor partakers of any of his traiterous practices, are equally devoted to destruction, lest they (forsooth) shall form any faction against the prince, or seek revenge for their father's death; *Le Clerc's Commentary.*

(b) Deut. xxiv. 16.

† Hence some have made an observation, how much the iniquities of the people of Judah had diminished their numbers since the days of Jehoshaphat, which was a space of but eighty-two years: For this king could bring no more than three hundred thousand men into the field; whereas Jehoshaphat brought almost four times as many; *Patrick's Commentary.*

† If these be reckoned for talents of silver, (as they generally are), each talent, at an hundred and twenty-five pounds weight, and each pound weight at four pounds in value, the whole will amount to fifty thousand pounds sterling, which will be but ten shillings to each man, officers included. Very low pay! unless we suppose, that this whole sum was given to the king of Israel for the loan of so many men, and that the men were to have their pay besides; or rather that they were to have no other pay but the booty which they took from the enemy; and that this was the true reason why they were so exasperated at their dismissal, as to fall upon the cities of Judah from Samaria even unto Beth-horon, 2 Chron. xxv. 13. They went very probably first to Samaria, where they complained to their own king of the bad treatment they had received from Amaziah, and desired some reparation to be made them for the affront put upon them, and the loss of the profit which they might have made in the war; but, finding him not inclinable to make them satisfaction, they immediately fell foul upon the territories of Judah, and, from Samaria (for that is the place of their setting out) even to Beth-horon, a town not far distant from Jerusalem, ravaged the country, and did the mischief here mentioned; which they might more easily do, because the war with Edom had drained the country of

A. M.
3001, etc.
Ant. Christ.
1003, etc.
from
1 Kings viii.
o the end
of 2 Chron.

by the direction of a prophet † whom God sent to him on purpose to dissuade him from employing these auxiliaries, they were (with much ado) discharged, and himself went in person against the Edomites with none but his own men, the people of Judah. However, being thus shamefully dismissed, as they thought, they were not a little exasperated against Amaziah; and therefore, in their return home, they plundered all the towns in their way, killed no less than three thousand men, and carried away a considerable booty, to make an amends for the plunder they had promised themselves in the Edomitish war.

Amaziah, (as we said), with none but his own forces, marched against the Edomites. In the † valley of Salt he gave them battle, slew ten thousand upon the spot, and took ten thousand prisoners. From thence he marched to Selah †, the metropolis of Arabia Petræa, which he soon became master of, and from the top of the rock whereon the town stood, * threw the ten thousand he had taken prisoners headlong, so that they were all dashed to pieces.

But

all the forces that should have opposed them; *Patrick's and Calmet's Commentaries* on 2 Chron. xxv. 6, 13.

† The Jews will needs have it, that this prophet was Amos, the father of Isaiah; but their tradition is built upon a mistake, viz. that Amos the prophet was Isaiah's father.

† This valley lay towards the land of Edom, and was so called, either from the salt-springs which were therein, or from that salt that was dug up there; *Patrick's Commentary* on 2 Sam. viii. 13.

† *Selah*; in the Hebrew tongue, signifies a rock, and so exactly answers to the Greek word *Petra*, that most commentators, with very good reason, have agreed, that this *Selah* is the same with *Petra*, the metropolis of Arabia Petræa, and from whence (as some imagine) the whole country took its name; though others rather think, that, as this city had its situation on a rock, so the adjacent tract was called *Arabia Petræa* from its being overspread with such rocks, or rocky hills; *Well's Geography of the Old Testament*, vol. iii.

* That this was an ancient punishment among the Romans, we may learn from Livy, Plutarch, and several others; as Mr. Selden (*de Synedriis*, lib. i.) observes, that it was in use among other nations; but we do not find it commonly practised among the Jews. It is not in the catalogue of the punishments which Moses enacts; neither was it ever inflicted by any regular judicature; and therefore one would think, that the Edomites, either by some such like cruelty to the people of Judah, had provoked them to make a retaliation in
this

But his cruelty to the captives was not the worst thing he was guilty of in this expedition. In his return, he brought with him the idols of Edom, to which he paid adoration, and offered incense; which thing provoked the Lord so, that he sent a prophet to reprove him for his apostacy, and to threaten him with the destruction which in a short time came to pass. For, being now elated with his success against the Moabites, and resenting the affront which the Israelitish army had lately put upon him, he † sent

A. M.
3001, etc.
Ant. Chris.
1003, etc.
from
1 Kings viii.
to the end
of 2 Chron.

Amaziah
falls into
idolatry, is
vanquished
by Joash
king of Is-
rael, and
murdered
by his own
subjects.

Joash

this manner, or that they were, in their very disposition, so apt to revolt, that there could be no keeping them in subjection, without some such sad exemplary punishment as this; *Calmet's Dissert. sur les supplices*; and *Le Clerc's Com.* on 2 Chr. xxv. 12.

* Idolatry, at the best, can no ways be apologized for; but no reason can be invented, why any person should make the objects of his adoration such gods as could not deliver their own people out of the enemies hands, as the prophet very justly reproveth Amaziah, 2 Chron. xxv. 15. unless we suppose, that the images of these gods were so very beautiful, that he perfectly fell in love with them, or that he worshipped them for fear they should owe him a spite, and do him some mischief, in revenge for what he had done against the Edomites. How much more wise were the sentiments of Fabricius Maximus, upon the like occasion, who, having conquered Tarentum, and being asked what should be done with their gods? bid them leave them with the Tarentines; “for what madness is it (as he adds) “to hope for any safety from those that cannot preserve themselves?” *Patrick's Commentary*.

† Josephus, in his account of this transaction, tells us, that Amaziah wrote an imperious letter to the king of Israel, “commanding him and his people to pay the same allegiance to him that they had formerly paid to his ancestors David and Solomon; or, in case of their refusal, to expect a decision of the matter by the sword.” Others think, that he intended no war by this message, but only a trial of military skill and prowess, or a civil kind of interview between his men and those of Israel; for had he proposed to act in a hostile manner, he would have assaulted them on a sudden, and not given them this warning to stand upon their defence. The words of the message are, *Come let us look one another in the face*, 2 Kings xiv. 8. Much of the same kind with what Abner said to Joab. *Let the young men now arise, and play before us*, 2 Sam. ii. 14. But how polite soever the expressions may be, in both cases they had in them the formality of a challenge, as both the king

A. M. Joash king of Israel a challenge, to meet and engage him
 3001, &c. in a pitched battle.
 Ant. Christ.
 1003, &c. Joash (as it deserved) * received the message with con-
 from tempt : But, when he found that Amaziah was hereby but
 1 Kings viii. the more irritated, and persisted in his purpose of fight-
 to the end ing, he met him, and gave him such a reception, that he
 of 2 Chron. routed his army, took him prisoner, and carried him * to
 his

and general (who were not acquainted with military language) did certainly understand them. So that the truth of the matter seems to be this : — Amaziah being encouraged by his late victory, determined to be revenged for the slaughter of his ancestors by Jehu, 2 Kings ix. and for the late spoil which the Israelites had made in his country; and thereupon resolving to have satisfaction, (but in a fair and honourable way), he sent them this open declaration of war, but conceived in as mild terms as any thing of that harsh nature could be; *Calmet's* and *Patrick's Commentaries*.

* It was a custom among the oriental people to deliver their sentiments in parables, in which they made a great part of their wisdom to consist : And, considering the circumstances of the person he addressed to, who was a petty prince, flushed with a little good success, and thereupon impatient to enlarge his kingdom, no similitude could be better adapted than that of a thistle, a low contemptible shrub, but upon its having drawn blood of some traveller, growing proud, and affecting an equality with the cedar, (a tall stately tree that is the pride and ornament of the wood), till, in the midst of all its arrogance and presumption, it is unhappily trodden down by the beasts of the forests, 2 Kings xiv. 9. which Joash intimates would be Amaziah's fate, if he continued to provoke a prince of his superior power and strength; *Le Clerc's*, *Calmet's*, and *Patrick's Com.*

* Josephus relates the defeat and captivity of Amaziah after this manner : — “ No sooner were his men advanced within
 “ fight of the enemy, but they were instantly struck with such
 “ a panic terror, and consternation, that they turned their
 “ backs, without striking a blow; and, flying several ways,
 “ left Amaziah Prisoner in the hands of his enemies, who re-
 “ fused to give him quarter upon any other terms, than that
 “ the citizens of Jerusalem should set open their gates, and re-
 “ ceive him and his victorious army into the town; which,
 “ between the pinch of necessity, and the love of life, they
 “ were prevailed upon to do: So that Joash entered the
 “ town in his triumphal chariot, through a breach of three
 hundred

his own city of Jerusalem; where he entered in triumph, plundered the temple and palace of all that was valuable, laid a tax upon the land, carried off hostages † for the security of the payment; and that, in case of any failure in this respect, the city might lie open to his invasions, he broke down all the fortifications of the wall, from the gate of Ephraim to the corner-gate, about four hundred cubits in length, and so † returned to Samaria.

A. M.
3001, etc.
Ant. Christ.
1003, etc.
from
1 Kings viii.
to the end
of 2 Chron. †

After this shameful defeat, Amaziah lived above fifteen years; but we read of nothing remarkable concerning him, save that, persisting still in his idolatry, he continued under God's displeasure, and at length fell under the contempt of his subjects; insomuch that some of † the inhabitants of Jerusalem formed a conspiracy against his life, which he, having some intelligence of, endeavoured to escape by flying to Lachish, (a town on the frontiers of the

“ hundred cubits of the wall (that he had caused to be made) “ with his prisoner Amaziah marching before him;” *Jewish Antiq. lib. ix. c. 10.*

† These hostages were, in all probability, the great men's sons of the city, whom Joash took along with them, as a security that the kingdom of Judah should give him no farther molestation.

† He never intended to make a thorough conquest of the kingdom, nor did he leave a garrison in Jerusalem; but contenting himself with what spoil he could get, he made all convenient haste home, because he had work enough at this time upon his hands, to defend his territories against the daily invasions of the Syrians; *Patrick's Commentary.*

† What provoked the people of Jerusalem more than any other part of the nation, against their king, was, their seeing their city spoiled of its best ornaments, exposed to reproach, upon account of the great breach that was made in their wall, and several of their children carried away as hostages for their good behaviour; all which they imputed to their king's mal-administration. Whereupon they entered into a conspiracy against him, which makes some commentators say, that he lived in a state of exile at Lachish, the space of twelve years, not daring to continue long in Jerusalem after the defeat which Joash had given him. But our learned Usher has placed this conspiracy in the last year of Amaziah's reign, as Jacobus Capellus (in his *Historia sacra et exotica*) supposes, that it was set on foot by the great men of Jerusalem, upon the specious pretence of being guardians to the young prince, and taking better care of him than his father was likely to do; *Patrick's and Calmet's Commentaries.*

A. M.
3001, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1003, &c.
from
2 Kings viii.
to the end
of 2 Chron.

Philistines); but all in vain: For the conspirators sent after him, and had him there privately murdered: which, when his friends understood, they brought his corpse (without any state or formality) to Jerusalem, where he was buried among his ancestors, and, after a reign of nine and twenty years, was succeeded by his son Azariah, who, in the book of Chronicles, is called *Uzziah*. But to turn our thoughts now to the kingdom of Israel.

Elisha's
death, his
advice to
Jehoash
king of Is-
rael, and
reviving the
dead man
who touch-
ed his
bones.

In the beginning of the reign of Jehoash, king of Israel, (which was in the † thirty-seventh year of Joash king of Judah), the prophet Elisha fell sick of a disease, whereof he died. The king of Israel, upon this occasion, came to visit him; and having much † lamented the loss which all Israel would have by his death, he received his blessing, and dying counsel to wage war against the Syrians with all courage and bravery; giving him assurance, and, * by the

† The synarchies, or joint reigns of father and son, in these times, have rendered the chronology a little difficult, as it is in this case: For, in 2 Kings xiii. 1. it is said, that Jehoahaz king of Israel began to reign in the twenty-third of Joash king of Judah, and reigned seventeen years: From whence it follows, that Jehoahash began to reign, not in the thirty seventh, but in the thirty-ninth or fortieth year of Joash king of Judah: But by this it only appears, that he reigned three of these years in conjunction with his father; *Howell's History, in the notes*; and *Patrick's Commentary*.

† His words are, — *My father! my father! the chariots of Israel, and the horsemen thereof*, 2 Kings xiii. 14.; which are the very same that Elisha used concerning his master Elijah, when he was taken up into heaven, 2 Kings ii. 12. signifying the great authority he had maintained among them, included in the word *father*, and the many glorious victories which he had obtained for them, by the efficacy of his counsels and prayers; *Patrick's Commentary*.

* This was a symbolical action, whereby the prophet intended to represent the victory, which he had promised the king of Israel against the Syrians more fully and plainly to him. His shooting the first arrow eastward, or to that part of the country which the Syrians had taken from his ancestors, was a declaration of war against them for so doing; and his striking the other arrows against the ground was an indication how many victories he was to obtain; but his stopping his hand too soon, denoted the imperfection of his conquests, which did not please the prophet so well; and for what reason, we shall see in the course of the objections; *Le Clerc's Commentary*.

emblem

emblem of a bow and arrows, making him sensible of the several victories which God had decreed that he should obtain.

A. M.
3001, etc.
Ant. Christ.
1003, &c.
from
1 Kings viii.
to the end
of 2 Chron.

This was the last prediction of Elisha, that we read of (for soon after this he died); but it was not the last miracle that we find he did: For, sometime after his interment, a company of Israelites, as they were going to bury a dead person, perceiving a band of Moabites † making towards them, * put the corpse for haste into Elisha's

† These Moabites were not such a gang of robbers as sometimes infest our roads, but a regular body of men, well appointed, and under proper officers, to the number of a small army, who made incursions into the territories of Judah and Israel, generally at the beginning of the year, which is the season proper for armies to take the field; and therefore some have observed that the month of Nisan, which, with the Jews, is the first in their year; had its name from *Nisim*, which signifies *the engines of war*, which were usually set up in that month; in like manner, as the month, which we call *March*, (and, in part, answers to the Jewish *Nisan*), had its name among the Romans from Mars, their god of war; because most nations, at that time, began their military expeditions; *Patrik's* and *Calmet's Commentaries*.

* The common places of burying among the Hebrews, were in the fields, in caverns dug into a rock, with niches for the corpses to be placed in, and, at the entrance of the sepulchre, there was an hewn stone, which might be removed or replaced without any damage to the tomb. The Jews (as Josephus informs us) gave Elisha a pompous and honourable interment, answerable to the dignity and merit of so great a prophet; but he does not tell us where the place of his sepulchre was. Hereupon some have imagined, that he was carried to Abelmeholah, the place of his nativity, to be there interred among his ancestors: Others think, that he was at first buried on mount Carmel, a favourite place of his, and afterwards removed to Samaria: Others again say, that he was buried at Nineveh; and, to this very day, the inhabitants show his monument at Mosul, which was built, as they say, upon the very same spot where old Nineveh stood. But the most prevailing opinion, founded upon a constant tradition, is, that he was buried somewhere in the neighbourhood of Samaria, because, there, in all appearance, he died. The tomb, however, that is usually shown for his in that city, can be nothing more than the repositories of his remains, since his original burying-place was certainly at some distance from it; *Jewish Antiq. lib. ix. c. 9.*

tomb,

A. M.
3001, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1003, &c.
from
1 Kings viii.
to the end
of 2 Chron.
Jehoash's
victories o-
ver Benha-
dad king of
Syria, and
his death.

tomb, which, as soon as it had touched his body, † immediately revived, so that the man stood upon his feet, and went home (no doubt) with the company. This miracle, which was a divine confirmation of the truth of all Elisha's prophecies, could not fail of being a powerful means to encourage Jehoash in his engaging in war with the Syrians. Nor was his success less than the prediction; for, † in three pitched battles he vanquished Benhadad, (his father Hazael being then dead), recovered all the cities that had been taken from his father Jehoahaz, and reunited them to the kingdom of Israel. After this he lived quiet from all enemies, until Joash king of Judah, gave him the small disturbance we have spoken of: But, after the victory which he gained over him, we hear no more of his

† Josephus, in his account of this transaction, varies from the sacred history: For, “ it happened, after Elisha's burial, “ (says he), that a traveller was killed upon the way by some “ thieves, and his body thrown into Elisha's monument, which, “ upon the bare touch of the prophet's corpse, instantly re- “ vived.” The Jewish doctors, who love to improve upon every miracle, tell us, that this person, (whom they pretend to call Sellum) after he was revived, did presently die again, because he was a wicked man, and did not deserve to live long; never considering that his hasty death afterwards was the ready way to impair the credit of the miracle, and make it indeed of no effect. However this may be, it is certain, that by this miracle, (as we find it related in Scripture), God did the highest honour to his prophet, and confirmed the truth of what he had promised to the king of Israel, as well as the certainty of a future life; in which sense some part of the character, which the author of Ecclesiasticus, chap. xlviii. 12. gives him, may not improperly be understood: *Elisba was filled with Elijah's spirit, whilst he was not moved with the presence of any prince, neither could any bring him into subjection: No word could overcome him; and, after his death, his body prophesied: He did wonders in his life, and at his death were his works marvellous;* Jewish Antq. lib. ix. c. 9. and Calmet's Comment.

† We have no particulars of the war between Jehoash and the Syrians, nor can we tell where these three battles were fought; but the success of them was so great, that the king of Israel not only retook all the places that had been lost in his own dominions, but repulsed the enemy into their own country, and there obtained a signal victory over them; *Patrick's Comment.*

appearing

appearing in the field, and may therefore conclude, that (after a reign of sixteen years) he died in peace, and was succeeded in his throne by his son Jeroboam. A. M. 3001, etc.
Ant. Christ. 1003, etc.

In the fifteenth year of Amaziah king of Judah, this Jeroboam, the second of that name, began to reign over Israel, and by † the encouragement which the prophet Jonah gave him, proved successful in many military achievements. He recovered a large territory, which several kings had taken from his predecessors, even all the country from Libanus, on the north, to the Lake Asphaltites, on the south; but especially on the east of Jordan, whereby he enlarged those conquests which his father Joash had made: And whereas Hamath and Damascus had, in the days of David and Solomon, been tributaries to the kings of Judah, but had now revolted from Israel, he conquered them again, and † made them pay homage to him, as they had formerly done to his predecessors. So that, after a long reign of † one and forty years, wherein from 1 Kings viii. to the end of 2 Chron.
Jeroboam the Second, greatly enlarges the kingdom of Israel, and after him there ensues an inter-regnum.

† The only mention we have of this prophet (whom the Jews will have to be the son of the widow of Zarephtha whom Elijah raised from the dead, but without any foundation of reason) is in this passage, and the account of his famous mission to Nineveh. What the prophecies were, whereby he encouraged Jeroboam to proclaim war against the king of Syria, we have no where recorded; but as we have not every thing which the prophets did write, so several prophets, we must know, did not commit their predictions to writing. From this place, however, we may observe, That God was very merciful to the Israelites, (though they were certainly a very wicked people), in continuing a race of prophets among them, even after Elisha was dead; *Patrick's Commentary.*

† Some are of opinion, that when Jeroboam reconquered these two chief cities of Syria, he restored them to the kingdom of Judah, because they belonged to it of right, and reserved to himself only a small tribute to be paid him by way of acknowledgment. This is what the original Hebrew, as well as the Chaldee and Septuagint versions seems to favour: But the Syriac and Arabic translators have omitted the word *Judah*, and may therefore be supposed to think, (as several others do), that Jeroboam kept to himself all those places which he had recovered at his own hazard and expence: *Calmet's Comment.*

† This was much longer than any of the kings of Israel had reigned: For even Jehu himself, tho' his reign was longer than that of any who went before him, reigned but twenty-eight years; God having on purpose prolonged this prince's reign, because

A. M.
3001, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1003, etc.
from
1 Kings viii.
to the end
of 2 Chron.
The book
of Jonah,
and its con-
tents,

his arms were all along successful, he † died in much honour and renown, and was buried with his ancestors; but (whether it was through wars abroad, or through discord and dissention at home) he left the government in such confusion, that, after his decease, there was an interregnum for the space of two and twenty years.

During the time of this interregnum, Jonah * the son of Amittai, who had prophesied before, in the time of Jeroboam, was now sent upon another errand. His commission was expressly to Nineveh, whither he was to go, and to exhort the inhabitants to repentance, because the cry

because he was not minded to blot out the name of Israel from under heaven, but to save them by his hand; 2 Kings xiv. 27.

† The prophet Amos, who lived in the reign of this prince, was accused by Amaziah, the priest of Bethel, for prophesying that *Jeroboam should die by the sword*; but Amos never made any such prediction. It was a false accusation which this idolatrous priest sent against him, because he was desirous to have him removed out of the way; Amos vii. 10, &c.

* It is a very common opinion among the Jews, (as we said) that Jonah was the widow of Zarephtha's son; and this opinion they found upon the words of the mother, when she received her son alive from the prophet's hand: *By this I know, that the word of the Lord in thy mouth is truth*, 1 Kings xvii. 24. for therefore, say they, was the child called the son of *Amit-tai*, because *Amit-tai* signifies *truth*: A weak reason, God wot! and such as is plainly repugnant to the testimony of Scripture. For this we know for certain, that Jonah lived in the reigns of Joash, and Jeroboam the Second, kings of Israel; and therefore could not be the widow of Zarephtha's son, since the former of these two princes did not begin to reign till sixty years after the translation of Elijah. Others pretend, that he was son to the Shunamite woman, whom the prophet Elisha raised from the dead; but Shunam and Gath-hepher (where we are certain Jonah was born) were two quite different places, the former in the tribe of Issachar, the other in that of Zebulun; and therefore, we may conclude, that Amittai was the proper name of Jonah's father, who lived in a little canton of the tribe of Zebulun, called *Hepher*, or *Hophir*, wherein was the town of Gath, which is generally believed to be the same with Jotapato, so famous for the siege which Josephus, the Jewish historian, there maintained against the Roman army, a little before the destruction of Jerusalem; *Calmet's Preface sur Jonas, and his Dictionary*, under the word.

of their sins had reached heaven. But instead of obeying the divine command, the sacred history informs us, that he bent his course another way, and, intending to retire to Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, embarked at Joppa *, a sea-port on the Mediterranean; that as soon as he had well got to sea, an unaccountable storm arose, which gave the mariners a suspicion, that some great malefactor was got on board, upon whose account the heavens seemed so very angry †; that

A. M.
3001, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1003, &c.
from
1 Kings viii.
to the end
of 2 Chron.

* Joppa is a sea-port town in Palestine, upon the Mediterranean, and was formerly the only port which the Jews had upon that coast, whither all the materials that were sent from Tyre, towards the building of Solomon's temple, were brought, and landed. The town itself is very ancient; for profane authors reckon it was built before the flood, and derive the name of it from Joppa, the daughter of Elolas, and the wife of Cepheus, who was the founder of it. Others are rather inclined to believe, that it was built by Japhet, and from him had the name of *Japho*, which was afterwards moulded into Joppa, but is now generally called *Jaffa*, which comes nearer to the first appellation. The town is situated in a fine plain, between Jamnia to the south; Cæsarea of Palestine, to the north; and Rama, or Ramula, to the east; but at present, is in a poor and mean condition; nor is its port by any means good, by reason of the rocks which project into the sea. The chief thing for which this place was famous, in ancient Pagan history, is the exposition of Andromeda the daughter of Cepheus, king of Egypt, who, for her mother's pride, was bound to a rock, in order to be devoured by a sea-monster, but was delivered by the valour and bravery of Perseus, who afterwards married her: For, in the times of Mela and Pliny, there were some marks remaining (as they themselves testify, *nempe*, Mela, lib. i. c. 11.; Pliny, lib. v. c. 13.; Joseph. De bello Jud. lib. iii. c. 15.) of the chains wherewith this royal virgin was bound to the rock which projects into the sea. But all this is mere fiction, first founded upon the adventure of Jonah, who set sail from this port, and then improved with the accession of some particular circumstances; *Calmet's Commentary sur Jonas* c. i. v. 3.

† The Jewish doctors, who are great lovers of prodigies, are not even satisfied with what they meet with in this history of Jonah, but have over and above added, that as soon as the ship wherein he was embarked, was under sail, it, all on a sudden, stood stock still, so that it could be made to move neither backward nor forward, notwithstanding all the pains that the mariners took in rowing: But others, with more probability, say, that while all the rest

A. M.
3001, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1003, &c.
from
1 Kings viii.
to the end
of 2 Chron.

that therefore calling all the people together, they made them cast lots, in order to know who this guilty person was; that when the lot fell upon Jonah, he freely owned that he was a Jew, who worshipped the God of heaven, and not only a Jew, but a prophet likewise, who had been ordered to go to Nineveh, but was now endeavouring to flee from the divine presence; that since he found it was impossible to do that, and every one's life, upon his account, was in such imminent danger, he wished them to throw him overboard, as the only way to appease the storm; that with some reluctance, † the seamen did it, whereupon there immediately ensued a calm, which struck the people with such devotion, that they offered a sacrifice to the Lord, and made their vows; that in the mean while, God had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah, in whose belly he continued for three days and three nights, and then, upon his supplications to heaven, was thrown out upon the shore; that being thus wonderfully delivered, he disputed the divine command no longer, but made the best of his way to Nineveh, which, at that time, was a very large city, and having got into the heart of it, delivered his message, viz. that within forty days that city should be destroyed, with great boldness and intrepidity; that the people of Nineveh, believing this message to be sent from

of the ships were quiet and unmolested, the storm fell upon none but that wherein Jonah was, which made the seamen think, that there was something miraculous in it; and thereupon called upon the company that sailed with them, to come and cast lots, (as the superstitious custom among the Heathens was, whenever they were in any great distress); that accordingly they cast lots three different times, which still fell upon Jonah; and that they let him down several times with a rope, without plunging him in the sea, and as often as they did it found the storm abate, and whenever they pulled him up again, found it increase; so that, at last, they were forced to commit him to the mercy of the waves: All which are circumstances which the Scripture account neither favours nor contradicts; *Calmet's Commentary*.

† The people of the east have a tradition, that it was not above four leagues from Joppa, over against Antipatris, that the seamen threw Jonah over-board.

God,

God, proclaimed a * most solemn fast, and † from the highest to the lowest, putting on sackcloth and addressing their prayers to God, shewed such tokens of sorrow, and repentance, that he reversed their doom, or at least

A. M. 3001, &c.
Ant. Christ. 1003, &c.
from 1 Kings viii.
to the end of 2 Chron.

* The history tells us, that *by a decree from the king, and his nobles, neither man nor beast, neither herd nor flock, were allowed to taste any thing, but were kept up from feeding and drinking water*, Jonah iii. 7. This was carrying their abstinence to a greater severity than what we find practised among the Jews. For though in times of public calamity, and on the day of solemn expiation, we find that they made their children fast, as we may gather from Joel ii. 16. yet we no where read of their extending that rigour to their cattle. Virgil indeed, in one of his eclogues, brings in a shepherd, telling his companion, that for the death of Julius Cæsar, the mourning was so general, that, even the sheep, and other creatures were not driven to water.

Non ulli pastos illis egere diebus

Frigida, Daphni, boves ad flumina; nulla neque amnem

Libavit quadrupes, nec fluminis attigit undam. Ecl. v.

But then the question is, Whether this may not be looked upon as a poetical exaggeration. From Homer, and some other ancient authors, we learn, that when any hero, or great warrior died, the custom was to make his horses fast for some time, and to cut off part of their hair; nor may we forget mentioning, what some historians tell us, of the people inhabiting the Canaries and Peru, viz. that in times of great drought, they shut up their sheep and goats, without giving them any thing to eat, upon presumption that their loud cries and bleating will reach heaven, and prevail with God to give them rain; *Horn de orig. gent. Americ. lib. ii. c. 13.*

† The text tells us of the king of Nineveh, that upon the preaching of Jonah, *he laid his robe from him, and covered him with sackcloth, and sat in ashes*, Jonah iii. 6. and (what is pretty strange) some have thought, that the king thus penitent upon this occasion, was Sardanapalus, a man famous among Heathen authors for his luxury and riches, and in whose reign the famous city of Nineveh was taken by Arbaces and Belshazzar. But others, with more probability, suppose, that it was Pul, the father of this Sardanapalus, whom some Heathen authors call *Anabaxarus*, and others *Anacyndaraxus*. For, as he died (according to Usher) about the year of the world 3237, he might be upon the throne in the reign of Jeroboam II. king of Israel, which was the time when Jonah was sent to Nineveh; *Calmer's Commentary*; and *Usher ad A. M. 3254.*

A. M.
3001, etc.
Ant. Christ.
1003, etc.
from
1 Kings viii.
to the end
of 2 Chron.

deferred it for some years; that Jonah being sore displeased at this, as fearing that it might bring some disgrace upon his prophetic office, after some expostulations with God, retired out of the city, and having built him a booth, sat under the cover of it to see what the end would be; that while he was here, God † caused a gourd to spring hastily up, which by its spreading leaves so shaded his booth from the heat of the sun, that it pleased him much; but being next morning gnawed by a worm, it withered away, which so fretted the impatient man, that he even desired to die; and that hereupon God took occasion to expostulate with him, and shew him the unreasonableness of his repining at the loss of a plant which cost him nothing, which rises in one night, and dies in another, and yet having no concern or commiseration for the destruction of a populous city, wherein there were above an hundred and twenty thousand innocent babes, and consequently the number of all its inhabitants vastly large; and with this way of reasoning, († we may suppose) he reconciled his prophet's wayward thoughts to this his merciful method of proceeding. But to return to the affairs of Judah.

After

† The word *Kikajon*, by the Septuagint, Arabic, and Syriac versions, is called a *gourd*; but most of the ancient Greek translators, following St. Jerom in this particular, chuse rather to render it *ivy*. St. Jerom, however, acknowledges, that the word *ivy* does not answer the signification of the Hebrew *Kikajon*, though he thinks it much better in this place than a *gourd*, which, growing close to the earth, could not have shaded Jonah from the heat of the sun: for the *Kikajon*, according to him, is a shrub which grows in the sandy places of Palestine, and increases so suddenly, that in a few days, it comes to a considerable height. It is supported by its trunk, without being upheld by any thing else; and by the thickness of its leaves, which resemble those of a vine, affords, in hot weather, a very agreeable shade; *Calmet's Dictionary*, under the word *Kikajon*.

† The book of Jonah ends as abruptly as it begins: It begins with a conjunctive copulative, *And the word of the Lord came upon Jonah*, (so it should be read), which has made some commentators think, that it was but an Appendix to some of his other writings; and it ends without giving us any manner of account, either what became of the Ninevites, or of Jonah himself, after this expedition. It is likely indeed, from the compassionate expressions which God makes use of towards the

the

After the murder of Amaziah at Lachish, Uziah, (who is † likewise called *Azariah*) in the sixteenth year of his age, (|| which was in the seven and twentieth year of the reign of Jeroboam king of Israel), succeeded his father, and, in the former part of his reign, behaved well; for which God prospered him in all his undertakings, and blessed his arms with great success: For he worsted the Philistines in many battles, dismantled several of their towns, and built cities in the country thereabout to keep them in subjection. His next expedition was against the Arabians that were upon the borders of Egypt, and against the Me hunims,

A. M.
1001, etc.
Aut. Chris.
1003, etc.
from
1 Kings viii.
to the end
of 2 Chron.
Uzziah
King of Ju-
dah, a vic-
torious and
powerful
prince at
first.

the Ninevites, that for that time, he reversed their doom; and it is not improbable that Jonah, when he had executed his commission, and been satisfied by God concerning his merciful procedure, returned into Judea; but the author of *The Lives and death of the prophets* (who goes under the name of Epiphanius) tells us, that, returning from Nineveh, and being ashamed to see that his prediction was not fulfilled, he retired with his mother to the city of Tyre, where he lived in the plain of Sear, until he died, and was buried in the cave of Cenezeus judge of Israel; but who the author means by Cenezeus, unless it be Caleb, who is frequently surnamed the *Kenezite*, (though we do not read of his being ever a judge of Israel), or rather Othniel, who was the son of Kenaz, and one that judged Israel, we cannot tell. *Galmet's Dictionary* under the word *Jonah*; and *Howell's History*, in the notes.

† The words are much of the same signification; for the former signifies *the strength*, and the other *the help of God*.

|| Commentators have been at a good deal of trouble to reconcile a seeming contradiction in this computation. For if Amaziah, the father of Azariah, lived but fifteen years, after the beginning of Jeroboam's reign, (as appears from 2 Kings xiv. 17.) then Azariah must begin his reign, not in the twenty-seventh, but (if he succeeded his father immediately) in the sixteenth, or fifteenth rather, of Jeroboam: But our learned Dr. Lightfoot solves this at once, by supposing, that there was an interregnum, wherein the throne was vacant eleven, or rather twelve years, between the death of Amaziah and the inauguration of his son Azariah, who, being left an infant of four years old when his father died, was committed to the guardianship of the grandees of the nation, who, during his minority, took the administration of public affairs upon themselves, and when he was become sixteen, devolved it upon him; so that, when he came into the full possession of the throne, it was in the seven and twentieth year of Jeroboam; *Patrick's Commentary*.

(who

A. M. (who lived in their deserts), whom he utterly subdued; and, 3001, etc.
 Ant. Chris. not long after, so terrified the Ammonites, that they (as the
 1003, &c. others were) became tributaries to him. He then repaired
 from the walls of Jerusalem, and, at proper distances, built
 1 Kings viii. towers, from whence, * with engines that threw darts
 to the end of 2 Chron. and stones, he might be able to annoy an invader; and, as
 he was a great lover of husbandry, he employed several
 plowers and planters in the plains, vine-dressers on the
 mountains, and shepherds on the vallies; whereby he ac-
 quired considerable wealth. But the chief glory of his
 kingdom lay in his army, which consisted of above three
 hundred and seventy thousand select men, under the com-

* This is the first time that we read of any machine, either
 for besieging or defending towns; which is plainly the reason
 why sieges were of so long a continuance before the invention of
 these. Homer, who is the most ancient Greek writer we know
 of that treats of sieges, describes a kind of intrenchment, (though
 a poor one), some lines of circumvallation, and a ditch with pa-
 lisades; but we hear not one word of any machines, such as the
ballistæ and the *catapultæ*, which were used for hurling stones,
 and throwing darts; and therefore we need less wonder, that
 the famous siege of Troy continued so long. Sardanapalus king
 of Assyria maintained himself in Nineveh for seven years, be-
 cause the besiegers (as Diodorus observes, lib. ii.) wanted such
 engines as were fit for demolishing and taking of cities, they be-
 ing not then invented. Salmanæzer lay three years before Sa-
 maria, 2 Kings xvii. 5, 6.; and, as some say, Psammitticus, (*Vid.*
Aristæas de LXX interp.) twenty, before Azoth. Now, of Uz-
 ziah it is said, *That he made in Jerusalem engines, invented by*
cunning men, to be on the towers, and upon the bulwarks, to shoot
arrows and great stones, 2 Chron. xxvi. 15.; so that it must needs
 be a mistake, to attribute the invention of the *Ballista*, the *scor-*
pio, or the *onager*, whereof Ammianus Marcellinus, lib. xxiii.
 c. 2. has given us the descriptions, to the Greeks or Romans,
 because we find them made use of in the east, before ever the
 Grecians had brought the military art to any great perfection.
 Uzziah was certainly the first inventor of them; and therefore it
 is said, that, for these, and other warlike preparations, *his name*
was spread abroad. From this time they began to be employed
 both in attacking and defending towns; and therefore we find
 the prophet Ezekiel describing the future sieges of Jerusalem
 and Tyre, where he makes mention of battering-rams, and en-
 gines of war, or, (as it should be rendered) *machines of cords*,
 which, in all probability, were what later ages called their
ballistæ and *catapultæ*; *Calmet's Dissert. sur la milice des anciens*
Hebreux.

mand

mand of two thousand brave experienced officers, all armed with proper weapons both offensive and defensive, and trained up in the most perfect manner of martial discipline.

Thus prosperous was Uzziah in every circumstance of life, † while Zechariah lived, and had him under his direction; but when once that faithful counsellor died, (which was in the three and thirtieth year of his reign), he soon grew so * intoxicated with the thoughts of his power and greatness, that forgetting himself, he would needs intrude in the priestly office. Accordingly, having taken it into his head one day to * offer incense, he went into the sanctuary, and when Ahaziah, and some other of the priests endeavoured to dissuade him from it, he fell into a rage, and received their remonstrances with threats. God however took care to vindicate the sacredness of the sacerdotal office: For the moment that he took the censer in his hand, and was going to burn incense, he was * struck with

A. M. 3001, &c.
Ant. Christ. 1003, &c.
from 1 Kings viii, to the end of 2 Chron.
But usurping the sacerdotal office, is struck with a leprosy, and dies.

† Some are of opinion, that the person here mentioned was a prophet, and the same with that Zechariah whose book of prophecies is extant in the Bible; but as he wrote in the reign of Darius, it is plain, that he lived almost three hundred years after this. It is not unlikely, however, that he was the son of that Zechariah, the son of Jehoiada, who, by the command of King Joash, was slain in the temple; that he was called after his father's name; was preceptor to Uzziah; and (though not a prophet) a man very skilful in expounding the ancient prophecies, and giving instructions out of them, as Grotius understands it; *Patrick's*, and *Calmet's Commentaries*.

* How hard a matter is it (says Bishop Patrick hereupon) to bear great prosperity with moderation, and humble thankfulness!

* What it was that tempted the king to this extravagant folly, it is hard to imagine; but the most likely conjecture is, that he had a vain ambition to imitate Heathen princes, who, in several countries, joined both the regal and sacerdotal offices together. But, however it may be in all other countries, the priesthood in Judea was confined to the house of Aaron only, and every one that pretended to usurp that office, was, by the law of the land, to be put to death: *For thou, and thy sons with thee, (says God to Aaron), shall keep your priest's office, for every thing of the altar, and within the vail, and ye shall serve. I have given your priest's office unto you, as a service of gift, and the stranger that cometh nigh shall be put to death*, Numb. xviii. 7.

* The punishment for such as would intrude into divine ministrations,

A. M.
3001, etc.
Ant. Christ.
1003, &c.
from
1 Kings viii.
to the end
of 2 Chron.

with a leprosy, which no art of man could ever after cure ; so that, while his son Jotham (as his father's viceroy) took the public administration upon him, he was forced to live in a separate place by himself ; and after a reign of two and fifty years, died, and was buried, not in the royal sepulchres, * but in the same field, at some distance from them,

frations, was capital, we see ; and therefore God smote Uzziah with such a disease, as was a kind of death ; because it separated the person that was afflicted with it from the commerce and society of men, even as if he were departed this world, and (as the Psalmist expresses it) become *free among the dead*, Psal. lxxxviii. 5. But, besides this infliction of the disease, Josephus tells us, " That, the very moment that Uzziah was going to burn incense, there happened a terrible earthquake, and, as the roof of the temple opened with the shock of it, there passed a beam of the sun through the cleft, which struck directly upon the face of this sacrilegious prince, whereupon he instantly became a leper : Nay, that this earthquake was so very violent, that it tore asunder a great mountain, towards the west of Jerusalem, and rolled one half of it over and over a matter of four furlongs, till at length it was stopped by another mountain which stood over against it, but choaked up the highway, and covered the king's gardens all over with dust." But all this may be justly suspected. That there was a great earthquake in the reign of Uzziah, is evident from the testimony of two prophets, Amos i. 1. and Zechariah xiv. 8. ; but, that it happened exactly when Uzziah attempted this invasion of the priesthood, is far from being clear : On the contrary, if we will abide by Bishop Usher's computation, the Jewish historian must be sadly mistaken. For since the prophet Amos tells us, that he began to prophesy two years before this earthquake happened, in the reigns of Uzziah king of Judah, and Jeroboam the Second king of Israel ; and since we may gather from the sacred history, that Jeroboam died two years before the birth of Jotham the son of Uzziah ; that Jeroboam died in the six and twentieth year of the said Uzziah, and Jotham his son was born in the three and twentieth year thereof, and yet was of age sufficient to be made regent of the kingdom when his father was thus struck with a leprosy, (which must have been several years after Jeroboam's death), it must needs follow, that this earthquake could not happen at the time which Josephus assigns, but must have been much later ; *Josephus's Jewish wars, lib. ix. c. 11 ; and Calmet's Commentary, on 2 Chron. xv. 5.*

* Josephus will needs have it, that his body was buried in his garden,

them, because he was a leper, and was succeeded by his son Jotham.

During the reign of this Uzziah, there happened some events, mentioned in some parts of Scripture, which are not to be found in the books that are purely historical. Such are that terrible earthquake whereof Amos (c) prophesied two years before it happened; that sore plague of the locusts, whereof Joel (d) gives us so full and lively a description; and that extreme drought, mixed with fearful flashes of fire, which fell from heaven, and (as the prophet (e) expresses it) *devoured all the pastures of the wilderness; and burnt up all the trees of the field.*

But that which we are chiefly concerned to take notice of, is the succession of prophets in Israel and Judah, whom God raised up to give them instructions and exhortations, and to denounce his threatenings and judgments against them, upon their persisting in their impieties: And these he appointed, not only to warn them by word of mouth, (as his former prophets had done), but to commit their admonitions to writing, that posterity might see the ingratitude of his people, and all other nations, from their backslidings and punishments, might learn not to do so wickedly.

The first of these prophets was Hosea, the son of Beeri, who, according to the introduction to his book, prophesied in the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam the second king of Israel; and consequently, continued to be a prophet, at least seventy years, unless we may suppose, (as (f) some have done) that this is a spurious title of some ancient transcribers, and that the true beginning of his work is at the second verse, *The beginning of the word of the Lord by Hosea.* However this be, we may observe, that he speaks positively of the captivity of the ten tribes, and inveighs strongly against their disorders; that he foretells, that the kingdom of Judah should for some time subsist after them, but that at length they too should be carried away captive beyond the Euphrates; and, through the whole, lays open the sins, and declares the judgments of God against a people hardened and irreclaimable.

garden, in a monument by itself, forgetting very probably, what he told us before, that these gardens, at this time, were covered all over with rubbish; *Ibid.*

(c) Chap. i. 1. (d) Chap. ii. 2, &c. (e) Joel i. 18. (f) Calmet's Dictionary, under the word *Hosea*.

A. M.
3001. etc.
Ant. Chris.
1003, &c.
from
1 Kings viii.
to the end
of 2 Chron.
An account
of some o-
ther events,
and particu-
larly of the
writings of
prophets,
during this
period

A. M.
3001, etc.
Ant. Christ.
1003, etc.
from
1 Kings viii.
to the end
of 2 Chron.

The next prophet is Joel, the son of Pethuel. He mentions the same judgment that Amos does; and, under the idea of an enemy's army, represents those vast swarms of locusts, which, in his time, fell upon Judea, and occasioned great desolation. He calls and invites the people to repentance, and promises mercy and forgiveness to those that will listen to the call. He speaks of the teacher of righteousness, whom God was to send, and of the Holy Spirit which he was to pour out upon all flesh; and, in the conclusion, relates what glorious things God would do for his church in the times of the gospel.

The next prophet is Amos; for he lived in the days of Uzziah king of Judah, and of Jeroboam the Second king of Israel. He begins his prophecies with threatenings against the neighbouring nations, that were enemies to Israel; then reproves the people of Israel and Judah for their idolatry, effeminacy, and other sins; exhorts them to repentance, without which their hypocritical services will do them no good; foretells their captivity, and other heavy judgments of God; and, at last, speaks of the restoration of the church among the Jews, and the happy accession of the Gentiles.

The next prophet is Obadiah; for he was cotemporary with Hosea, Joel, and Amos. He denounces God's judgments against the Edomites for the mischiefs they had done to Judah, and Jerusalem, whom he promises, that they should be victorious over these Edomites, and their other enemies; and, at last, foretells their reformation and restoration, and that the kingdom of the Messiah should be set up by the *bringing in of a great salvation*.

The book of Jonah is an history rather than a prophecy; and, if it was written by himself, it is a frank acknowledgment of his own faults and failings, and a plain evidence, that in this work, he designed God's glory, and not his own. For it contains remarkable instances of human frailties in the prophet, of God's compassion and condescension to him, and a noble type of our Saviour's burial and resurrection.

The other prophet that lived in these times was Isaiah, the son of Amos, whose prophecies may be divided into three parts. The first part includes six chapters relating to the reign of Jotham, the six following chapters relate to the reign of Ahaz, and all the rest to the reign of Hezekiah. The great design of what he does, is, to foretell the captivity of Babylon, the return of the people from that captivity,

tivity, and the flourishing kingdom of the Messiah : But * the whole book is highly serviceable to the church of God in all ages, for conviction of sin, direction in duty, and consolation in trouble ; and its author may justly be accounted a great prophet, whether we consider the extent and variety of his predictions ; the sublimity of the truths which he reveals ; * the majesty and elegancy of his style ; the loftiness of his metaphors, or the liveliness of his descriptions.

A. M.
3001, etc.
Ant. Christ.
1003, e. c.
from
1 Kings viii.
to the end
of 2 Chron.

The O B J E C T I O N.

BUT how highly soever we may think fit to commend the prophet Isaiah, others there are, that appear upon the stage in this period of time, whose conduct we have reason to censure, as not so well comporting with their sacred character. Lying and dissimulation was certainly a sin under the law, as well as under the gospel ; nor had the greatest prophet, by virtue of his call, an exemption from speaking truth, any more than the meanest man in Israel ; and yet we find no less a man than Elisha, telling the soldiers (*g*), who were sent to apprehend him, a parcel of lies, that they were out of

* St. Jerom, in his introduction to Isaiah's prophecy, tells us, that his writings are, as it were, an abridgment of the Holy Scriptures, and a collection of all the most uncommon knowledge that the mind of man is capable of. " Quid loquar " (as his words are) " de physicâ, ethicâ, et theologicâ ? Quicquid sanctarum est Scripturarum, quicquid potest humana lingua proferre, et mortaliu sensus accipere, isto volumine continetur ; " *Hieron. Præfat. in Isaiah.*

* Grotius compares this prophet with the great Grecian orator, Demosthenes ; for in him, says he, we meet with all the purity of the Hebrew tongue, as in the other there is all the delicacy of the Attic taste. Both are sublime and magnificent in their style, vehement in their emotions, copious in their figures, and very impetuous, when they set off things of an enormous nature, or such as are grievous or odious : But there is one thing, wherein the prophet was superiour to the orator, and that is, in the honour of his illustrious birth, and relation to the royal family of Judah ; and therefore what Quintilian says of Corvinus Messala, may be justly applied to him, *viz.* that he speaks in an easy flowing manner, and in a style which shows him to be a man of quality ; *Grotius on 2 Kings xix. 2 ; and Quintil. lib. x. c. 20.*

(*g*) 2 Kings vi. 19. &c.

A. M. 3001, etc. Ant. Chriſt. 1003, etc. from 1 Kings viii. to the end. of 2 Chron.

“ their way, had miſtaken their road, and were come to
 “ the wrong place; but that, if they would commit them-
 “ ſelves to his conduct, he would be ſure to carry them to
 “ the man whom they wanted: Which they, poor crea-
 “ tures, being now ſmitten with blindneſs, were glad to ac-
 “ cept of, and ſo, by the wiles and deceptions of this man
 “ of God, were unhappily drawn into a ſnare.

“ Nay, ſo great a propenſity had this prophet to the com-
 “ mon art of falſehood and diſſimulation, that (*b*) when
 “ the king of Syria ſent to him in a friendly manner, and,
 “ with a large preſent, even tempted him to tell him the
 “ truth, concerning the event of his ſickneſs, we find him
 “ ſtill prevaricating, returning a fallacious answer to the
 “ king, and, at the ſame time, telling Hazael another ſto-
 “ ry, which might probably at this time put him in the
 “ thoughts of aſcending the throne of Syria (to (*i*) which
 “ he had been anointed before by the prophet Elijah) by
 “ the immediate murder of his maſter.

“ Whether it is, that prophets looked upon themſelves
 “ as ſuperiour to kings, or, in virtue of their office, claim-
 “ ed a diſpenſation from the common forms of civility, but
 “ ſo it was, that this ſame Eliſha, (*k*) when Joaſh king of
 “ Iſrael did him the honour of a viſit in his ſickneſs, flew
 “ into a paſſion with him, for no other reaſon, but the
 “ ſenſeleſs trifle of not ſtriking with an arrow upon the
 “ ground as oft as he would have had him: Nor can we ac-
 “ count why the high-prieſt Jehoiada, who (as to ſecular
 “ matters) was no more than a private man, ſhould take up-
 “ on him to place Jehoſhaphat upon the throne of Judah, with-
 “ out the general conſent of all the ſtates of the kingdom,
 “ unleſs we may ſuppoſe,—That he affected the regency, du-
 “ ring the minority of the prince, and, upon that account,
 “ was as aſſuming in his way as if he had been a prophet.

“ Theſe prieſts and prophets, then, (we may ſay with
 “ the apoſtle), *were men of the like paſſions as we are*; but
 “ then it is to be hoped, that they died in charity, unleſs we
 “ may except the prophet Zechariah, who, in ſuffering
 “ martyrdom, called upon God (*l*) to avenge his death,
 “ as did not St. Stephen, who, when he was expiring,
 “ kneeled down, and prayed for his murderers, (*m*) Lord,
 “ *lay not this ſin to their charge*.

(*b*) Ibid. viii. 8. &c. (*i*) 1 Kings xix. 15. (*k*) 2 Kings
 xiii. 14. &c. (*l*) 2 Chron. xxiv. 22. (*m*) Acts vii. 60.

“ Jehu

“ Jehu, in his time, was certainly the minister of God, A. M. 3001, etc. Ant. Christ. 1003, etc. from 1 Kings viii. to the end. of 2 Chron.
 “ to execute wrath upon the house of Ahab; but then we
 “ know very well, that the ends of Divine Providence are
 “ not to be served by any indirect means, nor can lying and
 “ dissimulation, in any sense, be proper expedients to ac-
 “ complish his designs; and yet we find this same Jehu
 “ transcending his commission, and (n) falling upon Aha-
 “ ziah king of Judah, (where he was slain it is not agreed),
 “ for no other reason, but because he happened to be in
 “ the king of Israel’s company. We find him, (o) under
 “ the pretence of a greater zeal for idol-worship than ever
 “ Ahab had, drawing all the priests and worshippers of
 “ Baal, like so many lame cattle, into a penfold, and there
 “ slaughtering them: though how they came to pay any
 “ regard to his proclamation, who had made already (p)
 “ such havock among them, or how the temple of this
 “ false god should be able to contain all its worshippers,
 “ whom the connivance of the law, and countenance of
 “ the court, had made so numerous, we cannot well ima-
 “ gine. Nay, we find him calling upon Jehonadab, the
 “ son of Rechab, to be a witness (q) of his zeal for the Lord;
 “ and yet this vile reformer of others continues in the wor-
 “ ship of the golden calves, which were objects not much
 “ better than the images of Baal; and though he will not
 “ depart from the *sin of Jeroboam, who made Israel to sin*,
 “ receives this commendation from God himself, (r) be-
 “ cause thou hast done well, in executing that which was
 “ right in mine eyes, therefore thy children of the fourth ge-
 “ neration shall sit on the throne of Israel.

“ Wicked princes are, by principle, enemies to good
 “ men; but why Jehoram king of Israel should be for
 “ taking away the life of the prophet Elisha, who had been
 “ so very serviceable to him in his wars against Syria, and
 “ that for no other reason but because Samaria was besie-
 “ ged, and reduced to the last extremity of famine, (as if it
 “ had been in the prophet’s power either to make the e-
 “ nemies army withdraw, or (s) to open windows in hea-
 “ ven, and make it rain corn, as it once did manna) is be-
 “ yond our conception.

“ But of all the characters that appear upon the stage in
 “ this period of time, the most unaccountable is that of

(n) 2 Kings ix. 27. (o) Ibid. x. 18. (p) Ibid. ver. 17.
 (q) Ibid. ver. 15, 16. (r) Ibid. ver. 30. (s) Ib. ch. vii. 2.

“ Jonah,

A. M. 3001, etc. Ant. Chris. 1003, etc. from 1 Kings viii. to the end. of 2 Chron.

“Jonah, a sad, testy, splenetic creature, who, upon every turn, is growing angry with God, and, if he has not his will in every thing, wishing to die; who repines at Providence, because (t) *it is slow to anger, and of great kindness*, and had rather see the whole city of Nineveh laid in ashes, than that one tittle of his prophecy should be unaccomplished. And therefore, if God foresaw, that upon the Ninevites repentance, his comminations would be null, a person of another cast had been a proper messenger, since all he had to carry was but a short admonition; which, before he had gone half through so large a city, was in danger of becoming a thread-bare story.”

Answered,
by shewing
the reason
why God
employed
Jonah.

St. Paul, speaking of the propagation of the gospel, and the seeming insufficiency of the means which God had employed to effect it, has these remarkable words:—(u) *Ye see your calling, brethren, how not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called; but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, the weak things of the world to confound the mighty, the base things of the world, and things that are despised, yea, and things that are not, to bring to nought things that are, that no flesh should glory in his presence. And then proceeding to speak of himself; (x) And I, brethren, says he, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech, or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God; but was with you in weakness, and fear, and in much trembling: and my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit, and of power; that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.*

Now, if God, in the conversion of the world to Christianity, made use of instruments in themselves so incompetent for the work, lest the work might be imputed to human powers; by parity of reason we may presume, that, in the conversion of the Ninevites, God might not employ a prophet of the best natural temper and qualifications, (since Isaiah was then of age, and seems to have been better fitted for such a mission), that the glory of the event might not be ascribed to any innate abilities of the prophet, but to the sole power of God, which accompanied him, and (y) *made the foolishness of his preaching* (as the Apostle expresses it) *effectual to save them that believed.*

(t) Jonah iv. 2. (u) 1 Cor. i. 26, &c. (x) Ibid. ii. 1. &c.
(y) 1 Cor. i. 21.

We must not imagine however, that, in his address to the people of Nineveh, the prophet had nothing to say, but this one sentence, *Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown*. This indeed was the sum and substance of his preaching: But we may well presume, that he took frequent occasions to expatiate upon it; by reminding them of the number, and nature, and several aggravations of their offences; by acquainting them with the holiness, justice, and omnipotence of God; that holiness which could not behold iniquity without detestation; that justice which, sooner or later, would not suffer it to go unpunished; and that Almighty power which could, in a moment, lay the stateliest cities in ashes; by exhorting them to repentance, from a dread of his impending judgments; and by instructing them in the method of pacifying his wrath, and effecting a reconciliation with him.

A. M.
3001, etc.
Ant. Christ.
1003, etc.
from
Kings viii.
to the end
of 2 Chron.
The purport
of his mes-
sage.

Some of the ancients are of opinion, that Jonah received no orders from God to limit the destruction of Nineveh to forty days, because there is no such time fixed in his instructions; all that God appoints him to do is, (z) *to go unto Nineveh, that great city, (as he calls it), and to preach unto it that preaching which he should bid him*: And therefore they suppose, that the space of forty days was an addition of the prophet's own, and, for that reason, not exactly fulfilled: But there is no occasion for charging him with any such falsification, since the comminations of God are always conditional, and answer his gracious purposes much better when they are averted than when they are executed.

Why it was
not im-
mediately ex-
cuted.

And indeed, though, in this case, they were averted for a while, yet, when the people relapsed into their former iniquities, the prophet's prediction did not fail of its accomplishment. For, if we take the forty days to denote forty years, a day for a year, and the overthrowing of Nineveh, not to signify its final destruction, but only the subversion (a) of that ancient empire of the Assyrians, which had governed Asia for above thirteen hundred years, and was destroyed under the effeminate King Sardanapalus; then was the prophecy literally fulfilled, and from its fulfilling we may trace the time of Jonah's mission.

But in what
sense, and
at what
time it was.

But though this prophecy of Jonah was not fulfilled at the end of forty days, as he expected, and at the end of

(z) Jonah iii. 2. (a) Prideaux's Connect. at the beginning.

A. M.
3007, etc.
Ant. Christ.
1003, etc.
from
1 Kings viii.
to the end,
of 2 Chr. vi.

forty years there was only a destruction of the monarchy, and not of the city; yet his miraculous preservation in the whale's belly gave him such credit, that it was always believed, that the time of its accomplishment was uncertain. To this purpose we find Tobit (b) giving his son Tobias instructions to depart out of Nineveh, *because those things which the prophet Jonah spake should certainly come to pass*: And accordingly, before Tobias died, he heard of the destruction of Nineveh, which was taken by Nebuchadnosor and Ahasuerus: (c) For these two princes, being related by marriage, entered into a confederacy against the Assyrians, and, joining their forces together, besieged this city; and, after having taken it, and slain Saracus, the king thereof, they utterly destroyed it, and from that time made Babylon the place of royal residence, and the sole metropolis of the Assyrian monarchy. Thus was the prediction of Jonah, concerning the destruction of Nineveh, (though not in the time which he had prefixed), fulfilled; nor can the delay of it be looked upon as any breach of the divine veracity, whatever uneasiness it gave the prophet. The truth of the matter is,—Jonah was a man of an unhappy temper, peevish and passionate, and, in this case, fearful of being accounted a false prophet, of having his ministry exposed to contempt, or his person perhaps to violence from the Ninevites, because the event did not answer the prediction. And the proper lesson we are to learn from his behaviour is,—That the gift of prophecy does not alter men's natural tempers, nor set them above the level of human frailty: For (d) *we have this treasure (as the Apostle speaks) in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.*

Elisha's
speech to the
Syrian forces
justified.

That stratagems in war, and other artifices to delude and insnare an enemy, are not prohibited by the law of God, the generality of casuists are agreed; and therefore, upon the supposition, that Elisha's speech to Benhadad's men was framed on purpose to deceive, he did no more than make use of the common privilege which every nation, engaged in war with one another, is permitted to employ: But, upon a nearer examination, we cannot charge his words with a direct falsehood, though we must allow, that there is some ambiguity in them.

(b) Tobit xiv. 8, &c. (c) Prideaux's Connection, anno 613.
(d) 2 Cor. iv. 7.

When

When the prophet perceived that the Syrian army had encompassed the place where he abode, he went out of the city, and told them, (e) *This is not the way, neither is this the city, viz.* where they would find the man for whom they were sent; because, at that time, he was come out of the city; and therefore, if they proceeded in their march, they would be sure to miss of him. But *follow me, and I will bring you to the man whom ye seek*; and so he did; but not in the manner, it must be owned, that they either expected or desired. The whole conduct of the prophet, therefore, in this respect, was no more than what the practice of war always allows, *viz.* a feint to cover his real designs, and, by counterfeit motions and false alarms, to draw the enemy into such intricacies, that he might come upon them, and surprise them when they least of all thought of it.

A. M.
3001, etc.
Ant. Christ.
1003, etc.
from
1 Kings viii.
to the end
of 2 Chron.

The formality of a lye (as some will have it) does not consist so much in saying what is untrue, as in making a false representation of things with a purpose to do hurt: But the prophet's generous treatment of the enemy, when he had them at his mercy, shows, that he had no malignity in his intention, no designs to make an advantage of their deception; but, on the contrary, took the most effectual means, both to cure their inveterate hatred against the Israelites, and to reconcile them to the worship and service of the true God, who had wrought such a miracle for their conviction, as well as the preservation of his prophet.

(f) *He smote them with blindness, according to the word of Elisha*: But then we are not to imagine, that this blindness was so total that they quite lost the use of their eyes, but only, that it was such a dimness and confusion in their sight, as hindered them from distinguishing one object from another, the city of Dothan, for instance, from the city of Samaria: Even, in like manner, as we read of the people of Sodom, that when the angels (g) *smote them with blindness*, (which they might easily do by some small alteration either in their sight, or in the air), *they wearied themselves to find out Lot's door*. They saw the house, it seems, but did not discern the door, because this sudden disorder in their imagination might either make the door appear to them like the solid wall, or the solid wall like so many doors.

The nature
of their
blindness,
and why
they accept-
ed of a
guide.

(e) 2 Kings vi. 19. (f) Ibid. ver. 18. (g) Gen. xix. 11.

A. M.
3001, etc.
Ant. Chris.
1003, etc.
from
1 Kings. viii.
to the end.
of 2 Chron.

This is no more than what happens to several men in their liquor; that, though their eyes be open, and can perceive the several objects that surround them, yet they cannot discern wherein they differ. And, if we may suppose that the Syrian army was under the like *doctores*, (as the Greeks very happily term it), we need no longer wonder, that they readily accepted of a guide, who offered his service, and bespoke them fair, (whom they might indeed take for some deputy of the town, with authority to deliver up the prophet to them), than that a drunkard, who, after a long while having lost his way, and found himself bewildered, should be thankful to any hand that would promise to conduct him safe home.

What Eli-
jah's an-
ointing of
Hazael
means.

(b) That Hazael was never, in a strict sense, anointed by Elijah to be Benhadad's successor, is evident from what appears of him in sacred history. For, when he came to consult Elisha concerning his master's illness, (which was a considerable while after the prophet Elijah's translation), we find, by the whole interview, that he was entirely ignorant of his own designation for the throne of Syria, which he could not have been had he been anointed before this time. Either, therefore, we must take the word in a figurative sense, to denote no more than God's purpose or determination that Hazael should succeed in the throne of Syria, to execute the designs of his providence upon the people of Israel, even as Cyrus, for the same reason, is called (i) *the Lord's anointed*, though he was never properly anointed by God; or, if we take it in a literal sense, we must suppose some reason why Elijah waved the execution of that command, even because he foresaw the many sore calamities which Hazael, when advanced to the crown of Syria, would bring upon Israel, and thereupon prevailed with God, that he might be excused from that ungrateful office, and that, in his time at least, a succession which would be attended with such direful consequences might not commence.

His message
to Benha-
dad ex-
plained,
and vindicated.

It may possibly be thought, indeed, that Elisha's foretelling his advancement to the throne might be a spur and incitement to his ambition; but the means, whereby he accomplished his design, were entirely from his own wicked and corrupt mind, which would not stay for the ordinary methods of divine providence to bring it innocently about,

(b) Le Clerc's Commentary on 1 Kings xix. 15.; and Scripture vindicated, part 2.

(i) Isaiah xlv. 1.

bu

but chose rather to carve for himself, and, by murdering his master, to cut him out a more compendious way of coming into immediate possession. And this solves the seeming difficulty of the prophet's sending one answer to Benhadad, and telling Hazael quite another story: For, when Hazael understood that his master's disease was mortal, but that, if no violence intervened, he might easily get over that indisposition, (for that is the sense of *(k)* *he may certainly recover*); and, at the same time, was told by the prophet, that he would not however recover, because he foresaw that violence would be used to take away his life, (as this is the sense of *he shall surely die*), Hazael went his way, and, not willing to trust Providence with his master's recovery, took care the next morning to have him dispatched.

There is, however, another, and (as some think) a much plainer interpretation of the prophet's words: For, since this is a passage which admits of a various lection, the adverb *Lo* (as it is in the textual reading) signifies *not*, but in our translation (which in this place follows the marginal) it is rendered *to him*: So that, if the Hebrew text be right, (as some learned men, upon examination, have given it the preference), the plain reading of the words will be, *Go, say, thou shalt surely not live; for the Lord hath shewed me, that thou shalt surely die*. This was the sense of the prophet's answer to Benhadad; but Hazael, who was a wicked man, went and told him a quite contrary thing, on purpose to lull him into a state of security, that thereby he might have a fairer opportunity of accomplishing his design upon him.

Thus, whether the marginal or textual reading be right, and consequently, whether the prophet's message to Benhadad be taken in an affirmative or negative sense, he cannot justly be charged with baseness and ingratitude; since, whether he accepted of his present or no, it is manifest that he could not return him any false and delusive answer: And yet the more probable opinion is, that, in conformity to his practice, in the case of Naaman the leper, he did, upon this occasion; *reject the good things of Damascus* which Benhadad sent, because the same reasons which induced him to refuse them from the hand of Naaman were still in force, and might equally prevail with him not to accept them from the hand of Hazael.

(k) 2 Kings viii. 10.

A. M.
3001, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1003, &c.
from
1 Kings viii.
to the end
of 2 Chron.
His beha-
viour to
Joash not
amiss.

Thus, with regard to Benhadad King of Syria, the prophet stands clear of any imputation of falsehood or ingratitude; and, in like manner, if we consider the matter as it stood between him and Joash king of Israel, we shall find no unbecoming passion or peevishness in his conduct, but a great deal of zeal and concern, for the honour both of his king and country. For, whether King Joash, before this interview with Elisha, was acquainted or not with the nature of parabolical actions, whereby prophets more especially were accustomed to represent future events; by the comment which Elisha made upon the first arrow that he shot, (which he calls *(l)* *the arrow of deliverance from Syria*), he could not but perceive that this was a symbolical action, and intended to prefigure his victories over that nation; and therefore, as the first action of shooting was a kind of prelude to the war, he could not but understand farther, (even though the prophet had said nothing to him), that this second action of striking the ground with the arrow, was to portend the number of the victories he was to obtain. *(m)* But then, if we may suppose, with the generality of interpreters, that the prophet had apprised him beforehand, that such was the symbolical intent of what he now put him upon; that the oftener he smote upon the ground, the more would their victories be which his arms should obtain; that this was the decree of heaven; and that thus, in some measure, his success in war was put in his own power; the king's conduct was utterly inexcusable, if, dissident of the prophet's promise, and considering the vast strength of the kings of Syria more than the power of God that was engaged on his side, he stopped his hand after he had smote thrice; supposing, indeed, that the prediction would never have been fulfilled, had he gone on and smote upon the earth oftener. Upon the whole, therefore, the prophet had just reason to be offended at the king for not believing God, who had done so many signal miracles in favour of the Israelites; for not believing him, who (according to his own acknowledgment) had been a constant defender of the state, *(n)* *the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof*, and now, in his dying hours, was full of good wishes and intentions for his country; and, by this unbelief of his, for eclipsing the glory of his own

(l) 2 Kings xiii. 17.
2 Kings xiii. 19.

(m) Le Clerc's Commentary on
(n) Ibid. ver. 14.

arms, and curtailings the number of his victories: For (o) *thou shouldst have smitten five or six times*, (says the prophet to the king), *then shouldst thou have smitten Syria, till thou hadst consumed it; whereas now thou shalt smite Syria but thrice.*

(p) *Behold I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes*, (says our blessed Saviour, upbraiding the Jews with their bloody persecutions of the righteous), *and some of them ye shall kill, and crucify, and some of them ye shall scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city; that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel, unto the blood of Zechariah, the son of Barachiah, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar*: And hereupon some names of great authority have inferred, that the Zechariah, son of the high-priest, whom Joash, king of Judah, commanded to be slain, was the same with the person whom our Saviour here mentions; for though he calls his father by a different name, *Barachiah*, and not *Jehoiada*, yet this he might do, say they, to denote the divine graces, which were so conspicuous in him; for so the word *Barachiah* means.

It must be observed, however, that as there is a difference in these two persons, not only in regard to their father's names, but to the place likewise where they suffered, the one (q) *between the temple and the altar*, i. e. in the court of the priests, and the other (r) *in the court of the house of the Lord*, i. e. in the court of the Israelites, where he was mounted on high, and inveighing against their idolatry, there are some grounds to believe, that the Zechariah in the gospel is not the same with him whose death we find recorded in the Chronicles of the kings of Judah.

Our blessed Saviour, it must be owned, not only foretold the utter excision of the Jews, but described likewise several preceding calamities, almost in the very manner wherein their own historian has related them. Now, in the times of the Jewish war, Josephus (s) makes mention of one Zacharias, and gives us these circumstances concerning his murder: — — — That he was the son of one Baruch, a man of the first rank, and of great authority, virtue, and wealth, a friend to all good men, and a con-

(o) Ibid. ver. 19. (p) Matth. xxiii. 34, &c. (q) Matth. xxiii. 35. (r) 2 Chron. xxiv. 21. (s) History of the Jewish wars, lib. 1. c. 5.

A. M.
3001, &c.
Ant Christ.
1003, &c.
from
1 Kings viii.
to the end
of 2 Chron.

stant enemy to the wicked ; that his son Zacharias was, by the zealots of that time, looked upon as a man so very popular, that they could not think themselves safe; without taking away his life ; that to this purpose they brought him before a sham court of their own erecting, where they accused him of a conspiracy to betray Jerusalem to the Romans, and of holding a criminal correspondence with Vespasian ; that upon his trial, his innocence appeared so clear, and the accusations against him so false and malicious, that their own court, contrary to their expectation, acquitted him ; but that, after he was acquitted, two ruffians of their company fell upon him, and having murdered him in the middle of the temple, threw his dead body down the precipice whereon it stood.

This is the person (as others imagine) that our Saviour intends ; for as he begins with Abel, the first instance of a person suffering by violence, it is but reasonable, they think that he should conclude with one of the latest among the Jews, while their government subsisted ; and therefore they look upon our Lord's words; not as a recital of what had been done, but a prediction of what would be done ; and a glorious evidence it is of his divine omniscience, which could foretell the names both of father and son, above forty years before the event happened.

His father's
conduct in
regard to
Joash, vin-
dicated.

However this be, we must not accuse the father of that Zacharias, who died a martyr in the reign of Joash king of Judah, of shewing a busy and pragmatistical spirit, in placing this Joash, when a child, upon the throne of his ancestors. Jehoiada, as he was high-priest, had a large authority even in civil affairs ; (t) the dignity of his station set him at the head of a very powerful body of men, the priests and Levites ; and his quality as first judge and president of the great council of the nation, gave him a right to defend oppressed innocence, and to oppose the unjust usurpation of Athaliah, who had no pretence of claim to the crown, and was descended likewise from a wicked family, which God had particularly devoted to destruction.

(u) The constitution of the nation moreover was such, that the crown, by divine appointment, was appropriated to the sons of David ; and therefore the hereditary right

(t) Calmet's Commentary on 2 Kings xi. 4.
Annotations.

(u) Pool's

was inherent in him whom he had set up, whose aunt he had married, whose kinsman he was by birth, as well as marriage, and who upon these accounts, as well as all necessary qualifications for so high a trust, was the properest guardian of the succession. For he had a large share of wisdom and experience, an ardent love for the public good, courage and activity in his complection, and a solid piety towards God ruling in his heart; and yet he did not act alone in this important affair, but had the consent and concurrence of the chief officers, both civil and ecclesiastic, the special motion and assistance of God's blessed Spirit, and (as we may suppose) the direction and encouragement of the principal prophets that were then alive.

His son indeed was but badly requited for all the care which his father had taken in setting the crown upon young Joash, when, in his reign, and by his orders, he was stoned to death, and as he was expiring, cried out, (x) *Lord look upon it, and requite it.* But we must not by these words imagine, that he died with a spirit of revenge, (for far be it from so good a man), but that, by the spirit of prophecy, he only foretold, that it would not be long before God would find out some means of punishing the king for his barbarous usage of him; which accordingly came to pass; for in the following verses we read, that (y) *at the end of the year, the host of Syria came up against him,* and not long after that, (z) *his own servants conspired against him, and slew him on his bed.*

The spirit of the gospel, it must be owned, is of a much more gentle and forgiving temper than that of the law, under which we meet with several such imprecations (especially in the Psalmist) as cannot, without violence, admit of any other construction. Our blessed Saviour, in his reasoning with the Jews, tells them, (a) that Moses did indulge them in some cases, *because of the hardness of their hearts*; not that God ever did, or ever will, humour any man, because he is obstinate and obdurate; but the sense of the words is, (b) that God therefore connived at some things, because the dispensation under which they lived wanted proper efficacy to work their hearts to a greater softness. We are not therefore to wonder, that we find some dispa-

(x) 2 Chron. xxiv. 22. (y) Ibid. ver. 23. (z) Ibid. ver. 25, (a) Matth. xix. 8. (b) Young's sermons.

A. M.
3001, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1003, &c.
from
1 Kings viii.
to the end
of 2 Chron.

rity in the behaviour of a Christian and Jewish martyr : but that such prophetic declarations, concerning the future punishment of enemies and persecutors, were not thought wicked and uncharitable, even under a more perfect dispensation, we have the example of the great apostle of the Gentiles to evince ; who speaking of Alexander the copper-smith, who had greatly opposed him, (c) *the Lord reward him*, says he, *according to his works* ; where it is to be observed, that the King's manuscript reads ἀποδώσει, and not ἀποδόν i. e. *shall or will reward*, and most of the ancient commentators have remarked, that this is not an imprecation, but a prediction only, not unbecoming an apostle.

Jehu's character.

What God says of the king of Assyria, whom he calls *the Rod of his anger*, and *the Staff of his indignation*, is not unapplicable to Jehu, after he was advanced to the throne of Israel : *I sent him against the people of my wrath, to tread them down, like mire of the streets, howbeit he meant not so, neither did his heart think so, but it was in his heart to destroy, and cut off nations not a few.* Jehu indeed made great ostentation of his zeal for the Lord, and that during his administration, (d) *there should fall to the earth nothing of what he had said concerning the house of Ahab* ; and it must be acknowledged, that for his performance of the divine commands in this regard, (e) he received commendations from God, and a settlement of his family in the throne of Israel for four successions ; and yet we may say of him, *that he meant not so, neither did his heart think so* : He was still a bad man, though *he did well in executing that which was right in God's eyes*, as to the abolishment of the worship of Baal ; (f) but his obstinate persistence in the sin of Jeroboam, may be justly alledged against him, as an argument of his false-heartedness in all his other actions.

Why he continued the worship of the golden calves.

Why he continued in this kind of idolatry, the reasons were much the same with him, that they were with the first institutor of it, — lest, by permitting his subjects to go to the place appointed for divine worship, he might open a door for their return to their obedience to the house of David ; and, not only so, but disoblige likewise a great part of the nobility of the nation, who, by this time, had been long accustomed, and were warmly affected to the

(c) 2 Tim. iv. 14.
Testament.

(d) Whitby's Commentary on the New
(e) 2 Kings x. 30.

(f) Ibid. ver. 29.

worship

worship of the golden calves. Herein however he made a plain discovery of his sin and folly, in not daring to trust God with the keeping of his kingdom, though it was from his kindness and donation that he had it, and in apprehending any danger from the house of David, or the kingdom of Judah, which were both now in so weak and declining a condition, that they were much more likely to be swallowed up by him.

(g) The truth is, Jehu was a wicked, bold, furious and implacable man; but a man of this complexion (considering the work he was to be set about) was a proper instrument to be employed; and so far is it from tending to the reproach, that it is infinitely to the glory of God, that he can make use of such boisterous and unruly passions of mankind for the accomplishment of his just designs; according to the observation of the royal Psalmist, *(b)* *Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee, and the remainder of his wrath shalt thou restrain.* This he plainly did in the case of Jehu: For after he had settled him in the possession of a kingdom; and still found that he persisted in his political idolatry, he brought down the king of Syria upon him, *(i)* *who smote the coasts of Israel*, and quite wasted all that part of his kingdom, which lay beyond the river Jordan.

There is this to be said however, concerning Jehu's cutting off Ahaziah, and *(k)* the other branches of his family, that though his primary intent in doing it was to secure himself in the possession of the kingdom, against all claims that might come from the house of Ahab; yet did he not act entirely contrary to his commission, because *(l)* Ahaziah was the son of Athaliah, the daughter of Ahab, and the order of God was, *(m)* *that the whole house of Ahab should perish*: But then the question is, where it was that Ahaziah was slain? because, in the two accounts that we have of his death, there seems to be some repugnancy. The account which we have in the second book of Kings runs thus; — *(n)* *When Ahaziah saw the death of Jehoram king of Israel, he fled by the way of the garden-house, and Jehu followed after him, and said, smite him also in his chariot: And they did so, at the going up to Gur, which is by Hbleam, and he fled to Megiddo and there died*: But in the

A. M.
3001, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1003, &c.
from
1 Kings viii.
to the end
of 2 Chron.

Why God made use of him;

and how he executed his commands.

(g) Pool's Annotations. (b) Psal. lxxvi. 10. (i) 2 Kings x. 32.
(k) Pool's Annotations on 2 Kings x. 14. (l) 2 Kings viii. 18.
(m) 2 Kings ix. 8. (n) Ibid. ver. 27.

A. M. 3001, etc.
 Ant. Christ. 1003, &c.
 from 1 Kings viii.
 to the end of 2 Chron.

book of Chronicles it is said, that (o) *when Jehu was executing judgment upon the house of Ahab, and found the princes of Judah, even the sons of the brethren of Ahaziah, that ministered to Ahaziah, he slew them. And he sought Ahaziah, and they caught him, (for he was hid in Samaria), and brought him to Jehu, and when they had slain him, they buried him.*

The different accounts in Kings and Chronicles concerning Ahaziah's death reconciled.

Now, in order to reconcile the different accounts of the same event, we must observe, (p) that as one great end of writing the book of Chronicles, was to supply such matters as had been omitted in the book of kings; so this account of the death of Ahaziah, in the latter, is very short, and included the story of Jeroboam, that the reader, at one and the same view, as it were, might perceive in what manner it was that both these princes fell; but in the former it is told more at large; and therefore, to complete the history, we must take in both accounts, and from thence we may gather, — That upon seeing Jehoram mortally wounded, Ahaziah turned his chariot, and made the best of his way to Samaria, in order to escape into his own kingdom; but finding the passes too narrowly guarded, he thought proper to conceal himself in the town, in hopes of a better opportunity; that Jehu, in the mean time, coming to Samaria, and having intelligence that Ahaziah was lurking there, ordered that diligent search should be made for him, and when he was found, that he should be carried to Gur, (the place, in all probability, where his father Joram had slain all his brethren), and there be killed in his chariot, that so his servants might immediately carry off his corpse and bury it. But as Jehu's order to the officers that were intrusted with the execution, was only, that they should smite him, they thought it enough to give him a mortal wound, so that his servants carried him from thence to Megiddo, the next town in the tribe of Issachar, where he died.

Why Jehoram was so incensed against Elisha.

This makes the circumstances consistent: And though we are no ways concerned (especially when the sacred history is silent) to assign any reasons for such furious passions as are frequently observed in great and wicked men; yet it may be no hard matter to imagine something more probable, than what (q) Josephus makes the cause of Jehoram's indignation against Elisha, and his vowing to take off

(o) 2 Chron. xxii. 7. &c.
 (q) Jewish Antiq. lib. ix. c. 2.

(p) Pool's Annotations.

his head; even because he refused to intercede with God for the removal of the famine, that had, at this time, so forely wasted the city of Samaria. From the many miracles which Elifha did, the king very likely might be convinced, that the same spirit which once resided in Elijah was now descended upon him; and therefore, as Elijah had power, by his prayers, either to shut or open the windows of heaven, either to cause or remove a famine, as he pleased, (r) he might possibly imagine, that God had conferred the same privilege upon Elifha, and might therefore be highly incensed against him, because he would not make use of it in the preservation of a city reduced to the utmost distress. But we can hardly imagine, that a wicked and idolatrous prince (as Jehoram certainly was) would ever entertain so high a conception of any of the Lord's prophets: And therefore we must endeavour to find out some other reason for the violence of his rage and indignation against him.

When the prophet Elifha carried the detachment of the Syrian army, which was sent to apprehend him at Dothan, hood-winked (as it were) into the city of Samaria, Jehoram, we find, would have gladly taken this advantage, and fallen upon them with the sword: (s) *My father, shall I smite, shall I smite them?* So eager was he to have them destroyed, as we may learn from the repetition of his words! But by no means would the prophet permit him; on the contrary, he ordered them to be treated with much civility, and dismissed in peace. An usage this which deserved a better return than what they made the Israelites the year following, when they came, and besieged Samaria, and forely distressed it. The king of Israel, therefore, reflecting on the opportunity which, had he employed as he desired, would have disabled the army from making any fresh invasions, but was unhappily lost, by listening to an old doating prophet, (as he might call him); was grieved beyond measure, and hereupon vowed to make his life pay for the lives of those, who, by his counsel, had escaped, and were now returned to repeat their hostilities. It may be supposed likewise, that upon the return of the Syrian army, the king of Israel, knowing himself in no condition to oppose them, might possibly be for purchasing a peace at any rate; which Elifha might endeavour to dissuade him from, by giving him all along assurance, that the enemy should at length be defeated. Finding however no effect in

A. M.
3001, etc.
Ant. Chris.
1003, etc.
from
1 Kings viii.
to the end
of 2 Chron.

(r) Pool, *ibid.*

(s) 2 Kings vi. 21.

A. M. 3001. &c.
Ant. Christ
1003, &c.
from
2 Kings viii.
to the end
of 2 Chron.

the prophet's promises, and, on the contrary, seeing his capital closely besieged, and the people reduced to great extremity of want, he began to repent him of following his advice; and being shocked at hearing the horrid story (and that from the mother's own mouth) of her being forced to eat her own child for hunger, he fell into a rage, and vowed to be revenged of Elifha, as one who, by his bad counsel, had occasioned all that misery: *(t)* *God do so to me, and more also, if the head of Elifha, the son of Shaphat, shall stand on him to day*; never considering that his own manifold and crying sins, especially his obstinate adhering to the idolatry of the calves, *(u)* and the whoredoms and witchcrafts of his mother Jezebel, were the true and proper causes of all his calamities.

How all the
worshippers
of Baal
might be
brought to
meet toge-
ther.

Jehu (as we said before) was a wicked and ambitious man, and it is much to be questioned, whether he would have executed the divine will so punctually, had it not fallen in with his own interest and designs. He had now extirpated the house of Ahab, and as Ahab had been the first intruder of the idolatry of Baal into the kingdom of Israel, he could not but think, that the priests and prophets, and such as adhered to the worship of that false god, were of Jezebel's faction, and might, at one time or other, take occasion to revenge her death. Something or other was therefore necessary to be done, in order to get rid of this dangerous set of men, and, that the business might be done effectually, to get rid of them all at once. *(x)* He was a person of a known indifference in matters of religion, who, in this regard, always conformed to the humours of the court, and, in the reign of King Ahab, had been as strenuous a worshipper of Baal as any; and therefore, how could the people tell, when they read his proclamation for a great feast, and a solemn sacrifice to be offered unto Baal, but that, in good earnest, he had returned to his former love to the religion which he once embraced, and only deserted for a while, in complacency to others? He had gone on a little oddly indeed at his entrance upon the government, had murdered their chief patroness, and made free with some of their priests likewise; but these priests perhaps were *(y)* domestics to Jezebel, or too near related to Ahab's family not to go off in the common slaughter. Some instances of this kind could hardly be

(t) 2 Kings vi. 31. *(u)* chap. ix. 22.
notations. *(y)* 2 Kings xi. 11.

(x) Pool's An-

helped in the heat of execution, when the man was resolved to secure himself, and remove all competitors: but now, that he has nothing to fear, why should we think, but that a prince who has no sense of religion at all, should be a worshipper of our god Baal, (that glorious luminary † which shines so bright in the firmament of heaven), as he is of the golden calves?

A. M.
 3001, etc.
 Ant. Christ.
 1003, &c.
 from
 1 Kings viii.
 to the end
 of 2 Chron.

Thus, we may suppose, the Baalites reasoned, upon reading the king's proclamation so apparently in favour of their idolatry; and God, in his judgment, suffered their (z) *foolish hearts to be thus darkened, and because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved, for this cause he sent upon them a strong delusion, that they might believe a lie.* But whether they deluded themselves into this persuasion or not, this they knew by experience, that Jehu was a man of a fierce and bloody temper, who would not fail to put his threats in execution; and therefore reading in the same proclamation, that (a) *whoever shall be wanting, he shall not live*, they found themselves reduced to this sad dilemma, either to go or die: and therefore they thought it the wisest way to run the hazard, and throw themselves upon his mercy, having this at least to plead for themselves, that they were not disobedient to his commands. The only remaining question is, if every one obeyed this summons, how could the temple of Baal be capable of receiving them all?

Now, the words of Jehu's summons are these, ——— And how (b) *Call unto me all the prophets of Baal, all his servants, and all his priests, let none be wanting; for I have a great sacrifice to offer unto Baal.* ——— And Jehu did it in subtilty, to the intent that he might destroy the worshippers of Baal; in which words we may observe, (c) that two particular orders of men are distinctly mentioned, the prophets, and priests; and therefore we may presume, that the servants and worshippers who are joined with them, were some of an inferiour kind, (such as Levites in the Jewish, or deacons in the Christian church), who attended upon the other in their sacred ministrations; because in the 22d verse, we

And how the temple could contain them all.

† Baal and Astaroth are commonly joined together; and as it is believed, that *Astaroth* denotes the moon, we may with good reason say, that *Baal* is put for the sun. *Calmet's Dictionary.*

(z) 2 Thess. ii. 11.

(a) 2 Kings x. 19.

(b) Ibid.

(c) Pool's Annotations.

find

A. M. find Jehu ordering him, who was over the vestry, to bring
 3001, etc. forth vestments for all the worshippers of Baal, which cannot
 Ant. Christ. be meant of the people in general, because they wore no
 1003, etc. distinct garments, in their worship either of God or Baal,
 from. but of the priests and ministers only. These were the
 1 Kings viii. great support of the present idolatry; and therefore Jehu
 to the end concluded very justly, that if he did but once destroy
 of 2 Chron. them, all the common worshippers would fall away of
 course.

But, even if we take the words *servants* and *worshippers* in their utmost latitude, we need not doubt but that the temple of Baal (*d*), which was built in the capital city, and near the royal palace, and, being the chief in its kind, was designed for the use of the king and queen, and, particularly perhaps for such great and high solemnities, was large and capacious enough to hold them all. For, besides this principal building, (*e*) there might be several outward courts, (as there were in the temple at Jerusalem), where the people stood while they worshipped, (as they did in the temple-service), and these, together with the temple itself, would afford space sufficient for all the idolaters of that kind, both ministers and people, that were then in the whole kingdom. For, since the days of Ahab, by the ministry of Elijah, Elisha, and the rest of the prophets, as well as by the slaughter which Hazael, in his wars against Israel, had made among many of them, the number of Baal's worshippers had been greatly diminished. Jehoram himself, as we read, (*f*) put away the image of Baal that his father had made, and, when the king withdrew his presence and encouragement, his subjects, without doubt, for the generality, followed his example; for it cannot be supposed, that the worship of such senseless idols could ever be kept up (especially among a people that had the oracles of God in their custody, without the influence of some great authority, or the consideration of some wicked and worldly ends.

(*d*) Pool, *ibid*. (*e*) Patrick's Commentary. (*f*) 2 Kings
 vi. 2.

DISSERTATION III.

Of Jonah's Mission to Nineveh, and Abode in the Whale's Belly.

A. M.
3001, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1003, &c.
from
1 Kings, viii.
to the end
of 2 Chron.

IN the whole compass of the Old Testament, I know of no passage that has been made so popular a topic of banter and ridicule; and which the lovers of infidelity, in all ages, have so much delighted to descant upon, as the story of *Jonah's continuing three days and three nights in the whale's belly*. The story indeed at first hearing, sounds surprisngly; and therefore we need not wonder, that the wit and sagacity of a Porphyry, or a Julian, found some plausible exceptions against it, which our modern retailers, and malicious improvers, of their objections, have endeavoured to decry as a wild romance, or, at best, but a parabolical representation of something else.

The nature
of his story.

“ That a man, thrown into the sea, with all his cloaths
“ on, should, in the very nick of time, meet with a fish,
“ and such a fish as was never heard of before, large enough to swallow him up quick, and, without hurting an hair of his head, to keep him in his stomach, for so many days and nights, alive; that, in this narrow and gloomy prison, he should be able to breathe, and live, and be nourished; thence send up his prayers to God, and thence promise himself a deliverance in due time; this is an account of things so very absurd, that there is no possibility of believing it. For admitting that Jonah got safe and sound down the whale's throat, yet how could he subsist there without air, or continue any time without being parboiled? The stomach, we know, would do its office; and therefore we cannot but think, that in a few hours, much more in three days, the man must, of course, have been totally dissolved, and his body converted into the body of the fish; or, if its digestion was not so quick, he must, at least, when cast upon the shore, have been sadly sodden, and unfit to be sent upon another expedition.

The objection
against
it.

“ What God can do, we must not dispute; but then great care should be taken, not to magnify his power to the diminution of his wisdom, or to think, that he is so lavish of his miracles as to save a rebellious prophet that was disobeying his orders, and fleeing, if possible, from his presence, that deserved indeed to be

“ left

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“ left to the mercy of the waves, and made food for the fishes of the sea, rather than vouchsafed so stupendous a preservation : And all this, for what ? Even to compel him to go, against his will, to a wicked city, with an unwelcome message ; as if there had been no prophet in Israel, but this fullen and refractory man, to be sent upon this errand.”

Answered by an account of Nineveh, and why Jonah was sent thither, viz. to convert its inhabitants.

Nineveh, at the time when Jonah was sent thither, was the metropolis of the Assyrian empire, and one of the largest and most ancient cities in the world. According to the best chronologers, it was built not long after the flood, and very soon after the tower of Babel, by Nimrod ; but being afterwards greatly enlarged by Ninus, from him it received its name. It was situated upon the banks of the Tigris, and (as Diodorus (*g*) has given us the description of it) was, in length, an hundred and fifty stadia ; in breadth four score and ten ; and in circumference, four hundred and seventy ; which, being reduced to our measure, make it about one and twenty miles long, nine broad, and four and fifty round. How stately its walls, and how lofty its towers were, the same historian has taken care to inform us ; and how great the number of its inhabitants was, we may learn from (*h*) *the six score thousand children, who could not discern between their right hands and their left* : For, according to a proportional computation, there must have been in the whole above six hundred thousand persons.

Now, we have wrong conceptions of God, if we think, that because he made the children of Israel his peculiar people, he therefore neglected all the world besides. On the contrary, (*i*) *Though he shewed his word unto Jacob, and his statutes and ordinances unto Israel*, in a particular manner, yet he did not leave himself without a witness in other nations ; but whenever they were drawing destruction upon themselves, took care to acquaint them with their impending doom. To this purpose, we may observe, that not only Isaiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel, but almost all the other prophets, do foretel the destruction of Babylon, and publish the divine threats against Egypt, Edom, and the other kingdoms neighbouring upon Canaan ; that (*k*) Jeremiah, in particular, was ordered by God to make himself bonds and yokes, and send them to the kings of the Ammonites, of Tyre and Sidon, and other princes, by the hand of their

(*g*) Lib. 2. Bib. (*h*) Jonah iv. 11. (*i*) Psal. cxlvii. 19.
(*k*) Jer. xxvii. 2, &c.

ministers, who were then at the court of Zedekiah king of Judah, with his admonition to their masters, that unless they repented of their evil ways, he would deliver them into the power of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, whom he calls *his servant*, even as he does (l) *Cyrus his anointed*, (for being appointed to execute his will), some hundred years before he was born; and therefore we need less wonder, that we find God interesting himself in the preservation of the large and populous city of Nineveh, upon which depended the whole fate of the Assyrian empire, since, in all ages, he has given proofs of his protection, and absolute dominion over other nations, as well as the Israelites, either in threatening their disobedience, in order to procure their amendment, or, if they despised his threatenings, in punishing their obstinacy as they deserve.

(m) *Is he the God of the Jews only? Is he not also of the Gentiles?* Yes, *of the Gentiles also*, says an apostle of great authority: And therefore we may presume, that as Jonah was the only prophet in the Old Testament that was sent expressly to preach to the Gentiles, God might design hereby to give to his people a premonition of his intention, *in the fulness of time*, (n) *to raise up a root of Jesse*, (as the prophet expresses it) *which should stand for an ensign of the people, and unto which the Gentiles should seek*: To (o) *break down the middle wall of partition, even the law of commandments, contained in ordinances*; and to unite all nations in one communion, under (p) *one great shepherd and bishop of their souls*.

But whether God might design this call to the Ninevites, as a pledge and assurance of his future admission of the people of all nations into the privileges of the Christian covenant, this certainly he might have under his immediate view, *viz.* to show the disparity between his people and aliens, and upon the comparison of their several behaviours, shame them for living unreclaimed, under the constant preaching of his prophets for so many years, when a people, whom they despised, as *being strangers to the covenant of promise*, had, by the mighty power of his word, been converted in the space of three days.

Nothing is more common in Scripture, than to find God complaining of his people for not attending to the messages which he sent them: (q) *Since the day that*

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And to
shame his
own people.

(l) Isaiah xlv. 1. (m) Rom. iii. 27. (n) Isaiah xi. 10.
(o) Eph. ii. 14. (p) 1 Pet. ii. 25. (q) Jer. vii. 25, &c.
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*their fathers came forth out of Egypt, (says God to one of his prophets), even unto this day, I have sent unto them all my servants, the prophets, daily rising up early, and sending them; yet they hearkened not unto me, nor inclined their ear, but hardened their neck, and did worse than their fathers: Therefore shalt thou speak all these words unto them, but they will not hearken, and thou shalt call unto them, but they will not answer thee. And therefore God, very well foreknowing the success that his prophet would meet with, might send him with commission to preach to the Ninevites, not only in pursuance of his kind purposes to them, but with an intent likewise to render his own people inexcusable, even as our Saviour represents the case of the Jews in his days, who refused to hear him: (r) *The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and behold a greater than Jonah is here.**

Why Jonah
refused to
go.

And indeed, some have imagined, that one great cause of Jonah's declining the order at first, and of his going at last with so much reluctance to Nineveh, might be some suspicion, that in case these Gentiles should listen to his preaching, it might be, not only a lasting reproach, but a means of reprobation likewise, to his countrymen, who, under the constant ministration of so many prophets, were only become more obdurate in sin: And therefore, jealous of the honour of his nation, and too solicitous for their preservation, he could not prevail with himself to accept of a commission that seemed to interfere with this; lest a ready compliance with the divine command at Nineveh should prove the disparagement at least, if not the utter rejection of (s) *his brethren, his kinsmen after the flesh.*

The prophet himself, however, has suggested another reason for his unwillingness to go to Nineveh, and that is, the superabundant mercy of God, which, he foresaw, would be moved to pity at the prayers and tears of the people; and therefore he remonstrates thus: (t) *I pray thee, O Lord, was not this my saying, when I was not yet in my country? Therefore I fled before unto Tarshish; for I knew that thou art a gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger, of great kindness, and repentest thee of the evil. But, how plausible soever this excuse may be, yet, upon the face of*

(r) Matth. xii. 41. (s) Rom. ix. 3. (t) Jonah iv. 2.

the whole affair, it appears, that the prophet considered himself a little too much; and therefore we may conclude, that the true reason for his declining the errand, was the hazard and difficulty of the undertaking, and the great uncertainty of its success: The very same thought that deterred Moses from applying to Pharaoh to grant the Israelites their liberty, and Gideon from taking up arms to rescue his country from the slavery of the Midianites: For as each of these made their several excuses; *I am of uncircumcised lips*, says one, *and how shall Pharaoh hearken unto me?* And, *I am the least in my father's house*, says the other, *and how then shall I save Israel?* So might Jonah say within himself, "*I am less than the least of the prophets,*" and how then can I expect that the people of so great and opulent a city will give any attention to my preaching; that they will rather take the alarm, and fall upon me, and slay me, when I come to tell them that their ruin and destruction is so near approaching? I'll get quit of this dangerous affair, therefore, as well as I can; and, because I conceive, that the spirit of prophecy (which upon this account makes me so uneasy) will not pursue me, after I am gone out of the Holy Land, I'll make the best of my way into Cilicia; for, when I have got at some distance from Judea, God perhaps may think no more of sending me, but may find him out some other prophet that is better qualified for this purpose." But, (u) *Whither shall I go from thy spirit?* (as one better instructed than Jonah seems to be in this article of his omnipresence, addresses himself to God), *Or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there; if I go down into hell, thou art there also; if I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there also shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me;* which no man ever so experimentally found to be true as did this prophet, while he sojourned in the deep, and took up his habitation in the whale's belly.

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(*) Some learned men indeed are of opinion, that the fish which swallowed up Jonah, was not a whale, because the largest of these (as they tell us) have but in proportion very narrow gullets, such as are not capable of receiving a

That the fish which swallowed up Jonah, very probably was a whale.

(u) Psal. cxxxix. 7. (*) Bochart, De animal. sacris, part 2. lib. v. c. 12.; Bartholin. De morbis Biblicis, art. 14.

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man entire into their stomachs : And therefore they imagine that it is what they call the *lamia*, or *sea-dog*; which, though less in bulk than a whale, has a gullet so vastly large, that frequently in its stomach have been found men, all whole and entire, (*y*) and sometimes clad in armour.

It must be acknowledged, that the Hebrew *Dag-gadol*, which the text in Jonah makes use of, signifies no more than any great fish ; but then it makes something for the common opinion, that the whale is the largest species we know of that swims in the sea. The ancients indeed seem to have enlarged too much in their account of this animal. (*z*) Pliny talks of some that were six hundred feet long, and above half as much broad. Solinus (*a*) makes others no less than eight hundred feet ; and Dionysius (*b*) seems to affirm of others, that they had a throat wide enough to swallow up a ship with all its rigging. But tho' these may pass for extravagant exaggerations, (*c*) an author, who has wrote expressly upon this subject, gives us this account, —“ That, in the northern seas, there are whales of “ such a prodigious bigness, that, when their flesh is taken “ off, and nothing left but their skeletons, they look like “ large vessels, or rather like spacious houses, with several “ chambers and windows in them, wherein a whole family might find room to live.” Their mouth (every one allows) is capable of containing several men at once. We are told (*d*) of one, cast upon the coast of Tuscany, in the year 1624, whose jaws were so wide, that a man on horseback might have rode into them with ease :” And we have not much reason to doubt, but that their throat and belly are answerable to (*e*) so spacious an opening.

It cannot be thought indeed, but the œsophagus, in creatures that are dead, must be contracted to a great degree, in comparison to what it is when they are alive, and especially when they are eating ; in which case it is capable of so great dilatation (as is evident from a pike's sometimes swallowing another fish almost of his own mag-

(*y*) This a French author named Rondelet, reports of one of these sea-dogs which was taken near Nice, or Marseilles ; Calmet's Dissert. sur le poisson qui engloutit Jonah. (*z*) Lib. 38. c. 1. (*a*) Cap. 52. (*b*) Periegetes, ver. 603. (*c*) Olaus Magnus, De piscibus monstris, lib. xxi. c. 15, 16. (*d*) John Cabri, of the academy of Florence, makes mention of this whale. (*e*) Quanto hiatus patebat os illud, quod veluti janua speluncæ illius fuit.

nitude)

nitude) that we need not much fear, but that the fish which God had provided for that purpose was able to gulp Jonah down at once, without ever hurting him. For the whale, as we are told, has neither teeth nor tushes, (whereas the sea-dog has four or five rows of teeth in each jaw), and is therefore the much properer of the two to receive into its stomach any thing alive, without the danger of contusion.

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Thus we have conveyed Jonah safe and sound into the whale's belly; let us in the next place, see how he is to live three for the space of three days. The Scripture indeed speaks precisely of (f) *three days and three nights*; but as Jonah was a type of our Saviour, and his abode in the belly of the whale a prefiguration of our Lord's continuance (g) *in the heart of the earth*, there is some reason to think, that the type, and the antitype, in this respect, were both alike; and that as our Lord was but one whole day, and part of two more, in the grave, so Jonah might continue no longer in the deep; and yet, according to the Hebrew way of computation, both be truly said to have been *three days and three nights*, in their respective confinements. But not to insist on this abbreviation of time, what some naturalists tell us of the food of the whale, viz. That it does not live on flesh, but on weeds, on the froth of the sea, on insects, and such small fish as are easy of digestion; and that, consequently, as having a colder stomach, it was a fitter receptacle for the prophet, than any other fish that was carnivorous; this might be of some consideration perhaps, were we not disposed to call in the miraculous power of God, which alone could preserve him in these circumstances. But then, we cannot but allow, that as he suspended the violence of the fire from hurting the three young men that were cast into the furnace; that as he made St. Peter's body either so light as to walk upon the waters, or the waters so solid as to support it; so, with the same facility, he might controul the acid humours in any creature's stomach, and make it, (for such a determinate time) lose its faculty of digestion: For in all this, there is nothing that surpasses the power of the great author of nature, who gives, or suspends the activity of all bodies; who stops, or controuls, who changes, or modifies, (as he thinks fit), all the motion which he

How he
might live
in the
whale's sto-
mach.

(f) Jonah i. 17. (g) Matth. xii. 40.

communicates

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communicates to matter, of what kind soever it be. And, in like manner, though it be impossible, according to the ordinary laws of nature, for a man to breathe in the stomach of a fish, or at least, to draw in such a quantity of air as is requisite to give a due circulation to his blood; yet since it is neither contrary to the nature, nor superior to the power of God, by one means or other to effect the thing, if it be but agreeable to his will, we cannot see any reason why it may not be done.

Bats and swallows, and other birds, which in the cold season of the year creep into cliffs of rocks, and hollow trees, (*h*) creatures that live under ground, and several others that abide at the bottom of deep waters, subsist in a manner without breathing. They live, as it were, in a *deliquium* of life, and the blood in their veins seems to move very slowly, if at all; and yet we find them revive again, upon the approach of the genial heat of the sun, to give their blood and juices a brisker fermentation; and why might not God then, during these three days and nights, put Jonah into the very same state of repose and tranquillity, that either the element they live in, or the colder season of the year, do naturally bring upon these animals, by correcting the fluidity, and retarding the circulation of his blood, so as to make frequent respiration not so necessary?

The ancient physicians were of opinion, that while the child continued in its mother's womb, it lived without breathing, so that there was no employment for the lungs, until it came into the open air; but later anatomists will persuade us, that without some circulation of blood in the body, no animal can live; and therefore they pretend to have found out in the foetus a considerable artery, which conveys the blood from the *vena cava* (without its passing into the right ventricle of the heart) into the lungs; from whence, by another smaller artery, (which they call the *Botal*, it is carried into the *Aorta*, and so continues in a perpetual circulation, without entering the lobes of the lungs, which are not replete with blood, nor begin to move, until the child is born and sucks in the fresh air. For then, say they, the blood being forced by the motion of the heart into the artery, whose orifice lies in its right ventricle, goes directly into the lungs, and is thence brought back by

(*h*) Calmet's Dissert. sur le Poisson, &c.

the pulmonary vein ; so that the other vessels which help the circulation of the blood in the foetus, being now become useless, do by degrees stop, and are dried up. But it may not always happen so : In some particular persons nature sometimes preserves them open ; and this is the reason which some give us, why the divers, (as they are called), who accustom themselves to go under water, to discover and bring up the riches of the deep, can abide so long in that element, without breathing.

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We pretend not however to advance, that Jonah was one of this sort of men ; but still we may affirm, that it was in God's power, during his continuance in the fish's belly, to put him in such a state of acquiescence, and his blood into such a form of circulation, as would require no more respiration, than the foetus has in the womb. In this there is nothing impossible, nothing incompatible with the laws of nature ; though it must be acknowledged, that, strictly speaking, the thing is above the ordinary and known laws of nature, and therefore miraculous ; but then, if we believe not this miracle, why should we believe any other, or why should it be thought a more incredible thing, that Jonah should live three days in the belly of a large fish, than that Lazarus (i) should be recalled to life again after he had been four days buried in the grave ; that the prophet should return from this sea-monster's stomach, safe and sound, than that the (k) three Jews in Babylon should escape from the flaming furnace, without having so much as *the smell of the fire pass upon them* ?

“ But other miracles, it may be said, were done for some wise ends of providence, and when there appeared an urgent occasion for God's exerting his almighty power ; whereas, in the case before us, there seems to be none at all.”

That prophets, however, invested with great power, and sometimes intrusted with high commissions from God, were (l) *Men subject to like passions and infirmities as we are*, is evident, not only from the testimony of the apostle, but from the accounts of their own behaviour likewise.

Answered,
by showing
for what
ends God
did this mi-
racle, viz.
to punish
Jonah.

(i) John xi. 17, 39, 44.
(l) James v. 17.

(k) Dan. iii. 27.

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The prophet that was sent to Bethel to denounce God's judgment against the idolatrous altar, was a sad example of human frailty, in giving credit to the persuasions of another, even when they contradicted a divine command. Jonah, when he was directed to go to Nineveh, discovered the like, if no greater tokens of human infirmity, when, instead of pursuing that journey, he bent his course another way, not without some vain hopes of evading by that means the divine presence : And therefore, as God sent a lion to slay the prophet of Judah, for his too much credulity ; so some have imagined, that he not only pursued this prophet of Israel with a dreadful storm, but even had him thrown over board, and swallowed up by this sea-monster, in punishment for his perverseness and prevarication. God indeed, by his overruling power, made the belly of this monster a place of security to him ; but what notions the prophet himself had of this strange habitation, (*m*) *where the floods compassed him about, and the billows and waves passed over him*, we may learn from his meditations in the deep, (*n*) *when he cried, by reason of his affliction, to the Lord, and he heard him* : So that, upon the presumption that God intended not to destroy him, the primary reason, we may imagine, for his appointing this fish to swallow him up, was to stop this fugitive prophet, as he was endeavouring to make his escape : But then, *in the midst of judgment thinking upon mercy*, after a confinement of three nights and three days in the deep, whereby he both taught him better obedience for the future, and rectified his notions concerning the divine omnipresence, he ordered his jailor (if we may so speak) to give him his liberty, and deliver him safe on shore.

To convert
the mari-
ners.

The oriental traditions do vastly differ as to the place where Jonah was cast upon the land. (*o*) Josephus must needs be under a gross mistake, when, to throw him upon some coast of the Euxine sea, he makes the whale (which could hardly be any quick mover) run eight hundred leagues, at least, in three days and nights : Neither are others, who from the upper part of the Mediterranean, carry him into the ocean, and thence into the Red-sea, or the Persian gulph, in the like space of time, any happier in their conjectures. This ship, we know, was bound for

(*m*) Jonah ii. 3. (*n*) Ibid. ver. 2. (*o*) Jewish Antiq. lib. ix. c. 11.

Tarfus

Tarsus (*p*), a great trading town in Cilicia, a province in Asia Minor, at the east end of the Mediterranean sea; and therefore the most probable opinion is, that somewhere on this coast, the fish disembogued itself of Jonah; and if so, the mariners, who, by the time that he was set on shore, had arrived at their port, when they heard the strange account of his deliverance, must have become converts to the worship of that God only, who, in this instance, had shewn himself able (*q*) *to do whatever he pleased in heaven, and in the earth, in the sea, and in all the deep places.*

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In the storm which St. Paul, in his voyage from Crete to Rome, underwent, an angel stood by him one night, and said unto him, (*r*) *Lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee*: And if, by the expression, we may understand the salvation of their souls, as well as their bodies, a sufficient reason it was, for God's permitting this distress to fall upon them, since eventually it proved the occasion of their conversion. And, in like manner, if the sudden ceasing of the storm upon *Jonah's being cast forth into the sea* (*s*), made so strong an impression upon the mariners that sailed with him, how can we think, but that his miraculous escape out of that merciless element (especially when he came to recount the particulars of it) would make them all proselytes to his religion? And if we may suppose further, that some of the ship's crew accompanied him to Nineveh, as knowing the purpose of his errand thither, to testify to the people, that he was the same man who was in this manner delivered from the jaws of the deep, or that the Ninevites came by their intelligence of this miracle by some other means; we have here a good reason why they attended to his message, and repented at his preaching; and consequently why God wrought this wonderful work upon him, in order to give his predictions more weight and authority.

Nay farther, we may suppose, that, when the people of Nineveh heard Jonah preaching about their streets, and threatening their city with so sudden a destruction, their curiosity would naturally lead them to enquire who that person was, and by whose authority it was that he *took so much upon him*? And being informed, that he was of a nation (*t*) *which had God more nigh unto them in all things,*

To magnify his own glory.

(*p*) Wells's Geography of the New Testament, part ii. (*q*) Psal. cxxv. 6. (*r*) Acts xxxvii. 24. (*s*) Jonah i. 16. (*t*) Deut. iv. 7, 8.

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that they called upon him for, and had statutes and judgments more righteous than any other people upon earth: A nation (u) to whom; (as the apostle expresses it) appertained the adoption, and the glory, and the covenant, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises: A nation (x) which the Lord had taken from the midst of another nation, had brought out of Egypt, and settled in Canaan, by temptations, by signs, and by wonders, and by war, and by a mighty hand, and by a stretched-out arm, and by great terrors; and that he, in particular, was a prophet of this great God, who had made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and who, for his disobedience in refusing to come upon this errand, had confined him in the deep for three days and nights, but now, upon his humiliation, had set him free from his ghastly prison, and given him courage to speak with so much boldness: The people, I say, who were informed of all this, could not well fail of giving God the glory due unto his name, for sending a prophet of his favourite nation, and one of so distinguished a character, to give them notice of their impending doom.

and to
make Jo-
nah a type
of Christ.

(y) I wrought for my name's sake, (says God, remembering the wondrous things which he had done for the children of Israel), I wrought for my name's sake, that it should not be polluted among the heathen, among whom they were, in whose sight I made myself known unto them, in bringing them out of the land of Egypt: And therefore we may well admit (as another motive to his working this miracle) the desire he had to raise the fame of a nation he had taken so immediately under his care, as well as to have the glory of his own name magnified among the Gentiles. To which we add that most weighty reason of all, which our blessed Saviour suggests: (z) An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign, and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas: For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so shall the son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. So that the great design of God's exhibiting, at this time, this miracle in the person of Jonah, was to confirm, in future ages, the great and fundamental article of our faith, upon which the whole superstructure of the

(u) Rom. ix. 4. (x) Deut. iv. 34. (y) Ezek. xx. 9, 14.
(z) Matth. xii. 39, 40.

Christian

Christian religion depends, *the resurrection of our Saviour* A. M. 3001, etc. Ant. Christ. 1093, etc. *Christ*; and that whenever the reality of that fact, as it is related in the New Testament, came to be called in question, we might be furnished with a parallel instance of the mighty power of God recorded in the Old. from 1 Kings viii. to the end of 2 Chron.

Nor is it only in the sacred records that we meet with this history of Jonah, but in the fables, related by several Heathen authors both in verse and prose, we find evident footsteps and memorials of it. Hercules was the great champion of the Grecians, and his fame they were wont to adorn with all the remarkable exploits that they could in any nation hear of. It is not improbable therefore, (a)

that the adventure of his jumping down the throat of the sea-dog, which Neptune had sent to devour him, and there concealing himself for three days, without any manner of hurt, save the loss of a few hairs, which came off by the heat of the creature's stomach, was founded upon some blind tradition which these people might have of what happened to Jonah. Nor can the known story of Arion, thrown over-board by the seamen, but taken up by a dolphin, and carried safe to Coriath, be justly referred to any other original; since, (b) besides some resemblance in their names, and no great disparity in the times wherein they lived, (which are both circumstances that make for this hypothesis), the supposed difference in their respective callings can be no manner of objection to it, (c) because the same word in the Hebrew tongue signifies both a prophet and a musician. And therefore it is remarkable, that as Arion played the tune wherewith he charmed and allured the fish to save him, before he jumped over-board; so Jonah, when he found himself safely landed, uttered, what is called (d) a prayer indeed, but is, in reality, a lofty hymn in commemoration of his great deliverance, as appears by this specimen: (e) *The waters compassed me about, even to the soul: the depth closed me round about, and weeds were wrapped about my head. I went down to the bottoms of the mountains; the earth, with her bars, was about me for ever; yet hast thou brought up my life from the pit, O Lord my God,*

(a) Lycophron. vid. Grotius and Bochart. (b) Huet. Demonst. evang. propos. 4. De prophetâ Jona. (c) Huetius ibid. (d) Jonah ii. 2. (e) Ibid. ver. 5, 6.

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from

1 Kings viii. *From the Death of Uzziah, to the Death of Josiah King*
to the end
of 2 Chron.
of Judah.

C H A P. IV.

The History.

Zechariah
made king
of Israel, is
murdered
by Shallum,
who is slain
by Mena-
hem.

THE interregnum †, or vacancy in the throne Israel, which lasted for two and twenty years and upwards, occasioned so general a confusion, that the people, at length, came to a resolution to place Zechariah, the son of Jeroboam, and the fourth † and last of Jehu's line, upon the throne. This happened in the eight and thirtieth year of Uzziah king of Judah; but as he proved a wicked prince, and followed the steps of his ancestors, he did not live long to enjoy the government: For at the end of six months, he was murdered by Shallum, who usurped the throne; but enjoyed it no longer than one month. For Menahem, general of the king's forces, which were then besieging Tirzah, hearing of what Shallum had done, immediately raised the siege, and marching directly to Samaria, defeated and slew Shallum; and by the power and authority of the army, placed himself upon the throne. Not long

† This interregnum some chronologers make longer, and some shorter, according as they suppose that Zechariah reigned more or less in conjunction with his father: But that there was manifestly a vacancy in the throne of Israel for the time assigned, is evident from hence:—That Jeroboam the Second, who began to reign in the fifteenth year of Amaziah king of Judah, died in the fifteenth year of Uzziah; and that his son Zechariah began not to reign till the eight and thirtieth year of the said Uzziah; so that there was plainly all this interregnum; but whence it was occasioned, whether by foreign wars, or rather by domestic confusions, (as appears by the unfortunate end of the successors), we are no where told; *Patrick's Commentary*.

† God had promised Jehu, that for executing his will upon the house of Ahab, he would continue the crown of Israel in his family for four generations; and accordingly Jehoahaz, Joash, Jehoram, and Zechariah succeeded him: But because he did it, not so much in obedience to the divine command, as to satisfy his ambitious views, and in a method of cruelty quite abhorrent to the divine

long after this, he returned with his army to Tirzah † ; but the inhabitants refusing to open the gates, he took the place by storm, and so having spoiled it, and laid all the country waste as far as Tiphzah, he came, and sat down before it : But when the people of Tiphzah, in like manner, refused to open their gates, and submit to him, without distinction of age or sex, he put them all to the sword,

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divine nature, God cut his family short, as soon as he had fulfilled his promise to him, and thereby accomplished the prophecy of Hosea ; *I will avenge the blood of Jezreel upon the house of Jehu, and will cause to cease the kingdom of the house of Israel,*, chap. i. 4. ; and perhaps it was in remembrance of this prophecy, as well as of the promise which confined the kingdom in Jehu's family to four generations only, 2 Kings xv. 10. that Shallum was encouraged to attempt the life of Zechariah ; *Patrick's Commentary* ; and *Pool's Annotations*.

† This is a place we find frequent mention of in the sacred records, because it was a long time the regal city of the kingdom of Israel, after that the ten tribes had revolted from the house of David. Jeroboam, who was the first king of Israel, (though he dwelt for some time in Shechem), in his latter days, at least, resided here, as did all the other kings of Israel ; until Omri, having reigned six years in Tirzah, built Samaria, and removed the royal seat thither, where it continued until a final period was put to that kingdom. Now the reason which induced the first kings of Israel to make Tirzah the place of their residence, may be gathered from that expression in Canticles, *Thou art beautiful, O my love, as Tirzah*, chap. vi. 4. which certainly implies that Tirzah was a beautiful and pleasant city to dwell in. But how famous and beautiful a place soever this city was, we have no certain account of its situation ; only it is supposed by most, that as Jeroboam was of the tribe of Ephraim, he would be naturally inclined to make choice of a place within the compass of his tribe for his royal city : And this opinion is thought to receive some confirmation from the word *Ephraim's* being frequently used to denote the whole kingdom of Israel, even because its capital city was situated in that tribe. However this be, it is pretty plain, from the circumstances of the story, that the Tiphzah where Menahem exercised so much cruelty, was not the town of that name which lay upon the Euphrates, mentioned in 1 Kings iv. 21. as one of the boundaries of Solomon's dominion, but some place not far from Tirzah, and consequently, very probably in the tribe of Ephraim ; *Well's Geograph. of the Old Test.* vol. iii.

and,

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and, in short, was so barbarously cruel, as to * rip up the very women that were with child.

Pul † king of Assyria, taking the advantage of these distractions, marched with an army, and invaded the kingdom of Israel on the other side of Jordan, which lay nearest to Babylon : But Menahem by a present of three thousand talents of silver, which he raised out of the wealthiest of his subjects, prevailed with him, not only to withdraw his forces, but to recognise his title likewise to the crown

* Josephus does not indeed make mention of this particular instance of his unrelenting cruelty ; but this he tells us, that “ when he had taken the town, he put all to the sword, without sparing a man, woman, or child ; and that he exercised such merciless rigour and inhumanity towards his own countrymen, as would have been unpardonable even to the worst of barbarians :” But by these methods he thought, no doubt, to terrify the whole kingdom, so that none might dare to withstand him ; *Jewish Antiq. lib. 9. c. 11.* ; and *Patrick's Comment.*

† This is the first time that we find any mention made of the kingdom of Assyria, since the days of Nimrod, who erected a small principality there, Gen. x. 11. and Pul, or Phul, is the first monarch of that nation who invaded Israel, and began their transportations out of their country. Some are of opinion, that he was the same with Belesis, the governor of Babylon, who, together with Arbaces the Mede, slew Sardanapalus, the last of the Assyrian monarchs, and translated the empire to the Chaldeans. Our excellent Patrick seems to be confident in this. But according to our learned Prideaux, Belesis was one generation later ; and therefore it is supposed, that this Pul was the father of Sardanapulus, who was called *Sardon* with the annexion of his father's name *Pul*, in the same manner as Mero-dach king of Babylon, was called *Merodach-Baladan*, because he was the son of Baladan. This Pul therefore was the same king of Assyria who, when Jonah preached against Nineveh, gave great tokens of his humiliation and repentance. The only difficulty is, that he seems to have marched his army from Babylon, and not from Nineveh, and yet his son and successor, we find, lived at Nineveh : But then it is suggested, that as the kings of Assyria resided sometimes at Babylon, and sometimes at Nineveh, it is not improbable that Pul, to avoid the judgments which Jonah threatened against the latter, might remove to Babylon, where he resided the remaining part of his reign ; and this made it so convenient for him to attack the Israelites on the other side of Jordan ; *Prideaux's Connection, A. 747* ; and *Bedford's Scripture-chronology, lib. 6.*

of Israel, before he left the kingdom; which was one great reason, that he held the quiet possession of it for the space of ten years, and in the fiftieth year of Uziah king of Judah, died, and † was succeeded in it by his son Pekahiah.

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Pekahiah, however, did not reign above two years, before he was murdered, in his royal palace, by Pekah, the general of his army, who, in the last year of Uziah, usurped the crown, and wore it for twenty years, but not without much disquiet and perplexity. For after that Tiglath-Pileser †, king of Assyria, had several times invaded his

Menahem
is succeeded
ed by Pe-
kahiah, who
is murder-
ed by Pe-
kah, who
is murder-
ed by Ho-
shea, under
whom the
Israelitish
kingdom
was de-
stroyed by
Salmaneser.

† This shews that Menahem was a man of great weight and consideration; since, notwithstanding all his violence and cruelty, he left the kingdom in his own family, which his two predecessors could not do. It is manifest, however, that there was a small interregnum of about a year's continuance, between his death and his son's accession: For his son did not begin to reign till the fiftieth year of Uziah, and yet he must have been dead the year before, because it is said of him, 2 Kings xv. that he began to reign in the thirty-ninth of Uziah, and reigned but ten years. There was therefore apparently an interregnum; but what the occasion of it was, it is not so well known; though there is room to suppose, that it proceeded from the interest of his successor, who might raise a party to keep him out of the throne, as he did afterwards to deprive him both of that and life. For (according to Josephus " he was cut to pieces, with several of his friends about him, at a public feast, by the treasonable practice of Pekah, one of his principal officers, who, seizing upon the government, reigned about twenty years, and left it at last a difficult question to determine, *Whether he was more remarkable for his impiety towards God, or for his injustice towards men?*" Joseph. Antiq. lib. ix. c. ii.; and Bedford's Scripture-chronology, lib. vi.

† He is supposed by some to have been the son and successor of Sardanapalus, who restored the kingdom of Assyria, and possessed it, after it had been dismembered by Belesis and Arbaces; but our learned Prideaux (who begins his excellent *Connection of the history of the Old and New Testament* at this period) makes him to be the same with Arbaces, by Ælian called *Tolgamus*, and by Castor, *Ninus Junior*; who, together with Belesis, headed the conspiracy against Sardanapalus, and fixed his royal seat at Nineveh, the ancient residence of the Assyrian kings, as Belesis (who in Scripture is likewise called Baladan, Is. xxxix. 1.) did his at Babylon, and

A. M. 3601, &c.
 Ant. Christ.
 1003, &c.
 from
 1 Kings viii.
 to the end
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His kingdom, taken his cities, ravaged the country, and carried away great numbers of his subjects captive, Hoshea † the son of Elah murdered him, (as he had done his predecessor), and after an interregnum of nine years, thrust himself into the throne; but it was not long before he found that his usurpation was attended with many incumbrances.

Salmaneser, who in the fourteenth year of Ahaz, king of Judah, succeeded his father Tiglath-Pileser, in the kingdom of Assyria, invaded his country, and having subdued Samaria, made him promise to become his vassal, and to pay him an annual tribute. For some time Hoshea sent his presents, and his tribute-money, very punctually; but having entered into a confederacy with So † king of Egypt, by his assistance he hoped to be able to shake off the Assyrian yoke; and therefore with-

and there governed his new-erected empire for nineteen years; *Prideaux's Connection, anno 747.*

† After he had murdered his predecessor Pekah, the elders of the land seem to have taken the government into their own hands; for he had not the possession of the kingdom till the latter end of the twelfth year of Ahaz, *i. e.* about nine years after he had committed the fact. He came to the crown, it must be owned, in a very wicked manner, and yet his character in Scripture is not so vile as many of his predecessors, 2 Kings xvii. 2. For whereas the kings of Israel had hitherto maintained guards upon the frontiers, to hinder their subjects from going to Jerusalem to worship, Hoshea took away these guards, and gave free liberty to all to go, and pay their adorations where the law had directed. And therefore, when Hezekiah invited all Israel to come to his passover, this prince permitted all that would to go; and when, upon their return from that festival, they destroyed all the monuments of idolatry that were found in the kingdom of Samaria, instead of forbidding them, he, in all probability, gave his consent to it; because, without some tacit encouragement at least, they durst not have ventured to do it; *Prideaux's Connection, anno 729.*

† This So with whom Hoshea entered into confederacy, is, in profane authors, called *Sabacou*, that famous Ethiopian, mentioned by Herodotus and Diodorus Siculus, who, in the beginning of Hezekiah's reign, invaded Egypt, and having taken Boccharis, the king thereof, prisoner, had him, in great cruelty, burnt alive, and then seized on his kingdom; *Prideaux's Connection, anno 726.*

drew his subjection, and would pay no more tribute; whereupon Salmaneser † marched with an army against him, and having subdued all the country round, and amassed a * great quantity of rich prey, he came, and sat down before Samaria. The town held out for three years; but being at length compelled to surrender, Salmaneser quite demolished it. He took Hoshea, and put him in chains, and shut him up in prison all his days; and having † carried the people into captivity, and placed them in the north parts of Assyria, and in the cities of the Medes, he sent several colonies of his own subjects from Babylon, and other provinces, to replenish the land: But being too few for this purpose, and withal very wicked and idolatrous people, the Divine Providence permitted lions †, and other wild beasts, to multiply upon them to such

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† Salmaneser (who in Tobit i. 2. is called Enemessar, and in Hosea x. 14. Shalman) was the son and successour of Arbaces, or Tiglath-Pileser, and according to Josephus, (who has quoted a passage from Menander), there is mention made of him, and of his conquest over the land of Israel, in the history of the Tyrians; *Jewish Antiq. lib. ix. c. 14.*

* In this expedition, among other rich things which he took and carried away, was the golden calf which Jeroboam had set up at Bethel, which, ever since his time, had been worshipped by the ten tribes that had revolted with him from the house of David, as the other golden calf, which he at that time set up at Dan, had been taken thence, about ten years before, by his father Tiglath-Pileser, when he invaded Galilee, the province wherein that city stood; *Prideaux's Connection, anno 729.*

† The policy of any prince, in transplanting a conquered people into another country, is to prevent their combining together, (which they cannot so well do in a strange land, and among a mixt multitude of different languages), in order to shake off their uneasy yoke, and recover their liberty; *Le Clerc's Commentary.*

† Josephus, in this part of the history, takes the liberty to alter the sense of the sacred text: For instead of the increase of lions, which destroyed the people, he tells us, "That they were visited with a dreadful plague, so that the place was, in a manner, quite depopulated by it." But allowing it to be lions, why should these new inhabitants be afflicted with these creatures for not fearing the Lord, 2 Kings xvii. 25. when the Israelites, who feared the Lord as little as they, were never infected with any such thing? The Israelites indeed were addicted

A. M. 3001, &c. Ant. Christ. 1003, &c. from 1 Kings viii. to the end of 2 Chron.
 such a degree, that they were forced to make a representation thereof at the Assyrian court, viz. "That being ignorant of the manner wherein they were to worship the God of the country, they supposed that this affliction was sent upon them; and therefore they humbly prayed, that some priest of the Jewish nation might be sent to instruct them in that particular." This accordingly was done: But as these colonies consisted of a mixture of different nations and provinces, they joined the worship of the true God with that of the several idols of the countries from whence they came; so that one might have seen the people who came from Babylon worshipping Succoth Benoth †; the men of Cuthath,

A strange confusion of religion introduced into the land of Israel.

to idolatry; but then they did not deny the divine power and providence, only they imagined, that their idols were the intermediate causes whereby the blessings of the supreme God might be conveyed to them; whereas those new comers believed the idols that they worshipped to be true gods, and had no conceptions higher. They had no notion of one eternal, almighty, and independent being. The God of Israel they took to be such an one as their own, a topical god, whose power and care extended no farther than to one particular nation, or people; and therefore, to rectify their sentiments in this particular, he took this method to let them know, that *all the beasts of the forest were his*, and that whenever he is incensed with a people, he wants no instruments to execute his wrath; the air, the earth, the elements, and creatures of any kind, can avenge him, and punish them; *Jewish Antiq.* l. ix. c. 14.; and *Calmet's Commentary*.

† Among the great variety of conjectures, it is difficult to tell what we are properly to understand by these abstruse words. The Jewish doctors will have them to signify *an ben and chickens*; but for what reason, it is hardly conceivable. Others rather think them that celestial constellation called *Pleiades*, which the Babylonians, who were greatly addicted to astronomy, might possibly worship; some think them the name of a city which the Babylonians built in Samaria; and others a particular deity whom they adored: But since the words plainly import the *tabernacle of daughters*, or *young maidens*, they may be most properly referred to those infamous places where all the young women were obliged, once in their lives, to prostitute themselves to any that asked the favour, in honour of the goddess Mylitta, who, in other nations, is called *Venus*. Herodotus, in *Clio*, lib. i. gives us an account of this abominable custom at large, and it is not improbable, that these Babylonians might bring it along with them

thath †, praying to Nergal †; those of Hamath †, A. M. 3001, &c.
 setting up Ashimah †; the Avites †, adoring Nib-
 haz, 1003, &c.

them into the country of Samaria; *Calmet's Dictionary*, under the word; *Selden, De diis Syriis syntag.* 2. c. 7.; *Vossius, De ido-* from Kingsviii.
lolat. lib. 2. c. 2.; and *Jurieu, Histoire des dogmes, &c. part 4.* 10 to the end of 2 Chron. c. 8.

† A province of Assyria, which (as some say) lies upon the Araxes; but others rather think it to be the same with Cush, which is said by Moses to be encompassed by the river Gihon, and must therefore be the same with the country which the Greeks call *Susiana*, and which, to this very day, is called by the inhabitants *Chusestan*; *Well's Geography of the Old Testament*, vol. iii.

† The Rabbins, who are followed therein by some other interpreters, think, that this deity is worshipped under the shape of a woodcock; but, as the word *Ner* signifies a lamp, others (with better reason) have imagined, that the Cuthites, who were afterwards called *Persians*, adored fire, and, in honour of the Sun, (in the same manner as the Persians did), kept a perpetual fire burning upon their altars; *Calmet's Dictionary*, under the word; and *Patrick's Commentary*.

† There are several cities and countries which go under this name; but what we take here to be meant, is that province of Syria that lies upon the Orontes, wherein there was a city of the same name, which, when Salmaneser had taken, he removed the inhabitants from thence into Samaria, at distance enough (as he thought) to prevent their raising any fresh commotion; *Calmet's Commentary*.

† Some of the Jewish doctors say, that this Syrian god was worshipped under the shape of an ape; others of a lamb; others of a goat; others of a satyr; and others in the figure wherein the poets represent the god Pan. They who made an ape of this idol-god, seem to have some regard to the sound of the word *Sima*, which has an analogy to the Greek word *Simia*; but the Hebrews, it is very well known, have another word to denote an ape, which, together with the goat, was properly an Egyptian deity. The Syrians, however, adored the sun, under the appellation of *Elah Gabelah*, from whence the Emperor Heliogabalus (who instituted that worship with so much magnificence in Rome) took his name; and therefore, as *Asuman* or *Suman*, in the Persian language, signifies *heaven*, the Syrians might from hence derive the name of their god, who was represented by a large stone-pillar, terminating in a conic or pyramidal figure, whereby they denoted *fire*; *Calmet's Commentary*, and *Dictionary*, under the word; and *Tenison, Of Idolatry*.

† In Deut. ii. 23. we read of the Avims; but then, in the

A. M. 3001, &c. Ant. Chris. 1003, &c. from 1 Kings viii. to the end of 2 Chron.

haz †, and Tartak; and those of Sephervaim †, prostrate before Adramalech † and Anamalech; and all this, going on with the service of the God of Israel, made a strange and unaccountable medley of religion.

This

same text we are told, that the Caphtorim (which is generally understood of the Philistines) *destroyed them, and lived in their stead*, long before these times; nor does it appear, that the king of Assyria ever had under his subjection the places where these people are said to have lived. The most probable opinion seems, therefore, to be that which the learned Grotius has suggested, by observing, that there are a people in Bactriana, mentioned by Ptolemy under the name of *Avadia*, who might possibly be those whom Salmaneser at this time transported into Palestine; *Well's Geography of the Old Testament*, vol. iii.

† What these idols were, it is almost impossible to tell. Our learned Selden, though he thinks they were the same idol under different appellations, acknowledges himself unable to give any account of them; for he quite overlooks the fancy of the Rabbinical writers, who dress up the former in the shape of a dog, and the latter in that of an ass; *Patrick's Commentary*. Jurieu, in his *Histoire des dogmes*, &c. part 4. c. 10. has observed, that as the word *Nibhas* or *Nibchas*, both in the Hebrew and Chaldee, with a small variation, denotes *quick, swift, rapid*, &c. and *Tartak*, in the same language, signifies *a chariot*, these two idols may both together denominate *the son mounted on his car*, as the fictions of the poets, and the notions of the Heathen theologists, were wont to represent that bright luminary.

† Ptolemy makes mention of a city called *Zipphara*, on the banks of the river Euphrates, which the generality of interpreters take to be this: But, as the sacred history tells us, that the Israelites were translated into the cities of the Medes, and these Medes, in all likelihood, were brought to supply their places; between Colchis and Media there are a people, whom Herodotus calls the *Saspires*, which may be the same with these that the text calls the *Sepharvaites*; *Calmet's Commentary*.

† The former of these, according to the Jewish doctors, was represented in the form of a mule, some say a peacock; and the latter in the form of an horse, some say a pheasant: But the definition of the words, as well as the sacrifices that were made to them, quite destroys these idle fancies. *Moloch*, *Milcom*, and *Melech*, in the languages of different nations, do all signify *a king*, and are put for the Sun, which is called *the King*, as the moon is *the Queen*, of heaven: And therefore the addition of *Addir* to the one, which denotes *powerful*, and of *Anna* to the other, which signifies *to answer*, means

This was the end of the Israelitish kingdom, after it had subsisted above two hundred and fifty-six years, and the beginning of that mungrel people which went afterwards under the name of *Samaritan*. Among the captive Israelites that were carried away by Salmaneser, † we have

A. M.
3001, etc.
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means no more than *the mighty* or *the oracular Moloch*; as the children which were offered to him in sacrifice shew, that he was the same with the Moloch of the Ammonites, or the Saturn of the Phœnicians; *Calmet's* and *Patrick's Commentaries*.

† This account we have here inserted in the sacred history, not that we look upon the book of Tobit as canonical, (for that the Jews and ancient Christians never held it to be, though the church of Rome, by a decree of the council of Trent, thought fit to receive it as such), but purely because it has been allowed, by the generality of the Christian fathers, to be a true history of this particular family, a good exemplar of charity and beneficence, and an excellent pattern of paternal care and filial obedience. The book itself is supposed to have been wrote, the former part of it by Tobit, and the latter by his son; at least it is thought, that they left behind them memoirs of their family, and such materials as a latter author, who lived very likely either in or after the captivity, (because the words *Raphael*, *Gabriel*, and *Michael* are allowed to be Babylonish), might compile and digest into proper order. It is not doubted, but that the original of this book was either in Hebrew or Chaldee. St. Jerom, having met with a Chaldee copy of it, did not question but that he had got the original, and accordingly employed a man that was perfectly well skilled in that language to render it into Hebrew, whilst himself translated it into Latin; and this is the version that the church of Rome chiefly esteems. Before this version there was another, (which is reckoned the most ancient) done into Greek; but who the author of it was, or from what language he translated it, we have but small foundation for conjecture; though some have been apt to think, that it came from the same fountain from whence St. Jerom had his, but that the translator had taken such freedoms with the text, as obliged him to re-translate it. The Latin translation, which was in use before St. Jerom's appeared, seems to have been taken from the Greek, though in many places it varies from it, by abridging sometimes, and sometimes amplifying, the narration. The Hebrew copies, published by Fagius and Munster, are nothing but translations (and those very modern ones) from the Greek or Latin versions, though, in many places of the book, they take the freedom to vary from them. That of munster is supposed to have been

A. M.
1001, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1003, &c.
from

1 Kings viii.
to the end
of 2 Chron.

The story
of Tobit
and Tobias
abridged.

an account of Tobit, of the tribe of Naphtali, (a) who married one Anna, a woman of the same tribe, and by her had but one son, whose name was *Tobias*: That, during his captivity, he was advanced to be purveyor to King Salmaneser; and, in that capacity, had liberty to go where he pleased; which gave him an opportunity of visiting his brethren; and doing them all good offices, of supplying their wants, and lending them money upon any occasion, as he did to one Gabriel, a kinsman of his, who lived at Rages in Media, to the sum of ten talents, for which he

been done by himself, and that of Fagius by the Jews of Constantinople in the year 1517, and has so near a conformity to the Greek, that no manner of doubt is to be made of its being descended from thence. These are the several versions that we have of this book of Tobit, which, as it was not received into the canon of the Jews, was not therefore admitted into that of the ancient Christian authors, who confined themselves to those books which the Jews acknowledged to be canonical. It is certain, that neither Josephus, nor Philo, nor any of the ancient Jewish writers, make any mention of that copy which St. Jerom took so much pains about, nor do they register it among their sacred books. Fagius pretends, that this book of Tobit does not contain a true history, but a pious fiction only, wherein, under borrowed names, the characters of a father and a son truly pious are set forth; and our learned Prideaux seems to go farther, when he tells us. "That there are some matters in it, which are not so reconcilable to a rational credibility, which look indeed more like the fictions of Homer than the writings of a sacred historian, and gives such an objection against the book as does not lie against any other." But, notwithstanding these allegations, we may be assured, that the Jews had all along a great regard for this book. Origen, in his Epistle to Africanus, tells us, that the ancient Christians read it, though they placed it among their apocryphal writings. St. Jerom acknowledges, that though they did not receive it into their canon, yet they admitted it among their Hagiographa. Grotius owns, that they read this book, and looked upon it as a true history; and our own Prideaux confesses, that "it is of great use to represent to us the duties of charity and patience, in the example of Tobit's ready helping his brethren in their distress, to the utmost of his power; and his bearing, with a pious submission, the calamities of his captivity, poverty, and blindness, as long as they were inflicted on him;" *Calmet's preface sur le livre de Tobie*; and *Prideaux's Connection*, anno 612.

(a) Tobit. 1.

took

took his note : That by a revolution of fortune, himself being reduced to a low condition, deprived of his eye-sight, and now advanced in years, he ordered his son to go to Rages, to fetch the money he had left in his kinsman's hand ; and because it was proper to have a companion in so long a journey, he hired a young man (as he thought) to be his guide, but who afterwards proved to be the angel Raphael : That coming to their inn one night upon the banks of the Tigris, Tobias went into the river to wash his feet, when a large fish made at him, as though it would devour him ; but the angel encouraged him to lay hold on it, and draw it to the shore, and then bade him open it, and take out the heart, the gall, and the liver ; for that the heart and liver, when burnt, would drive away evil spirits, and the gall was an excellent remedy for all impediments in the sight : That when they came to Ecbatana, they went to one Raguel, a near relation of Tobit's, who had an only daughter, named *Sara*, but her misfortune was to be haunted by a demon, who had slain her seven husbands successively, the very first night they went to bed to her : That notwithstanding this, by the persuasion of the angel, Tobias was induced to marry her, and by following his advice how he and his wife were to conduct themselves after marriage, and in what manner they were to fumigate the room by burning the liver of the fish, came off safe, to the great joy of the whole family : That having received the money at Rages, he returned with his wife to his parents at Nineveh ; and, upon his return, cured his father of his blindness, by rubbing his eyes with the fish's gall, which brought away a kind of white film that obstructed his sight : That after this recovery of his sight, Tobit lived about forty years ; but having all along charged his son (as soon as he and his wife were dead) to leave Nineveh, because the wickedness of the people, he was sure, would bring upon it the judgment which Jonah had denounced, Tobias (as soon as he had done his last duty to his parents) left the place, and, with his wife and family, returned to Ecbatana, where he found his father and mother-in-law healthy, though now grown old. Upon their death he succeeded to their estate ; and, after he had lived to the age of fourscore and nineteen, died in peace, and was buried by his children. But it is time now to look back upon the affairs of the kingdom of Judah.

Jotham,

A. M.
3246, &c.
Ant. Christ.
758, &c.
from
1 Kings viii.
to the end
of 2 Chron.
Jotham's
good and
prosperous
reign, over
Judah.

Jotham, the son of Uzziah king of Judah, was five and twenty years old when he began to reign; though, as viceroy to his father, he had the whole administration in his hands for some years before. He (*b*) was a prince † famous for all excellent qualities and virtues; a man exemplary for his reverence to God, his justice to men, and his care for the commonwealth. He made it his business to set and keep things in order; to rectify whatever he found amiss; and, in matters of religion, would have made a thorough reformation, but that his people were extremely wicked, and obstructed his designs. He took care, notwithstanding, to repair the temple; to rebuild the High-gate which led from his palace; and (to secure himself against hostile invasions) raised several structures, both in the mountains and forests, for the service and strength of the kingdom.

The Moabites however, though they had been formerly conquered by David, and made tributary to the crown of Judah, were now become so powerful, that they invaded Jotham; but he, with a good body of men, soon drove them out of his country, and imposed on them a tribute of an hundred talents of silver, ten thousand measures of wheat, and as many of barley, to be paid him yearly. For three years they continued to pay it; but when Rezin king of Syria, and Pekah king of Israel, entered into a confederacy against Judah, they took this opportunity of revolting; and Jotham indeed had his hands too full ever to attempt to reduce them. He however died in peace, before the preparations for war that were making against him,

(*b*) Josephus's Jewish Antiquities, b. ix. c. 11.

† Solomon Jarchi here observes, that all the kings of Judah had some crime or other laid to their charge, except this Jotham: That David himself sinned grievously in the matter of Uriah; that Solomon by his wives was drawn into idolatry; that Rehoboam forsook the law of the Lord, and Abijah walked in his steps; that Asa sent the treasures of the temple to the king of Syria, and put the prophet in the stocks; that Jehoshaphat entered into society with the idolatrous; and so he goes on with all the rest: But in Jotham, says he, there is no fault found, (which in an age of general corruption, is pretty wonderful), unless we may suppose, that *the people's sacrificing and burning incense still on high-places*, 2 Kings xv. 35. (which he, by his authority, might have removed), be imputable to him as a fault; *Patrick's Commentary.*

took effect: And being buried in the royal sepulchre of his ancestors, left his son Ahaz (who was then about twenty years of age, but much degenerated from his father's piety) under a fearful apprehension of the approaching war.

The design of the two confederate kings, upon taking of Jerusalem, was to have extirpated the whole house of David, and set up a new king over Judah, the son of Tabeal †; but as God's design was only to punish Ahaz, and not to cut off the whole family of David his servant, he sent the prophet Isaiah to encourage him in the defence of the city, and (to assure him, that they should not succeed in their attempt) he gave him two signs, the one to be accomplished speedily, and the other at some distance of time. The former was, (c) that the son which the prophet then had by his wife, should not be of age to discern between good and evil, before both these kings should be cut off from the land. The other was, that a virgin (d) should conceive, and bear a son, who should be called *Emanuel*, so that he might rest himself satisfied; because the destruction of the house of David could in no case happen, until the Messiah should be born, in this miraculous manner, of a virgin descended from that family: And accordingly the two kings finding themselves not able to carry the town so soon as they expected, raised the siege, and returned home.

This deliverance, however, made no other impression upon Ahaz, than that instead of being reformed, he grew more wicked and obdurate in his sins. For he not only set up the worship of the golden calves, (for which he had not the same politic reason that the kings of Israel had); but made molten images likewise for all the inferior gods of the Heathens. To these he sacrificed, and burnt incense in the high places, and on the hills, and under every green tree. Nay, (and to add to all his other impieties),

† Who this person was, it is no where said in Scripture; but he seems to have been some potent and factious Jew, who having revolted from his master the King of Judah, excited and stirred up this war against him, out of an ambitious aim of plucking him down from the throne, and reigning in his stead; *Prideaux's Connection*, anno 747.

(c) Isaiah viii. 4. (d) Ibid. viii. 14.

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758, etc.
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made his sons *pass through the fire to Moloch* *, in the valley of the sons of Hinnom † ; for which provocations the Lord brought upon him the same confederate army, the year following. * This, dividing itself into three bodies, the first under Rezin king of Syria, the second under Pekah king of Israel, and the third under Zichri, a mighty man of Ephraim, invaded his kingdom in three different parts, at the same time.

* Interpreters are agreed, that *this passing through the fire* was performed, either by causing the child to pass between two fires made near one another, by way of its consecration to the service of Moloch, or by putting it in the body of the idol made of brass, and heated extremely hot, so that it was immediately burnt to death. But then, to abate the horror of the crime, some are of opinion, that Ahaz made his sons pass through the fire, in the former sense only, and that because we find Hezekiah survive, and succeed him in the throne, and another of his sons, viz. Maaseiah, slain by Zichri, at his taking of Jerusalem, but this does not hinder Ahaz from having other sons, not mentioned in the history, whom he might make sacrifices to Moloch. The Scripture says expressly, that *he made his sons to pass through the fire, according to the abominations of the Heathen, whom the Lord cast out before the children of Israel*, 2 Kings xvi. 3. Now, it is incontestably true, that the ancient inhabitants of the land of Israel did frequently imitate the Heathens in these barbarities: *They offered their sons and their daughters unto devils, and defiled the land with innocent blood, which they offered unto the idols of Canaan*, Psal. cvi. 36. Vid. Ezek. xvi. 20, 21. and xxiii. 37, 39. And therefore it is reasonable to think that he did the same, and that this is recorded against him as an aggravation of his other crimes; *Patrick's* and *Calmet's Commentaries*.

† Hinnom, in all probability, was some eminent person in ancient times, to whom this valley belonged, and to whose posterity it descended, and is therefore sometimes called the *valley of the children of Hinnom*. It was a famous plot of ground on the east side of Jerusalem, and so delightfully shaded, that it invited the people to make it a place of idolatrous worship, whereby it became infamous, and was at last turned into a public dunghil, or receptacle where all the filth and excrements of the city were brought and burnt; for which purpose, there was a perpetual fire kept, which made it a kind of image or representation of hell; *Patrick's Commentary on Josh.* xv. 8.

Rezin

Rezin took Elah †, out of which he drove the Jews, and settled the Edomites in it; and, having loaded his army with spoils, and taken a vast number of captives, returned to Damascus. Pekah, with his army, marched directly against Ahaz, and gave him a terrible overthrow, wherein he destroyed no less than an hundred and twenty thousand of his men: And Zichri, taking advantage of this victory, marched to Jerusalem; and, having taken the royal city, slew Maaseiah the king's son, and all the great men of the kingdom, whom he found there. After this, both these armies of Israel, in their return, carried with them vast spoils, and above two hundred thousand captives, whom they intended to have sold for slaves; but, as they approached Samaria, the prophet Oded, with the principal inhabitants of the city, came out to meet them, and, after proper remonstrances of their cruelty to their brethren, prevailed with them, not only to release the prisoners, but to let them likewise be clothed and relieved out of the spoils they had taken, and so sent back to their own houses.

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The kingdom of Judah was no sooner delivered from these enemies, but it was invaded by others, who treated it with the same cruelty: For the Edomites to the south, and the Philistines to the west, seized on those parts which lay contiguous to them; and, by ravages and inroads, did all the mischief they could to the rest.

† Elah, or Elam, (as we took notice before), was a famous port on the Red-sea, which David, in his conquest of the kingdom of Edom, took, and there established a great trade to divers parts of the world. In the reign of Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat, the Edomites recovered their liberty, and became sole masters of this city, until the time that Uzziah recovered it to the dominion of Judah, 2 Kings xiv. 22.; but, in the reign of Ahaz, the Syrians retook it, and restored it to the Edomites, and why they chose to do this, rather than keep so advantageous a place in their own possession, we may learn from what we read of the Edomites, 2 Chron. xxviii. 17. viz. that they invaded Judah, as auxiliaries to the King of Syria, much about the time that he was engaged in war with that kingdom; and therefore it is no wonder, that he should give up a place which lay at too great a distance for him to keep, to the Edomites, whose originally it was, and who made perhaps the restitution of it one article of their confederacy with him; *Patrick's* and *Le Clerc's Commentaries*.

A. M.
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Ant. Christ.
758, &c.
from
1 Kings viii.
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of 2 Chron.

He makes a
league with
the king of
Assyria, and
becomes
tributary to
him.

Being reduced to this low condition, and seeing no other remedy left to his affairs, Ahaz sent an embassy to Tiglath-Pileser king of Assyria, with a large present of all the gold and silver that he could find in the treasury of the temple, and as large promises, to become his vassal and tributary for ever, if he would but send forces to his assistance against his enemies.

The king of Assyria readily laid hold on this invitation; and, marching with a great army against Rezin king of Syria, he slew him in battle; besieged, and took his capital of Damascus; and, having reduced the whole country under his dominion, transplanted the people to Kir, a place in the Upper Media, and so put an end to the kingdom of Syria in Damascus *, after it had continued for nine or ten generations.

After this he marched against Pekah; seized all that belonged to Israel beyond Jordan; and, having plundered the land of Galilee, proceeded towards Jerusalem, with an intent to squeeze more money out of Ahaz, which when he had done, (by making him cut the vessels of the temple to pieces, and melt them down, to satisfy his avarice), he

* In the time of Abraham, Damascus was in being; and some of the ancients inform us, that this patriarch reigned there immediately after Damascus, its founder. Thus much is certain, that one whom he had made free, and appointed steward of his house, was of Damascus, Gen. xv. 2. at the time that he pursued Chederlaomer and the five confederated kings, as far as Hobah, which lies northward of Damascus, Gen. xiv. 15. The Scripture says nothing more of this city, until the time of David, when Hadad, who, according to Josephus, (*Jewish Antiq. lib. vii. c. 6.*), was the first who took upon him the title of *King of Damascus*, sending troops to the assistance of Hadadezer king of Zabab, was himself defeated by David, and his country subdued. Towards the end of Solomon's reign, Rezin recovered the kingdom of Damascus, and shook off the Jewish yoke, 1 Kings xi. 23, &c. Some time after this, Aza king of Judah, implored the help of Benhadad king of Damascus, against Baasha king of Israel, 1 Kings xv. 18. And from this time the kings of Damascus were generally called *Benhadad*, till, in this last controversy with them, Ahaz called in the assistance of the king of Assyria, who killed their king, and carried his subjects into captivity, according to the predictions of Isaiah, chap. vii. 9. and Amos, chap. vii.; *Calmet's Dictionary*, under the word.

marched

marched back to Damascus, and there wintered, || without doing him any farther service. These indignities, which another man might have resented, Ahaz, in his circumstances, thought proper to overlook; and not only so, but, when he heard that Tiglath-Pilezer was returned to Damascus, he went thither to pay him homage and obeisance, as his vassal and tributary. While he continued at Damascus, he happened to see an idolatrous altar, of so curious a make and figure, in his opinion, that he ordered a model of it to be taken, and sent to Urijah, the high-priest at Jerusalem, † with injunctions to have another made, as like it as possible; and when he returned, he removed the altar of the Lord out of its place in the temple, and ordered this new

A. M.
3246, etc.
Ant. Chris.
758, etc.
from
1 Kings viii.
to the end.
of 2 Chron.
And grows
wicked
and wicked-
er, till at
length he
dies.

|| In 2 Chron. xxviii. 20. we read, *that Tiglath-Pileser came unto Ahaz, and distressed, but strengthened him not.* And yet, in 2 Kings xvi. 9. it is said, that he *did help him*; and how then can he be said to have distressed him? Very well; for, as he came to his assistance against the king of Syria, so he took Damascus, carried the people captive, and delivered Ahaz from the power of the Syrians; but this did Ahaz little good, for he helped him not to recover the cities which the Philistines had taken from him. He lent him no forces, nor enabled him to recruit his own; on the contrary, he rather weakened him, by exhausting his treasures, and destroying Samaria, which opened a way for the invasion of his country with more facility, as it happened in the next reign. For it is no uncommon thing, even in later ages, to hear of kingdoms that have called in the help of some foreign prince against their enemies, overrun and conquered by those who came to their assistance; *Patrick's Commentary.*

† It must not be denied, indeed, but that the high-priest carried his complaisance much too far, in obeying the king's injunction, which he ought, with all his power and interest, to have opposed. God prescribed to Moses in what form, and with what materials, he was to make the altar, *Exod. xxvii. 1. &c.* The altar which Solomon made, was indeed four times as large. *2 Chron. iv. 1.*; but then God had given such solemn testimony of his approbation of it, that there was no touching it without impiety: for the high-priest could not but know, that this innovation of the king's did not proceed from any principle of religion, but from a design to degrade the altar of the Lord, as well as the other sacred vessels of the temple. But what shall we say for this? There will, in all ages, be some men found, who will be ready to execute the most impious commands that can possibly come from the throne; *Patrick's and Calmet's Commentaries.*

A. M. 3246, etc. one to be set up in its stead, and that sacrifices, for the future should be offered on it alone.

Ant. Christ. 758, &c. The truth is, the more his misfortunes came upon him, the greater his contempt of Almighty God grew; insomuch, that having defaced † several of the most stately vessels of the temple, he caused it at last to be wholly shut up; and, suppressing all divine worship throughout the kingdom, in the room thereof he set up the worship of the gods of the Syrians †, and of other nations, alleging, that they had

from
1 Kings viii.
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of 2 Chron.

† The words in the text, according to our translation, are, *Abaz cut off the borders of the bases, and removed the laver from off them, and took down the sea from off the brazen oxen, that were under it, and put it upon a pavement of stones, and the covert for the Sabbath, that they had built in the house, and the king's entry without, turned he from the house of the Lord, for the king of Assyria*, 2 Kings xvi. 17, 18. His removing the bases, the laver, and the brazen sea, was palpably with a design to deface the service of God in the temple, and thence to bring it into public contempt; but then Commentators are much at a loss to know what we are to understand by *the covert for the Sabbath within, and the king's entry without*, the temple. Now, the prophet Ezekiel tells us expressly, that the gate of the *inner court, which looked towards the east*, was opened only on the Sabbath, and on the day of the new moon; and that in these days, the king was to enter into the temple at this gate, and continue at the entrance of the priests court (where was the brazen scaffold which Solomon erected, 2 Chron. vi. 13. a place for the king to pay his devotions on) until his sacrifices were offered; and, if so, the *Musack*, which we translate *covert*, might be a kind of canopy, or other covered place, under which the king sat, when he came to the service of the temple, on the Sabbath, or other great solemnities, which was therefore called the Covert of the Sabbath: and the reason why the king ordered this to be taken away was, because he intended to trouble himself no more with coming to the temple, and by this action to express his hatred likewise and contempt of the Sabbath; *Calmer's* and *Patrick's Commentaries*; and *Spencer De reg. Hebreor. lib. i. c. 1.*

† This was a monstrous stupidity, to think, that these gods had any power over him, who could not defend themselves from the arms of Tiglath-Pileser! Thinking, however, that they had distressed him, he sacrificed to them, in order to appease their wrath, that they might do him no farther hurt; in the same manner as the ancient Romans were wont to bribe the gods of their enemies with larger sacrifices than ordinary, in hopes of bringing them over to their party, and making them their friends; *Patrick's Commentary*.

helped

helped their respective people ; whereas his God, forsooth, had forsaken him, and therefore deserved no farther homage. But, in the height of all his impiety and profaneness, he was cut off by a sudden stroke, in the very prime of his age, after he had lived six and thirty, and reigned sixteen years ; and, being buried in the city of David, though not in the royal sepulchres, (for that honour he was denied because of his iniquities), he was succeeded by his son Hezekiah, who was a worthy and religious prince.

A. M.
3246, etc.
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758, etc.
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to the end.
of 2 Chron.

¶ In the five and twentieth year of his age, Hezekiah began to reign ; and, after he had got the full possession of the

Hezekiah's
happy
reign, and
reformation
of religion,

¶ Of Ahaz it is recorded, that he was but *twenty years old when he began to reign*, and that he reigned sixteen before he died ; so that in the whole he lived six and thirty years, 2 Kings xvi. 2. Now, his son Hezekiah is said to have been *five and twenty years old when he began to reign*, 2 Kings xviii. 2. ; and, consequently, his father must have begot him when he was eleven years old, which seems a little incredible : and, to solve this difficulty, commentators have taken several ways. Some have imagined, that Hezekiah was not the real, but adopted son only of Ahaz, and might therefore succeed his foster-father, at this or any other age ; but this hypothesis (as Bochart observes, spoils the descent of our Saviour from David. Others suppose, that there was an interregnum for some years, occasioned by a sedition that happened in Jerusalem : But there is no foundation for this hypothesis in history ; on the contrary, it is much more likely, that, as Hezekiah was a man grown, and greatly beloved by the people, he should immediately succeed upon his father's demise. Others again imagine, that, in detestation of Ahaz's wickedness, his reign is omitted on this account, and that therefore the passage should be thus rendered : *Ahaz was twenty years old when his father began to reign*. But this is reversing the order of words in the text, and turning them into a sense that is far from being natural. Others, not satisfied with any of these solutions, will needs have it, that there is an error crept into the text itself, by the negligence of some transcriber, who, instead of *twenty*, made Hezekiah *five and twenty* years old, when his reign commenced, merely by mistaking the numerical letters : but it is not so well, even in numerical matters, (which are most liable to variation), to find any fault with the text, except where there is no other tolerable solution, which is not the case here. In these days, and long before, it was no unusual thing (upon several considerations) for kings to take the son who was to succeed them into partnership with them before they died. Now Ahaz, by his mismanagement, had brought himself into so many in-

tanglements,

A. M. 3246, etc. Ant. Chriſt. 758, etc. from 1 Kings viii. to the end. of 2 Chron.

the kingdom, (for, during his father's illneſs, he acted only as viceroy under him), he began in good earneſt to ſet about a thorough reformation of religion. To this purpoſe he cauſed the doors of the temple, which his father

tanglements, (2 Chron. xxviii. 16. &c. and xxix. 7. &c.) as to want an aſſiſtant in the government, and accordingly, it appears that he admitted his ſon in that capacity. For, whereas, it is ſaid of Hezekiah, that he began to reign in the third year of Hoſhea ſon of Ela, 2 Kings xviii. 1. and of Hoſhea, that he began to reign in the twelfth year of Ahaz, 2 Kings xvii. 1. it is evident, that Hezekiah began to reign in the fourteenth year of Ahaz his father, and ſo reigned two or three years before his father's death. So that, at the firſt date of his reign, (which was in conjunction with his father) he might be but two or three and twenty, and his father, conſequently, when he begot him, two or three years older than the common computation. But there is another way of ſolving this difficulty. It is a common thing, both in ſacred and profane authors, in the computation of time, to take no notice, whether the year they mention be perfect or imperfect, whether finiſhed or but newly begun. Upon this account Ahaz might be near one and twenty years old when he began to reign, and near ſeventeen years older when he died: and, on the other hand, Hezekiah, when he began to reign, might be but juſt entering into his five and twentieth year, and, by this means, Ahaz might be near fourteen years old when he begot Hezekiah, which is no extraordinary thing at all. Nay, even upon the loweſt ſuppoſition, that he was but eleven or twelve years old, yet inſtances are innumerable (ſuch as Bochart and others have given) of perſons that have procreated children at that age; for it is not ſo much the number of years, as the nature of the climate, the conſtitution of the body, the ſtature of the perſon, the quality of the diet, &c. that ought to be conſidered in this affair; Bochart's *Phaleg*. p. 920.; Millar's *History of the Church*, p. 201.; Bedford's *Scripture-chronology*; Patrick's and Calmet's *Commentaries*.

† A great demonſtration this of his ſincere piety and zeal towards God, that he began ſo ſoon to reform the corruption of religion, and did not ſtay till he had eſtabliſhed himſelf in his throne! He might think, however, that the ſureſt way to eſtabliſh himſelf in the throne, was to eſtabliſh the true worſhip of God; though he could not but foreſee, that he run a great hazard in attempting the abolishing of idolatry, which had been confirmed by ſome years preſcription; Patrick's *Commentary*.

had

had ordered to be shut up, to be opened; his father's new altar to be removed; the altar of the Lord to be restored to its place again; and whatever other pollutions it had contracted during his father's administration, he ordered them all to be purged and done away. Then calling the priests and Levites together, he required them to sanctify themselves, according to the directions of the law; and, after that, the former he appointed to offer sacrifices †, in order to atone for the king's, their own, and the peoples sins; and the latter, † with musical instruments, to sing praises

A. M. 3246. etc.
An. Chrif. 758, &c.
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† The words in the text are,—*For a sin-offering for the kingdom*, i. e. for the king's sins, and those of his predecessors; *for the sanctuary*, for the priests sins, and the profanations of the temple; *and for Judah*, i. e. for all the people who have followed the bad examples of their impious kings. Now, the offering which the law prescribed for the transgressions of the people, was a young bullock; and for the offences of the prince, was a goat, Lev. iv. 23. &c; but good Hezekiah, we find, was willing to do more than the law commanded. He was sensible, that both prince and people had been guilty, not only of sins of ignorance, (for which these sacrifices were instituted), but of wilful and presumptuous crimes, of gross idolatry, a profanation of the temple, and an utter extinction of the worship of God; and therefore he appointed seven bullocks for a burnt-offering, and as many goats for a sin-offering, upon presumption that these numerous sacrifices were, if not necessary; at least highly fit and becoming, upon the account of the great and long neglect of divine service, and the multitude, and long continuance, of their other offences against God, for which they were now to beg forgiveness; *Calmet's and Patrick's Commentaries*.

‡ Moses, in the service of the tabernacle, did not appoint the use of any musical instruments; only he caused some trumpets to be made, which, upon solemn occasions, were to be sounded, at the time when the burnt-offering and peace-offering were upon the altar, Numb. x. 10. But David, by the advice of the prophets Gad and Nathan, introduced several kinds of music into the service of the temple, as a thing highly conducive to inspire people with respect, with joy, and with affection for the solemnities and assemblies of religion, 1 Chron. xxiii. 5. and xxv. 1.; and it is farther observable, that the institution of music, in religious assemblies, is not a matter of human invention, but what was ordained by God, and has the sanction and authority of his prophets to confirm it; *for so was the commandment of the Lord by his prophets*, 2 Chron. xxix. 25.

A. M.
3246, etc.
Ant. Christ.
758, etc.
from
1 Kings viii.
to the end
of 2 Chr. vi.
His renew
ing the pas
sover, and
demolishing
idolatry.

to God in the words of David †, and of Asaph the seer.

Having thus restored the service of the temple, he purposed with himself to revive the passover, which, by reason of the division of the kingdom, and the frequent commotions that had happened thereupon, had not been regularly observed for a long while. To this purpose, he advised with the princes, and chief men of the kingdom; and because it was thought, that neither the temple, the priests, nor the people, could be sufficiently sanctified, against the usual time of observing it, (which was in the first month of the year), it was resolved, that † it should be celebrated in the second: And accordingly, a proclamation was issued out requiring not only the people of Judah, † but all other Israelites, of whatever tribe they were, to come to this solemnity.

It

† David was both a great poet and master of music, and might therefore modulate and compose his own hymns; but whether the music of them might not be altered or improved in after ages, (because the words only are here taken notice of), is a matter of some uncertainty. The Asaph, here mentioned, was the person who lived in David's days, so famous for his skill in music, and the several devout pieces, which he composed, are those which we meet with in the collection of the Psalms; but others will needs have it, (but for what reason I cannot tell), that the author of the Psalms ascribed to Asaph, was another person who lived in after times, though perhaps of the same family, as well as name, with this famous Asaph who lived in David's; *Patrick's Commentary.*

† The direction which the law gives, is,—That the passover should be celebrated on the fourteenth day of the first month, which the Jews call *Nisan*: but because it was found impossible to get all things in readiness against that time, it was judged more advisable to adjourn it to the fourteenth of the next month, (which the Jews call *Iyar*), rather than stay to the next year: and for this they had some encouragement; because the law allows, that, in case any man shall be unclean, by reason of a dead body, or be on a journey afar off, he may eat the passover on the fourteenth day of the second month, Numb. ix. 10, 11. and what was an indulgence to particular persons, they thought might well be allowed to the whole congregation of Israel; *Patrick's Commentary.*

† Hezekiah, it is certain, had no right to invite Hoshea's subjects to repair to Jerusalem to the celebration of his passover;

ver;

It could hardly be expected, but that after so long a disuse of this holy festival, an attempt to revive it should meet with some scorn and opposition; and therefore, we need not wonder, that many of the tribes of Ephraim, Manasseh, and Zebulun, should laugh at Hezekiah's messengers, when they invited them to this feast. Great multitudes, however, even from these parts, came to Jerusalem upon this occasion; and the concourse indeed was so numerous, that this might be justly reckoned one of the greatest passovers that had been solemnised from the days of King Solomon. The time which the law directs for the continuance of this feast, is seven days; but forasmuch as it had been long neglected, they now doubled the time, and kept it for fourteen, with great joy and gladness of heart: And as soon as the solemnity was ended, those that belonged to the tribes of Judah and Benjamin †, went and brake the images in pieces, cut down the groves, threw down the high-places, and altars belonging to strange gods, and absolutely destroyed all the monuments of idolatry which were any where to be found, either in Jerusalem, Judea, or any of the coasts belonging to them; as those of the other tribes, in their return home, did the same in all the rest of Israel; so that idolatry was quite abolished, and the true worship of God again universally restored.

A. M.
3246, etc.
Ant. Christ.
753, etc.
from
1 Kings viii.
to the end
of 2 Chron.

Nay,

ver; yet for the doing of this, we may well presume, that he had encouragement from Hoshea himself, who, as to the matter of religion, (as we said before), has a better character in Scripture than any of his predecessors from the division of the two kingdoms. But the truth of the matter was, that both the golden calves (which had made this political separation) were now taken away, that of Dan by Tiglah Pileser, and the other of Bethel, by his son Salmaneser; and therefore the apostate Jews, being thus deprived of their idols, began to return to the Lord, and to go up to Jerusalem to worship for some time before Hezekiah made them this invitation to his passover; *Prideaux's Connection, anno 729.*

† This, as the text tells us, was done not only in the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, but in those of Ephraim also and Manasseh, 2 Chron. xxxi. 1. which, though they were part of Hoshea's dominion, yet Hezekiah might direct this abolition of idolatry in them, in virtue of a law which bound Israel, as well as Judah, and required the extirpation of these things in the whole land of Canaan; by the special impulse and direction of God's Spirit, which puts men upon heroic actions, though not to be drawn into imita-

A. M.
3246, etc.
Ant. Christ.
758, etc.
from

1 Kings viii.
to the end
of 2 Chron.

Nay, there was one thing, viz. the brazen serpent †, which might have been of innocent use, and served, in the same manner as did the pot of manna, and Aaron's rod,

tion; or out of a firm persuasion that his neighbour Hoshea, who had permitted his subjects to repair to the passover, would approve and consent to what he did in this respect; *Pool's Annotations.*

† The reason which the Scripture assigns for Hezekiah's destroying this brazen serpent, is,—*because, unto this day, the children of Israel had burnt incense to it, 2 Kings xviii. 4.* We are not however to suppose, that all along from the days of Moses, this brazen serpent was made an object of religious worship: This is what neither David nor Solomon, in the beginning of his reign, would have allowed of; nor can we think, but that either Asa or Jehoshaphat, when they rooted out idolatry, would have made an end of this, had they perceived that the people, at that time, either paid worship, or burnt incense, to it. The commencement of this superstition therefore must be of a later date, and since the time that Ahab's family, by being allied to the crown of Judah by marriage, introduced all kinds of idolatry. Now, one false inducement to the worship of this image might be a mistake of the words of Moses. For whereas it is said, *that whosoever looketh upon it shall live, Numb. xxi. 1.* some might thence fancy, that by its mediation, they might obtain a blessing, and so make it the object of their superstition at first. However, we may imagine that their burning incense, or any other perfumes, before it, was designed only in honour to the true God, by whose direction Moses made it; but then, in process of their superstition, they either worshipped the God of Israel under that image, or (what is worse) substituted an Heathen god in his room, and worshipped the brazen serpent as his image; which they might more easily be induced to do, because the practice of some neighbouring nations was to worship their gods under the form of a serpent. Upon this account Hezekiah wisely chose rather to lose this memorial of God's wonderful mercy to his people in the wilderness, than to suffer it any longer to be abused to idolatry, and therefore *he brake it in pieces, i. e.* as the Talmudists explain it, he ground it to powder, and then scattered it in the air, that there might not be the least remains of it. And yet, notwithstanding all the care which he took to destroy it, Sigonius, in his history of Italy, tells us, that in the church of St. Ambrose, in Milan, they shew a brazen serpent entire, which they pretend to be the very same which Moses erected in the wilderness; though, it must be owned, that among their learned men, there are some who acknowledge the cheat, and disclaim it; *Le Clerc's Commentary*; and *Prideaux's Connection, anno 726.*

for

for a monument of God's miraculous mercy to the Israelites in their passage through the wilderness; but, because the preceding times of iniquity had made it an object of idolatrous worship, Hezekiah thought proper to destroy it, in order to take away all occasion of the like abuse for the future. Having thus removed all the objects of idolatry, he took care, in the next place, to restore the temple-worship to its ancient splendour and purity. To this purpose he put the priests and Levites in their courses, and appointed every one his proper ministration. The tithes and first-fruits, which idolatrous princes had detained, on purpose to bring the priesthood into poverty, and thence into contempt, he returned to the church; and † out of his own privy purse, (as we say), ordered the expence of the daily oblations, as well as of the larger offerings on the great festivals of the year, to be defrayed.

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of 2. Chron.
His re-esta-
blishing the
temple-
worship,
and success
in war.

Upon these, and several other accounts, Hezekiah deserved the title of one of the best of kings || that ever reigned

† After that David had brought the ark of the Lord into the tent which he had pitched for it, near his own palace, the Scripture seems to intimate, 1 Chron. xvi. 1. that he divided the priests and Levites into two bodies; one of which he left at Gibeah, to attend in the tabernacle, which Moses made; and the other he took with him to Jerusalem. And from this time it is highly probable, that out of his own estate he supplied whatever was necessary for the sacred ministry of this his domestic tabernacle, on mount Sion. When Solomon had built the temple, he obliged himself to defray all the expences, both ordinary and extraordinary, of the altar, 2 Chron. viii. 13. And in like manner, upon the rebuilding of the temple, at the return from the captivity, Ezekiel assigns a proper revenue to the king, to answer the expence of all sacrifices, both stated and occasional, chap. xvi.; so that Hezekiah in this, did properly no more than what was incumbent on him; tho' several of his idolatrous predecessors had doubtless withdrawn the fund appropriated to that purpose, which made it so commendable in him to restore it to its proper channel; *Calmet's and Patrick's Comment.*

|| The words in the text are, — *So that, after him, was none like him amongst all the kings of Judah, nor any that were before him,* 2 Kings xviii. 5. Now it is plain, that the same commendation is given of Josiah, viz. that *like unto him was there no king before him, which turned to the Lord, with all his heart, &c. neither after him arose there any like him,* 2 Kings xxiii. 25. So that this

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reigned in Judah ; nor was God, in the least, wanting to reward his piety in a most signal manner. For while Salmaneser was engaged in the siege of Samaria, he warred against the Philistines, and not only regained all the cities of Judah, which they had seized during the time that Pekah and Rezin jointly distressed the land, but also dispossessed them of almost all their own territories, except Gazah and Gath.

As soon as the siege of Samaria was over, Salmaneser sent to Hezekiah to demand the tribute which his father Ahaz had agreed to pay to the kings of Assyria ; but Hezekiah refused to pay it, which would doubtless have brought the Assyrian upon him with all his power, had he not been diverted by the war * he entered into against Tyre, and died before he had put an end to it.

He was succeeded by his son Sennacherib, who as soon as he was settled on the throne, renewed the demand for the tribute, and upon Hezekiah's refusing to comply, marched a great army into Judea, in order to fall upon him.

His sickness
and recovery.

‡ Not long before this, Hezekiah was taken with a sore illness, and had a message from God by the prophet Isaiah, to

this character of Hezekiah must relate to some particular virtue wherein he stood distinguished from the rest of the kings of Judah, and that was, *his trusting in the Lord God of Israel*, (as it is in the beginning of the verse), and not in the help of any foreign forces, as all the other kings, (even the most renowned for their piety), in some measure, are known to have done ; *Calmet's Commentary*.

* The king of Tyre finding the Philistines brought low by the war which Hezekiah had lately made upon them, laid hold on the opportunity to reduce Gath (which had some time before revolted from him) under his obedience. Hereupon the people of Gath applying themselves to Salmaneser, engaged him in their cause against the Tyrians. He soon took several of their cities, and at length closely besieged their capital : But before he could carry the place, (which held out for five years), he died, and by that means gave some respite to Hezekiah ; *Prideaux's Connection, anno 720*.

‡ In the course of the sacred history, this sickness of Hezekiah's is placed immediately after the defeat and death of Sennacherib ; whereas it plainly happened before that time, because in the message which God sent him upon his bed of sickness by the prophet Isaiah, he promises to *deliver Jerusalem out of the hands*

to settle his affairs, and prepare for death; but, upon his great concern, and hearty prayer to God, he obtained another message from him by the same prophet, promising him a reprieve for fifteen years longer, and a deliverance from the Assyrians, who were then coming against him. Both these were events beyond his expectation; and therefore, to give him a full assurance of faith, God, at his request, made the sun go backward ten degrees upon the sun-dial that Ahaz had erected; and when (by the prophet's directions) a plaster of figs was applied to his ulcer, he recovered in the space of three days, and went up to the temple to return God thanks for so wonderful a deliverance.

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758, etc.
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1 Kings viii.
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Upon Hezekiah's recovery, Merodach-Baladan king of Babylon sent ambassadors † to congratulate him, and, at the same time, to enter into an alliance with him against Sennacherib, whose growing power the Babylonians, as well as the Jews, had reason to fear: And Hezekiah was so taken with the honour done him upon this occasion, that, out of the vanity and pride of his heart, he shewed the ambassa-

Alliance
with the
king of Ba-
bylon.

bands of the king of Assyria, 2 Kings xx. 6. The truth of the matter is, — Hezekiah reigned in all nine and twenty years, 2 Kings xviii. 2. He had already reigned fourteen years, when Sennacherib invaded him, 2 Kings xviii. 13.; and after his sickness he continued to reign fifteen years, 2 Kings xx. 6.: so that his sickness must have happened in the very same year that the king of Assyria invaded his kingdom; but the sacred penman deferred the account he was to give of that, until he had finished the history of Sennacherib, which he was willing to give the reader at one view; and this is the true reason of the mislocation; *Calmet's Commentary*.

† The conquests, which the Assyrians were every where making, could not fail of giving umbrage to the neighbouring powers to confederate against them; and therefore we may well suppose, that, besides the business of congratulating Hezekiah's recovery, the purpose of this embassy was to enter into an alliance with him against Sennacherib, whose growing power the Babylonians had reason to fear, as well as the Jews: and (as the author of the Chronicles expresses it) *to inquire into the wonder that was done in the land*, 2 Chron. xxxii. 31. i. e. to inquire about the miracle of the sun's retrogradation, which could not fail of being a matter of great curiosity to the Chaldeans, who, above all other nations, were at that time given to the study of astronomy; *Calmet's Commentary*; and *Prideaux's Connection*, anno 713.

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758, &c.
from
1 Kings viii.
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dors all the wealth † and strength of his kingdom; for which the prophet Isaiah was sent to reprove him, and to let him know, that a day would come when all the stores he made such ostentation of should be carried into Babylon; which admonition || he received in a very decent and humble manner.

Sennacherib,

† The things which Hezekiah shewed to the Babylonian ambassadors, were the riches of his house, his treasures, his armory, and all his stores and strength for war; and therefore for his doing this was, doubtless, to make the Babylonians put the greater value upon his friendship: But herein he offended God, that he not only laid a bait before these foreigners to encourage them to invade his country, but seemed to place more confidence in this new alliance with them, than in the power of the Almighty, whose favour and protection he had so long experienced: The author of the Chronicles tells us, that, *in the business of the ambassadors of the princes of Babylon, who sent unto him to inquire of the wonder that was done in the land, God left him to try him, that he might know all that was in his heart,* 2 Chron. xxxii. 31. And hence some have inferred, that Hezekiah's great offence lay not so much in the ostentation of his military stores and treasures, as in his not giving sufficient glory to God for so signal a miracle, and his recovery ensuant thereupon, and in his not representing this matter to these idolatrous ambassadors, in such powerful and convincing terms as might have drawn them over to the knowledge of the true God, which was the proper improvement he should have made of this divine vouchsafement to him; *Le Clerc's Commentary.*

|| The words in the text are, — *Then said Hezekiah unto Isaiah, Good is the word of the Lord, which thou hast spoken. And he said, Is it not good, if peace and truth be in my days?* 2 Kings xx. 19: The prophet had told him, that the very people whom he had been so highly complimenting would carry his posterity into captivity; and to return him such an answer as this, shews not all the concern which a good prince ought to have for his people and posterity. It shews, indeed, as if he cared not what became of them, so long as he was permitted to live easy and happy. The words in the original are to this effect, *That which thou hast told me from God, is good. I will submit to it: But shall peace and truth, i. e. solid and lasting peace, continue for my time?* “ May “ I flatter myself with so much happiness? And will God be “ so gracious as not to revoke the grant which he hath made “ me of a longer continuance here? He is just, no doubt, in “ every thing he sends upon us; but do these threats relate to “ me, or my posterity only? Well were it for me, if he “ would

Sennacherib, in the mean time, advanced with a mighty army against the fenced cities of Judah; and, having taken several of them, he came at length and sat down before Lachish, and threatened, after he had taken that, to besiege even Jerusalem itself. Hereupon Hezekiah, taking advice of his princes and chief counsellors, made all manner of preparations for a vigorous defence. He repaired the walls, and fortified them with towers. He provided darts and shields in great abundance, and all other arms and artillery that might be useful, either to defend the place or annoy the enemy. He had the people inrolled that were fit for war, and placed over them good officers, both to instruct them in all military exercise, and to head and conduct them when they were to make their sallies. He stopped up the fountains * for a good compass round, and the brook † that passed by the walls of the

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758, &c.
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1 Kings viii.
to the end
of 2 Chron.

War and
truce with
the king of
Assyria,

“ would suspend the execution of his wrath for the little time that I have to live.” This is the natural sense of Hezekiah’s answer; and accordingly Josephus makes him say, “ That tho’ I am much afflicted at the thoughts of the misery that will befall my family, yet, since it is God’s pleasure that it should be so, I have no more to beg of heaven, than that I may enjoy the small remainder of my miserable life in peace;” *Jewish Antiq. lib. x. c. 3.*; and *Calmet’s Commentary*.

* It is an old stratagem in war, to distress an enemy by the want of water; but this is what the besiegers do generally practise against the besieged. In this manner it was Holofernes intended to distress Bethulia, Judith vii.; and of Semiramis, Cyrus, and Alexander, it is reported, that they all took Babylon by diverting the current of the Euphrates. But Hezekiah here takes another method: He is for preventing the Assyrians from carrying on the siege of Jerusalem by intercepting the water, *i. e.* by filling up the fountain-heads with earth, that the enemy might not perceive where any water was; and so carrying their streams through pipes and subterraneous channels into the city, there to be received in basins and large pools for the benefit of the besieged: And this he might do with more facility to himself, and prejudice to the enemy, because (except the springs and brooks that were just contiguous to the city) the whole country, (according to Strabo, lib. xvi.), for the space of sixty furlongs round about, was all barren and waterless; *Le Clerc’s Commentary*.

† This must be the brook Kidron, which ran in a valley of that name, between the city and the mount of Olives, when it

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Ant. Christ.
758, &c.
from
1 Kings viii.
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the city, in order to distress the enemy for want of water; and, to strengthen himself the more against them, he entered into an alliance offensive and defensive with the king of Egypt. But this alliance the prophet Isaiah highly blamed, as it implied a diffidence of the Almighty's power to help him, and would redound to his own shame and reproach, and confusion at last; which accordingly came to pass. For, while Sennacherib was besieging Lachish, Hezekiah, observing that this new ally of his made no haste to come to his assistance, and being sadly sensible that of himself he was not sufficient to resist so powerful an adversary as the king of Assyria, sent ambassadors to him, desiring him to retire out of his dominions, and promising to submit to such conditions as he should be pleased to impose upon him.

The demand which Sennacherib made, was the payment of three hundred talents † of silver, and thirty talents of gold; which Hezekiah was not able to raise, without exhausting all his treasures, and stripping the very doors of the temple of the gold-plates wherewith they were overlaid. This diverted the king of Assyria for some time; so that, leaving Judea, he turned his arms against Egypt*; but, after a series of different successes, he returned

had any water in it; for, except in the case of great rains, or the snow's dissolving from the mountains, it was generally dry. However, if it had any fountain-head, by stopping up that, and diverting its current by conveyances under ground, Hezekiah might, in like manner, make it of no use to the besiegers; *Patrick's and Calmet's Commentaries.*

† The Hebrew talent, according to Scripture, (Exod. xxv. 39. contains three hundred shekels, and every shekel answering to the value of three shillings, these three hundred talents of silver must contain, of our money, thirteen thousand five hundred pounds; and the thirty talents of gold, one hundred and sixty-four thousand two hundred and fifty; so that the whole sum here paid by Hezekiah amounted to one hundred and seventy-seven thousand seven hundred and fifty pounds of our money. *Prideaux's Connection, anno 713.*

* What might possibly be the occasion of a war between two kingdoms so widely distant as Assyria and Egypt were, it is difficult to know. We have no where any information from history, and are left therefore to conjecture.—That, after Salmaneser had taken away the ten tribes, and sent colonies in their room, the tribe of Simeon, which lay nearest to Egypt, becoming part of his dominions,

turned again, and invested Lachish, and thence (contrary to all faith, and the agreement subsisting between him and the kings of Judah) sent three of his principal officers, with a good detachment of forces, to demand the surrender of Jerusalem.

† Rabshakeh (for that was the name of the person who delivered the demand from the king of Assyria) spake in the

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Ant. Christ.
753, &c.
from
1 Kings viii.
to the end
of 2 Chron.
Who sends
Hezekiah
inquiet
messages,
but is at
length mi-
raculously
defeated,
and slain by
his own
sons.

nions, as well as the rest, the Egyptians might take the advantage of the Assyrians great distance, and make some incroachments upon it. That Sennacherib, when he was come as far as Judea, might take that opportunity to proceed with his arms into Egypt, in order to be revenged on Sevechus, the son of Sabacon, or So, (whom Herodotus calls *Sethon*), who was at this time king of Egypt, and the chief pontiff likewise of the god Vulcan. And, as he was a weak prince, the king of Assyria gained many advantages over him; but setting down at length before Pelusium, when he had brought his platforms (as Josephus tells us) within a little of the top of the walls, and was upon the very point of giving the assault, news was brought him, that Tirhakah king of Ethiopia was upon his march, with a great reinforcement, to assist the Egyptians; whereupon he immediately raised the siege, and drew off his army, which gave occasion to the fabulous account in Herodotus, viz. "That, upon the king's prayer to his god Vulcan, there came, in one night, such troops of rats into the camp of the Assyrians, that they gnawed all their bow-strings to pieces, and so, in effect, disarmed the whole camp of the besiegers, and made them draw off from the town with so much precipitation;" *Le Clerc's Commentary on 2 Kings xxiii. 29.*; and *Jewish Antiq. lib. x. c. i.*

† Tartan, Rabfaris, and Rabshakeh, are not the proper names of these men, but rather denote their employments and offices. *Tartan* signifies the president of the customs, *Rabfaris*, the chief eunuch, and *Rabshakeh*, the principal cupbearer; and, because he spake Hebrew with some fluency, the Rabbins are generally of opinion, that he was either an apostate Jew, or one of the captivity of Israel. It is certain, that he was a very-eloquent man, and his speech very excellently well calculated to raise sedition or defection among the besieged; but that a person of his education should be versed in the Phœnician, which is in a manner the same with the Hebrew language, is no wonder at all. Moreover, had he been a Jew, (tho' an apostate) he should have known better, one would think, than to have upbraided Hezekiah with acting according to the law under which he lived, in destroying the groves and altars of idols,

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the Hebrew tongue, and in a very insolent and imperious manner, to the three ministers of state whom Hezekiah sent to parly with him, telling them, “ That it was in vain for them to trust in their god for help, because his master’s arms had been all along so victorious, that the gods of other nations could not resist their course ; and much more vain would it be, to depend on the king of Egypt for assistance, who was hardly able to support his own dominions, and would certainly * fail them when they looked for his aid. Their wisest way therefore would be, to surrender the town to his master, the great king of Assyria, at discretion ; for if they pretended to stand a siege, (and this he spake with a louder voice than ordinary, in the audience of the people that were upon the wall, and in hopes of creating a revolt among them), his master would distress them to such a degree, that they should be compelled to eat their own excrements, and drink their own piss.”

When Hezekiah heard the blasphemous message, which Rabshakeh had delivered to his ministers, he rent his cloaths, put on sackcloth, went to the temple to address himself to God, and sent an account thereof to his prophet Isaiah. But Isaiah’s answer was, not to fear the menaces of the proud Assyrian ; for that God would soon find out a method to make him depart his country ; which accordingly came to pass. For news being brought him, that Tirhakah king of Ethiopia (or of the Cushites rather in Arabia) had invaded some part of his dominions, he immedi-

and in requiring his subjects to worship God in Jerusalem only, 2 Kings xviii. 22.; *Le Clerc’s Commentary*.

* The words in the text are,———*Now behold thou trustest upon the staff of this bruised reed, even upon Egypt*, 2 Kings xviii. 21. The Comparison is excellent, to denote an ally that is not only weak and unable to help, but dangerous likewise to those that rely upon him for succour ; and his representing the power of Egypt to be as brittle as the canes or reeds that grow on the banks of the Nile, (for it is to this, no doubt, that the Assyrian orator alludes), is a great beauty in the similitude. This however must be allowed, that what he here speaks in contempt of the Egyptian strength, has more of ostentation in it than truth ; because the Assyrian army, having lately made an attempt to subdue that kingdom, was now returned into Judea with disgrace ; *Patrick’s*, *Le Clerc’s*, and *Calmet’s Commentaries*.

ately raised the siege of Libnah †, (where he then was), and marched against the enemy: However, before he raised the siege, he sent a second summons to Hezekiah, as insolent and blasphemous as the former. This was delivered in a letter; and Hezekiah had no sooner read it, but he went into the temple, spread it before the Lord, and implored of him a deliverance from this outrageous enemy; which Isaiah assured him he should have, because that the Lord had taken the city of Jerusalem under his protection, and would not therefore suffer the King of Assyria * (notwithstanding all his vain boastings) to come near it.

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1 Kings viii.
to the end
of 2 Chron.

† Libnah was not far from Lachiſh, both ſituated on the mountains of Judea; and it is probable, that Sennacherib, not finding himſelf able to carry the latter, had removed the ſiege to Libnah, which was a place not ſo well fortified in his opinion, and yet ſo ſituated, that by keeping a good guard in the chops of the mountains, he might carry on the ſiege, without any fear of Tirhakah's coming upon him; *Le Clerc's Commentary*.

* The prophet, in his answer to Hezekiah, has given us an admirable deſcription of the ridiculous vanity and oſtentation of a king puffed up with great ſucceſs: By *thy meſſengers thou haſt reproached the Lord, and haſt ſaid,——With the multitude of my chariots I am come up to the height of the mountains, and the ſides of Lebanon;——and I will enter into the lodgings of his borders, and enter into the foreſt of his Carmel. I have digged, and drank ſtrange waters, and with the ſoles of my feet have I dried up all the rivers of beſieged places,* 2 Kings xix. 23. &c. as if he had ſaid, “What can reſiſt the force of my victorious arms? Or where is the place that is unacceſſible to the ſtrength and activity of theſe troops? I have ſcaled the top of the higheſt mountains with my heavy chariots of war. I have aſcended even Lebanon itſelf, and, through the moſt difficult paſſages, have opened and plained myſelf away. ——Who then ſhall hinder me from taking up my quarters in what part of Judea I pleaſe, from either climbing up to the top of Carmel, or from coming down into the fruitful vales, by making an entire conqueſt of the country? At my call fountains, even in the drieſt places, ariſe; at my beck, the hills ſubſide, the rocks divide, and make me a way; and, at my approach, the deepeſt rivers and ditches run dry; ſo that reſiſtance is unavailable, and victory muſt attend my ſtandard wherever I go, or whatever enterpriſe I take in hand.”

Subſidere noſtris
Sub pedibus montes, areſcere vidimus amnes.

Glaud. De bello Gallico.

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3246. &c.
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758 B.C.
from
1 Kings xiii.
to the end
of 2 Chron.

In the mean time, the king of Assyria having engaged the Ethiopian army, and given them a great overthrow, was in full march to Jerusalem, flushed with this fresh victory, and resolved to destroy the place, and every soul in it; when the very night after that the prophet had given the king of Judah this assurance, an angel † of the Lord came down into the camp of the Assyrians, and smote no less than a hundred fourscore and five thousand men: So that, terrified with this slaughter, Sennacherib made haste into his own country, and took up his residence at Nineveh; where he had not been long, before * his two eldest sons,

† The ancient Jews (as well as Persians and Arabians) were of opinion, that there is an angel of death, or an exterminating angel, to whom God has given commission to take away the lives, either of single persons, or of multitudes of people at once, wherein the Almighty gives the order, but leaves the method of doing it to the discretion of the angel; so that in which way soever the infliction is made, it is always said to be done by the angel of God. The modern Jews are much of the same opinion: For they maintain, that this angel of death stands at every dying man's bed's head, with a naked sword in his hand, at the extremity of which there hang three drops of gall, and that the sick person, seeing this angel, in a great fright opens his mouth, whereupon he immediately drops into it these three fatal drops; the first of which occasions his death; the second makes him pale and livid; and the third reduces him to the dust in the grave, with some other notions of the like nature. Now, since the Scripture has no where said expressly in what manner this Assyrian army was destroyed, some have thought that it was by a plague others by thunder and lightning; others by fire from heaven; others by a scorching wind; others by their falling foul upon one another in the obscurity of the night; but which way soever it was effected, according to the Hebrew idiom, there is no impropriety in saying, that it was done by a destroying angel, which is a comprehensive phrase, that reconciles all the Scripture-passages wherein this terrible defeat is mentioned, and all the sentiments of commentators concerning it; *Calmet's Dissert. sur la défaite de l'Armée de Sennacherib.*

* When Sennacherib was got home, after the loss of so great an army, he demanded of some about him, What the reason might be, that the irresistible God of heaven so favoured the Jewish nation? To which he was answered, That Abraham, from whom they were descended, by sacrificing his only son to him, had purchased his protection

sons, Adrammelech and Sharezer conspired against him, and as he was worshipping at the temple of Nisroch * his god, fell upon him and slew him; and afterwards making their escape into Armenia, gave room for Esarhaddon, their younger brother, to succeed in the throne.

After this signal defeat of the Assyrian army, Hezekiah lived the remainder of his days in peace and tranquillity, being both honoured and revered by all neighbouring nations, who, by this and several more instances, perceived that he was under the immediate protection of God, and were therefore afraid to give him any molestation. So that being at rest from wars, he applied his thoughts to the good government of his people, and the improvement of the city of Jerusalem, by erecting magazines, and filling them with arms, and by making a new aqueduct, which was of great convenience to the inhabitants for the supplying them with water. At length, after a course of great and worthy actions, he died in the twenty-ninth year of his reign, and was buried, with great solemnity, † in the most

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758, &c.
from
1 Kings viii.
to the end
of 2 Chron.
While Hezekiah lives and dies in peace.

protection to his progeny; whereupon the king replied, *If that will win him, I will spare him two of mine to gain him to my side*: which when his two sons, Sharezer and Adrammelech heard, they resolved to prevent their own death by sacrificing him. But for all this fiction there is no other foundation, but that scarce any thing else can be thought of, that can afford any excuse for so wicked a parricide; *Prideaux's Connection*, anno 709.

* Some take this God to be the figure of Noah's ark; others of a dove, which was worshipped among the Assyrians; and others, of an eagle. The Hebrew of Tobit, published by Munster, calls it *Dagon*; but Selden acknowledges, that, in all his reading, he never met with any thing that could help him to explain it. Jurieu, however, seems to be more lucky in his inquiries; for, by several arguments, he has made it appear, that this idol was Jupiter Belus, the founder of the Babylonish empire, who was worshipped under the form of an eagle; and therefore, he observes farther, that as this Belus in profane history was the same with the Nimrod of Moses, between Nimrod and Nisroch the dissimilitude is not great, nor is it improbable, that to perpetuate his honour, his votaries might change the name of *Nimrod*, which signifies *a rebel*, into that of *Nisroch*, which denotes *a young eagle*; Patrick's Commentery; and Jurieu Histoire des dogmes, &c. part. iv. c. 11.

† In the innermost and chiefest of the rooms of the royal sepulchres of the house of David, was the body of Hezekiah placed in

A. M.
3246, etc.
Ant. Christ.
758, etc.
from
2 Kings viii.
to the end
of 2 Chron.

Manasseh's
wickedness,
in the be-
ginning of
his reign.

most honourable place of the sepulchres of the sons of David. Happy in every thing else, except in being succeeded by a son, whose name was Manasseh, and who, in the beginning of his reign more especially, proved the very worst of all his race.

Manasseh was but a minor of twelve years old when he succeeded to the crown; and as he had the misfortune to fall into the hands of such guardians, and chief ministers, as were ill affected to his father's reformation, they took all the care imaginable to breed him up in the strongest aversion to it, and to corrupt his mind with the worst of principles, both as to religion and government. For he not only worshipped idols, restored high-places, and erected altars unto Baal, but, in the room of the ark of the covenant, set up an idol, even in the sanctuary itself, made his children pass through the fire to Moloch, practised withcrafts and enchantments, and consulted soothsayers, and such persons as dealt with familiar spirits.

Nor was he content to practise these abominations himself, but being naturally of a cruel temper, he raised bitter persecutions against those who would not conform. The prophets * who were sent to reprove him, he treated with the utmost contempt and outrage, and filled, in short, all the land with innocent blood, which he shed in carrying on his detestable purposes: but it was not long before the divine vengeance overtook him.

His captivity
by the
king of Ba-
bylon, re-
pentance,
restoration,
and refor-
mation.

Esharhaddon being settled in the kingdom of Babylon, began to set his thoughts on the recovery of what his father had lost, in a nich, which in the upper end of the room was very likely at that time cut on purpose for it, to do him the greater honour; *Prædeux's Connection*, anno 699.

* The prophets, who are supposed to have been living in this king's reign, were Hosea, Joel, Nahum, Habakkuk, some say Obadiah; and who was the greatest prophet of them all, Isaiah. In the late reign he was in great esteem at court, and being himself of the blood royal, and as some say, the king's father-in-law, he thought it more incumbent upon him to endeavour to reclaim him from his degenerate wicked courses: But this so exasperated him against Isaiah, that instead of hearkening to his remonstrances, he caused him to be apprehended, and to make his torture both more lingering, and more exquisite, had him sawn asunder with a wooden saw, to which the author of the epistle to the Hebrews, chap. xi. 37. may be thought to allude; *Calmet's Commentary*; and *Howell's History*, in the notes.

ther

ther Sennacherib had lost in Syria and Palestine; and having raised a great army, marched into the territories of the ten tribes, from whence he carried away a great multitude of Israelites, who were remains of the former captivity, and so sending some of his generals with a part of his army to Judea to reduce that country likewise, they vanquished Manasseh in battle, and having taken him hid in a thicket of briers and brambles, brought him prisoner to Esarhaddon †, who put him in irons, and carried him prisoner to Babylon.

A. M.
3246, etc.
Ant. Christ.
758, etc.
from
1 Kings viii.
to the end
of 2 Chron.

† His prison and chains brought him to himself, and made him so sensible of his heinous provocations against God, that with deep sorrow and humiliation, † he implored

† From Isaiah xx. 1. we may learn, that Esarhaddon (whom the sacred writer in that place calls *Sargon*) king of Assyria, sent Tartan, his general, into Palestine; and it was he, very probably, who took Manasseh, and carried him prisoner to Babylon. Esarhaddon was, some time before, no more than king of Assyria; but, upon his accession to the throne, he made himself master of Babylon, and Chaldea, and so united the two empires together; *Calmet's Commentary*; and *Prideaux's Connection*, anno 677.

† The Jewish doctors have a tradition, that while Manasseh was at Babylon, by the direction of his conquerour, he was put in a large brazen vessel, full of holes, and set near to a great fire; that, in this extremity, he had recourse to all his false deities, to whom he had offered so many sacrifices, but received no relief from them; that remembering what he had heard his good father Hezekiah say, viz. *When thou art in tribulation, if thou turn to the Lord thy God, he will not forsake thee, neither destroy thee*, Deut. iv. 30, 31. he was thereupon immediately delivered, and in a moment translated to his kingdom. But this is no less a fiction, than that miraculous flame which the author of the imperfect comment upon St. Matthew speaks of, that encompassed him on a sudden, as he was praying to God, and having melted his chains asunder, set him at liberty. *Vid. Tradit. Hebr. in Paralip.*; et *Targum in 2 Chron. xxiii. 11.* In all probability, it was Saos Duchin, the successor of Esarhaddon, who, some years after his captivity, released Manasseh out of his prison.

† We have a prayer, which it is pretended he made in prison. The church does not receive it as a canonical, but it has a place among the apocryphal pieces, and, in our collections, stands before the books of the Maccabees. The Greek church, however, has received it into their *Euchologium*, or *book of prayers*,

A. M. 3246, etc. Ant. Ch. 11. 758, etc. from 1 Kings viii. to the end. of 2 Chron. ed the divine pity and forgiveness, and thereupon prevailed with God to mollify the king of Babylon's heart, who restored him to his liberty, and re-instated him in his kingdom.

Upon his return to Jerusalem, he redressed, as much as he could, the mischiefs which his former impiety had done. He abolished the idolatrous profanations of the temple; restored, in all things, the reformation which his father had made, and obliged all his subjects to worship, and serve the Lord only; so that, after this, God blessed him with a long and prosperous reign, longer indeed than any of the kings of Judah, either before or after him, had reigned. He possessed the throne full five and fifty years: and yet, notwithstanding his signal repentance, because his former wickedness was so great, he was not allowed the honour of being buried in any of the royal sepulchres, but was laid in a grave made in the garden belonging to his own house, called *the garden of Uzzah* †, and was succeeded by his son Ammon.

Ammon succeeds his father, and is murdered by his servants.

This prince, imitating the first part of his father's reign, and not the repentance of his later, gave himself up to all manner of wickedness and impiety; so that God shortened his government, by permitting some of his own domestics, († after a reign of two years) to conspire against him and slay him: But, as wicked as he was, the people of the land took care to revenge his murder, by putting all to death who had any hand in it, though they would not, at his burial, honour him (any more than his

and they use it sometimes as a kind of devout form, and what contains nothing it in deserving censure; *Calmet's Dictionary*, under the word *Manesseh*.

† This garden, as some think, was made in that very spot of ground where Uzzah was struck dead, for touching the *ark of the Lord*, 2 Sam. vi. 7; but others imagine, that this was the place where Uzziah, who died a leper, was buried, 2 Chron. xxvi. 23. and that Manesseh chose to be buried here, as unworthy, because of his manifold sins, (whereof he nevertheless repented), to be laid in any of the royal sepulchres of the kings of Judah; *Patrick's* and *Calmet's Commentaries*.

† This, as some Jewish authors observe, is the usual number of years to which the sons of those kings did arrive, who, by their abominations, provoked God to anger, as they instance in the son of Jeroboam, 1 Kings xv. 25; the son of Baasha, chap. xvi. 8.; the son of Ahab, chap. xxii. 51.; *Patrick's Commentary*.
father)

father) with a place among the sepulchres of the sons of David.

His son Josiah, who was then a child no more than eight years old, succeeded in the throne; but, having the happiness to fall under the conduct of better guardians in his minority than did Manasseh, his grandfather, he proved, when grown up, a prince of very extraordinary worth, equal, if not superiour, in piety, virtue, and goodness, to the best of his predecessors. In the sixteenth year of his age, he took upon him the administration of the kingdom; and beginning with the reformation of religion, endeavoured to purge it from all those corruptions which had been introduced in the preceding reigns. To this purpose he took a progress through the whole kingdom, and, wherever he came, brake down the altars, cut down the groves, and brake in pieces all the carved and molten images that were dedicated to idolatry. The graves of idolatrous priests he dug up, and burnt their bones upon some of these altars, thereby to defile and pollute them for ever; and † whatever priests of the Levitical order had at any time sacrificed on the high-places, though it were to the true God, these he took care to depose from their sacerdotal office. † The houses of the Sodomites he broke

A. M.
3246, etc.
Ant. Christ.
738, etc.
from
1 Kings viii.
to the end
of 2 Chron.
Josiah's
good and
pious reign,
his reformation of
religion.

down:

† Several of these priests, seeing the worship of the temple abandoned, and, after that the tenths, and offerings, and sacrifices were taken away, having nothing to subsist themselves, had the weakness to repair to the high-places, and there offer unto God such oblations and sacrifices as the people brought them; (for it does not appear, that any of them entered into the service of false gods); but because this was giving countenance (by their presence and ministry) to a worship that was forbidden, Deut. xii. 11. he would not receive them any more into the service of the temple, though he suffered them to be maintained by it. He put them, in short, into the condition of those priests that had any blemish, who might *not offer the bread of their God*, and yet might *eat the bread of their God, both of the holy, and most holy*, Lev. xxi. 21, 22.; *Patrick's and Calmet's Commentaries.*

† This was the name which is sometimes given to the most infamous of all prostitutes, who exposed their bodies to be abused, contrary to nature, in honour of those filthy deities whom they worshipped. Their houses were near the temple, and therefore these were persons consecrated to impurity; and that they might commit their abominations with a greater licentiousness, they had wo-

A. M.
3246, etc.
Ant. Christ.
758, etc.
from
1 Kings viii.
to the end
of 2 Chron.

down : Tophet †, which was in the valley of Hinnom, he defiled : The horses * dedicated to the sun, he removed ; burnt its chariots with fire ; and, being not satisfied with destroying all the monuments of idolatry in his own dominions, he visited in person the cities of Ephraim and Manasseh, and all the rest of the land, which had formerly been possessed by the ten tribes, and there did the same. But, while he was at Bethel, † discovering by the inscription the monument of the prophet who was sent from Judah

men appointed to make them tents, wherein they were wont to retire upon these detestable occasions ; *Calmét's Commentary.*

† It is the general opinion of the Jews, that the word *Tophet* comes from *Thoph*, which in their language signifies a drum ; because drums, in this place, were used to be beat in order to deaden the cries of those children which were burnt alive to the idol Moloch ; but there is one objection to this etymology, viz. that it does not appear that the larger kind of drums, such as are in use now, were at all known to the ancients. There was a lesser sort indeed, or what we call a *taber*, wherewith they made music in their dancing ; but these were not loud enough for the present purpose, and the larger kind we owe to the Arabians, who first brought them into Spain, from whence they were dispersed all Europe over ; *Le Clerc's Commentary.*

* It is certain, that all the people of the east worshipped the sun, and consecrated horses to it, because they were nimble and swift in their course, even as they supposed it to be :

Placat equo Persis radiis hyperiona cinctum,

Ne detur celeri victima tarda Deo.

Ovid. Fab. lib. i.

but then the question is, whether the people of Juda sacrificed these horses to the sun, (as it is certain the Armenians, Persians, and other nations did), or only led them out in state every morning to meet and salute the sun at his rising. The ancients had a notion likewise, that the sun itself was carried about in a chariot ; and therefore chariots, as well as horses, were dedicated to it. Since then we find these horses and chariots standing so near together, the horses, we may suppose, were designed to draw the chariots, and the chariots to carry the king and his other great officers (who were idolaters of this kind) out at the east gate of the city every morning, to salute and adore the sun at its coming above the horizon ; *Bochart's Hieroz. part. i. lib. ix. c. 10.*

† The Jews will tell us, that on one side of the grave, (where the prophet of Judah and the prophet of Bethel lay together), there grew

Judah to declare against the altar which Jeroboam had there set up, and (above three hundred years before) to name the very name of Josiah, who was to destroy it; he would not suffer it to be touched, nor his bones to be molested.

Having thus carried on the work of reformation in the distant parts of his kingdom, he took care in the next place to have the temple repaired. To this purpose, he ordered Hilkiah, the high priest, to take a general view of it, and see what was necessary to be done; who, while he was surveying and examining every place, chanced to find *a book of the law of the Lord given by Moses*. The book was carried to the king, who, having † heard some part of it

A. M.
3246, &c.
Ant. Christ.
758, &c.
from
1 Kings viii.
to the end
of 2 Chron.
Reparation
of the tem-
ple.

grew nettles and thistles, on the other, myrtles, and other odoriferous plants; signifying, that a true and false prophet lay there; and that this raised the king's curiosity to inquire whose that sepulchre was; but there is no ground for this fabulous fancy. The king, we may suppose, espied a stone or a pillar more eminent than the rest, with the names of the persons that were buried under it, and this made him ask the question of the men of the city, *i. e.* some of the old inhabitants that had escaped the captivity, and not any of those new comers whom the king of Assyria had sent thither; for these could give no account of the ancient histories of the Israelites; neither can we suppose, that the sepulchre itself, after so many years standing, could have been distinguishable, had not some pious person or other, with an intent to perpetuate the memory of the thing, in each successive age, taken care to preserve and repair it, Matth. xxiii. 29.; *Le Clerc's* and *Patrick's Commentaries*.

† Whether it was the whole Pentateuch, or the book of Deuteronomy only, which the high-priest found in the temple, it is generally agreed, that the part which Shaphan read to the king was taken out of the book of Deuteronomy, and not without some probability, that the 28th, 29th, and 30th chapters were that portion of Scripture which the secretary who (as we are told 2 Kings xxii. 8.) had read the book before he brought it to the king, thought proper upon this occasion to turn to; for therein is contained a renewal of the covenant which Moses, as mediator, had made between God and the people of Israel at mount Horeb; and therein are those threats and terrible commissions to the transgressors of the law, whether prince or people, which affected Josiah so much; and *which Moses had given the Levites to put on the side of the covenant, that it might be there for a witness against the transgressors of it*, Deut. xxxi. 25, 26.; *Calmer's Commentary*.

read,

A. M.
3246, etc.
Ant. Christ.
758, etc.
from
1 Kings viii.
to the end
of 2 Chron.

read, rent his robes in dread of the curses denounced against a wicked people, and immediately sent the high-priest, and some other of his chief officers, to Huldah † the prophetess to inquire of the Lord; who returned them in answer, “ That the judgments threatened in the book of the law, would not be long before they fell upon the kingdom of Judah; but that, because the king had expressed so deep a concern upon hearing the denunciation of them, their execution should be delayed till after his death.”

And farther
reforma-
tion.

The good king, however, in order to appease the wrath of God, called together a solemn assembly of all the elders and people of Judah and Jerusalem; and going with them to the temple, he caused the law of God there to be distinctly read; and when that was done, both he and all the people entered into a covenant to observe all that was contained in it. After this he made another progress round the kingdom of Judah and Samaria, to destroy every the least remainder of idolatry that he could meet with; and when the season of the next passover was come, had it || kept with such exactness and solemnity, as had never

† This is the only mention we have of this prophetess, and certainly it makes much to her renown, that she was consulted upon this weighty occasion, when both Jeremiah, and Zephaniah were at that time prophets in Judah. But Zephaniah, perhaps, at that time might not have commenced a prophet; because, though we are told that he *prophefied in the days of Josiah*, Zeph. i. 1.; yet we are no where informed, in what part of his reign he entered upon the prophetic office. Jeremiah, too, might at that time be absent from Jerusalem, at his house at Anathoth, or some more remote part of the kingdom; so that, considering Josiah's haste and impatience, there might be no other remedy at hand to apply to but this woman: *Great is the wrath of the Lord that is kindled against us*, says the king to his ministers, 2 Kings xxii. 13.; and therefore his intent, in sending them, might be to inquire, whether there were any hopes of appeasing wrath, and in what manner it was to be done. Being therefore well assured of this woman's fidelity, in delivering the mind and counsel of God, the ministers who went to inquire, concluded rightly, that it was much more considerable, what message God sent, than by whose hand it was he conveyed it; *Pool's Annotations.*

|| The words of the text are, — *Surely, there was not held such a passover, from the days of the judges, nor in all the days of the kings*

never been observed, from the days of Samuel the prophet, till that time.

In a word, this excellent prince did all that in him lay, to atone for the sins of the people, and appease the wrath of God; but his decree † for the removal of Judah into a land of their captivity, was passed, irrevocably passed: And therefore, when Pharaoh Necho * king of Egypt de-

fired

kings of Israel, and of the kings of Judah, 2 Kings xxiii. 22. which, taken in a literal sense, must denote, that this passover, which was celebrated by two tribes only, was more numerous, and more magnificent, than all those that were observed in the days of David and Solomon, in the most happy and flourishing state of the Jewish monarchy, and when the twelve tribes were met together, to solemnize that feast. It may not be amiss therefore to allow, that, in these expressions, there is a kind of *auxesis* or *exaggeration*, not unusual in sacred, as well as in profane authors. For nothing is more common than to say, "Never was so much splendour and magnificence seen," when we mean no more than that the thing we speak of was very splendid and magnificent: Unless we suppose, with some, that a preference is given to this passover above all the rest, in respect of the exact observation of the rites and ceremonies belonging to it, which, at other times, were performed according to custom, and several things either altered or omitted; whereas at this, every thing was performed according to the prescribed form of the law, from which, since the finding of this authentic copy of it, Josiah enjoined them not to vary one tittle; *Calmet's* and *Le Clerc's Commentaries*.

† Though Josiah was doubtless sincere in what he did, and omitted nothing to restore the purity of God's worship, wherever his power extended; yet the people had still a hankering after the corruption of the former part of Manasseh's reign. They complied, indeed, with the present reformation; but this was only out of fear of incurring the king's displeasure, or of feeling the severity of his justice. Their hearts were not right towards God, as appears from the writings of the prophets that lived in those times; and therefore, seeing no sign of their repentance, God had no reason to reverse his decree; *Calmet's* and *Le Clerc's Commentaries*.

* *Pharaoh* signifies no more, in the Egyptian language, than *King*; and was therefore given to any one that sat upon that throne: But Necho (according to Herodotus) was his proper name, though some will have it to be an appellative which signifies *lame*, because this Pharaoh (as they suppose) had a lameness,

A. M.
3246, etc.
Ant. Christ.
758, etc.
from
1 Kings viii.
to the end
of 2 Chron.
The man-
ner of his
death, bu-
rial, and the
great la-
mentation
made for
him.

A. M.
3246, &c.
Ant. Christ.
758, &c.
from
1 Kings viii.
to the end.
of 2 Chron.

fired to pass through Judea, in order to go and attack Charchemish †, a city belonging to the king of Babylon, and situate upon the Euphrates, Josiah would by no means consent to it; but getting together his forces, posted himself in the valley of Megiddo *, on purpose to obstruct his

nefs, which proceeded from some wound he had received in the wars. The same historian tells us, that he was the son and successor of Psammetichus king of Egypt, and a man of a bold enterprising spirit; that he made an attempt to join the Nile and the Red-sea, by drawing a canal from one to the other; that though he failed in this design, yet, by sending a fleet from the Red-sea through the streights of Babel-Mandel, he discovered the coasts of Africa, and, in this his expedition to the Euphrates, resolved to bid fair (by destroying the united force of the Babylonians and Medes) for the whole monarchy of Asia; *Prideaux's Connection*, anno 610.; and *Marsham's Canon*. æg. sæcul. 18.

† Geographers make no mention of this city under this name; But it is very probably the same with what the Greeks and Latins call *Cercusum* or *Cercesum*, which was situated on the angle formed by the conjunction of the Chaboras or Chebar, and the Euphrates, Isa. x. 9. speaks of this place as if Tiglath-Pileser had made a conquest of it, and Necho perhaps now was going to retake it, as we find he did; but Jeremiah informs us, chap. xlvii. 1, 2. that in the fourth year of Jehoiachim king of Judah, it was taken and quite destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon; *Calmet's Commentary*; and *Wells's Geography of the Old Testament*, vol. iii.

* Megiddo was a city in the half-tribe of Manasseh, not far from the Mediterranean Sea, which way Necho was to pass with his army, in order to go into Syria, and thence to the Euphrates. In the valley adjoining to this place Josiah was slain, "while he was at the head of his army," (as Josephus tells us), "and riding up and down to give orders from one wing to the other." This action Herodotus makes mention of, when he tells us, "that Nechos king of Egypt having fallen upon the Syrians, near the city Magdol, obtained a great victory, and made himself master of Cadytis:" Where the author plainly mistakes the Syrians for the Jews; Magdolum, a city in the Lower-Egypt, for Megiddo; and Cadytis for Kadesch, in the Upper-Galilee, by which he was to pass in his way to Charchemish; or rather for the city of Jerusalem, which, in Herodotus's time, might be called by the neighbouring nations *Cadyta*, or *Cadyfcha*, i. e. *the holy city*; since, even to this day, it is called by the eastern people *Al-huds*, which

his passage. The Egyptian king, hearing of this, sent ambassadors desiring him to desist, declaring that he came not to invade his territories, but purely to do himself justice on the king of Babylon; and assuring him withal, that what he did in this case was by the order and appointment of God. Josiah, however, thought himself no way concerned to believe him; and therefore, on Necho's marching up to the place where he was posted to receive him, a battle immediately ensued, wherein the Egyptian archers discovering Josiah, (though he had disguised himself before the action began), plied that quarter of the army, where he fought so very warmly, with their arrows, that, at last, receiving a mortal wound from one of them, he was carried in another chariot * out of the battle to Jerusalem, where, after a reign of one and thirty years, he died, and was buried in the sepulchre of his ancestors.

3246, etc.
Ant. Christ.
758, etc.
from
1 Kings viii.
to the end
of 2 Chron.

* The death of so excellent a prince was deservedly lamented by all his people, but by none more sincerely than by Jeremiah the prophet; who, having a thorough sense of the greatness of the loss, as well as a full foresight of the fore calamities which were afterwards to follow upon

which is plainly both of the same signification and original; *Calmet's Dictionary*, under the word *Kadesh*; and *Prideaux's Connection*, anno 610.

* It was the custom of war in former times, for great officers to have their led horses, that if one failed they might mount another. The kings of Persia (as Quintus Curtius informs us) had horses attending their chariots, which, in case of any accident, they might make to; and, in like manner, we may presume, that, when it became a mighty fashion to fight in chariots, all great captains had an empty one following them, into which they might betake themselves if any mischance befel the other; *Bochart's Hieroz.* part 1. c. 2. & 9.

* The author of the book of Ecclesiasticus has given us his encomium in these words:—*All, except David and Hezekias, and Josias, were defective. They forsook the law of the Most High; even the kings of Judah failed. But the remembrance of Josias, is like the composition of the perfume, that is made by the art of the apothecary: It is as sweet as honey in all mouths, and as music at a banquet of wine. He behaved himself uprightly in the conversion of the people, and took away the abomination of iniquity. He directed his heart unto the Lord, and, in the time of the ungodly, he established the worship of God, Ecclus. xlix. 1, &c.*

A. M. 3246, &c. the whole kingdom of Judah, while his heart was full with
 Ant. Christ. 758, &c. a view of both these, wrote a song of lamentation * upon
 from (which goes under his name, and is still remaining) was
 1 Kings viii. composed upon the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebu-
 to the end of 2 Chron. chadnezzar.

The OBJECTION.

“ BUT how religious soever we may suppose Josiah the
 “ king of Judah to have been, we cannot but wonder
 “ at his ignorance in the law of God. Those who had
 “ had the care of his education, were required to instruct
 “ him in it (a) upon all proper occasions ; himself (ac-
 “ cording to what (b) the law directs) was to transcribe a
 “ copy of it with his own hand, and to have it so con-
 “ stantly in his remembrance, as if it were (c) *frontlets*
 “ *between his eyes* ; and yet, when he was no less than six
 “ and twenty years old, and in the eighteenth year of his
 “ reign, we find him (d) *rending his cloaths*, for fear of
 “ the threats denounced against a wicked prince and peo-
 “ ple, as if he had never read his Bible, (which he high-
 “ priest by the bye seems equally a stranger to), nor heard
 “ a word of the book of Deuteronomy before.

“ How the chosen people of God came so frequently to
 “ fall into the detestable sin of idolatry, we are at a loss

* The Jews were wont to make lamentations, or mournful songs, upon the death of great men, princes, and heroes, who had distinguished themselves in arms, or by any civil art had merited well of their country. By an expression in 2 Chron. xxxv. 25. *Behold they are written in the Lamentations*, one may infer, that they had certain collections of this kind of composition. The author of the book of Samuel has preserved those which David made upon the death of Saul, and Jonathan of Abner and Absalom : But this mournful poem, which the disconsolate prophet made upon the immature death of good Josiah, we no where have ; which is a loss the more to be deplored, because, in all probability, it was a master-piece in its kind ; since never was there an author more deeply affected with his subject, or more capable of carrying it through all the tender sentiments of sorrow and compassion ; *Calmet's Commentary*, and *Preface sur les Lamentations de Jeremie*.

(a) Deut. vi. 7. (b) Chap. xvii. 18. (c) Chap. vi. 8
 (d) 2 Kings xxii. 11, &c.

“ to

“ to comprehend ; but though, whenever they did so, it
 “ was the part of every good prince to endeavour to re-
 “ claim them ; yet we should be glad to know, what right
 “ King Josiah had to extend his reformation into other
 “ countries, and to exercise this authority in the kingdom
 “ of Samaria, which was then subject to the Assyrians ;
 “ or upon what pretensions he opposed Necho king of
 “ Egypt, when he only civilly asked a passage through his
 “ country, and was going to do himself justice upon an
 “ enemy that had invaded his territories first.

A. M.
 346, &c.
 Ant. Christ.
 753, &c.
 from
 1 Kings viii.
 to the end
 of 2 Chron.

“ Had he sent, indeed, in his own name only, Josiah
 “ might have pleaded, in his excuse, the danger of ad-
 “ mitting a large army into the bowels of his country ;
 “ but since (e) the request was sent in the name of God,
 “ who had put him upon this expedition, and accordingly
 “ prospered him in it, we cannot but say, that Josiah
 “ justly suffered for opposing the Almighty’s will, and in-
 “ termeddling in the matter wherein he had no concern :
 “ Though how to absolve the divine goodness and veracity,
 “ in bringing so good a prince to an untimely end, and
 “ causing him to be slain in battle, when he had promised,
 “ (f) *that he should be gathered into his grave in peace*, is
 “ what we cannot unriddle.

“ *The sting of death is sin* ; but the man who can appeal
 “ to God for the truth and sincerity of his heart, (as we
 “ find Hezekiah appealing), may bid defiance to that
 “ prince of terrors : And yet (whatever his distemper
 “ might be) the Scripture represents this great and good
 “ man, upon notice of his death, in a very piteous plight,
 “ (g) *weeping sore, (h) chattering as a crane or a swallow,*
 “ *and mourning like a dove*, at the thoughts of his dissolu-
 “ tion, which is far from setting the faint and the hero,
 “ more the benefits which accrue from a religious life, in
 “ an advantageous light.

“ A person so passionately in love with life may well be
 “ supposed to desire some assurance of his recovery : But
 “ to cause the sun, not only to stop its course, but even to
 “ go ten degrees backward, for his conviction, is a little
 “ too lavish.

“ Instead of disturbing the whole course of nature,
 “ therefore, merely to satisfy the diffidence of one man, it

(e) 1 Chron. xxxv. 21. (f) 2 Kings xxii. 20. (g) Ibid.
 xx. 3. (h) Isaiah xxviii. 3, 14.

A. M.
3246, etc.
Ant. Christ.
758, &c.
from
1 Kings viii.
to the end
of 2 Chron.

“ more rational to think, (i) that this miracle was not wrought upon the body of the sun, but upon the dial only, *i. e.* that God, upon this occasion, made no alteration in the motion of the heavens, but only, by the means of some extraordinary meteors or refractions, so disposed the rays of the sun, and directed its light, that no shadow could be projected but where the prophet foretold.

“ But, whether this miracle was in the motion of the sun, or in the direction of its shadow only, it certainly was a sufficient evidence to convince Hezekiah of his future recovery. Much better than what God gave this prince to assure him, (k) that the king of Assyria should not invest the city of Jerusalem, *nor shoot an arrow there, nor cast a bank against it.* Much better (l) than what he gave King Ahaz, when, from the invasion of two confederate kings, he lay under the most dreadful apprehensions. For, (m) of what use can a sign be, that is subsequent to the thing signified? What consolation could the promise of the future birth of a son be, to a person labouring under perplexity and want of immediate relief? Or, where is the sense of the prophet’s saying, that, (n) *before the child* (to be born seven hundred years hence) *shall be able to distinguish between good and evil, the land shall be forsaken of both her kings?*

“ But of all the stories in this period of time, commend me to that wonderful novel of young Tobias, and the angel, in their adventures to Ecbatana. His father’s losing his eye-sight by the hot dung of swallows had been a sad family-accident, had not the gall of the fish come in opportunely to remedy it; though it be the first time that we ever knew, that a swallow’s dung was pernicious, and a fish’s gall restorative to the eye-sight. This, however, was nothing in comparison to its heart and liver, whose very smoke was enough to drive away the devil Asmodeus, as far as the utmost parts of Egypt, where the good angel took care to chain him down, that he might give the new-married couple no farther molestation. All this sounds so like a romance, that we know not what else to call it, unless we will

(i) Le Clerc’s Comment. on 2 Kings xx. 9. (k) Isaiah xxxvii. 33. (l) Ibid vii. 14. (m) Grounds and Reasons of the Christian religion. (n) Isaiah vii. 16.

“ suppose

“suppose with Grotius (*o*) that the whole account is parabolical, and that this pretended Asmodeus was some ill quality attending Sara’s body, which had proved mortal to her other husbands; but that Tobias, by using proper fumigations, had preserved himself, and cured her.”

A. M.
3246, &c.
Ant. Chris.
758, &c.
from
1 Kings viii.
to the end
of 2 Chron.
The contents of the
book of
Tobit vindicated.

That the dung of swallows is of a very hot and caustic quality, and when dropt into the eye, must needs be injurious to the sight, as being apt to cause an inflammation, and thereby a concretion of humours, which, in process of time, may produce a white film, that will obstruct the light from the optic nerves; and that the gall of a fish (especially of the fish called *Callionimus*) is of excellent use to remove all such specks and obstructions to the sight, we have the testimony of some of the greatest men, (*p*) physicians and naturalists, to produce in confirmation of this part of Tobit’s history. That good angels are appointed by God to be the guardians of particular men, and in execution of this their office, do frequently assume human shapes, to guide them in their journeys, and to deliver them from all dangers, is a doctrine (*q*) as antient as the patriarch Jacob’s time, embraced by Christians, and believed by the wisest Heathens; and that every man, in like manner, has an evil angel, or genius, whereof some preside over one vice, and some over another; insomuch that there are demons of avarice, demons of pride, and demons of impurity, &c. each endeavouring to insnare the person he attends with a complexional temptation, is another position that has been almost generally received, (*r*) not only in the Jewish and Christian, but in the Pagan theology likewise; and therefore thus far the history of Tobit can be no novel or romance.

That good angels have a superior power and controul over the bad, and by the divine authority can curb and restrain their malice, (which is all that we need understand

(*o*) Tobit, iii. 8. and vi. 4. (*p*) Galen. De simplic. medicament. facult. lib. 10. c. 12; Ælian. lib. xiii. c. 4.; Rhafis, lib. ix. c. 27.; Pliny, lib. xxvii. c. 11.; Gefner. Hist. animal. lib. iii. Aldrovand. Ornitholog. lib. xvii.; Valef. De sacra philosoph. c. 42. (*q*) Gen. xlviii. 16.; Psal. xxxiv. 7.; Mat. xviii. 10.; Acts xii. 15.; Hesiod. oper. et dies lib. 1.; Plato, De legibus, lib. 10.; and Apuleius, De deo Socratis. (*r*) Vid. Buxtorf. Synag. Jud. c. 10.; Basnag. Hist. des Juif. liv. vi. c. 19.; Orphei Hymn. ad musas; Plutarch, in Bruto; 1 Pet. v. 8; Matth. vii. 32, 33.; Luke xii. 11, 16.

by

A. M. 3246, &c. Ant. Chris. 758, &c. from 1 Kings viii. to the end of 2 Chron.

by *their binding them up*), is evident from a passage in the Revelations very resemblant to what we read here concerning Raphael and Asmodeus; (s) *I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit, and a great chain in his hand, and he laid hold on the dragon, the old serpent, which is the Devil and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, and cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more*: And that this good angel, personating an Israelite, and (t) *calling himself Azarias, the son of Ananias*, was not guilty of any lie or prevarication, is plain from cases of the like nature. For as the picture is usually called by the person it represents, and he who in tragedy acts the part of Cato, does, for that time, go under his name; so Raphael, being sent by God in the form and appearance of a young man, was, in that capacity, to act and speak as if he had been such. Nor was there any fallacy in his assuming the name of Azarias, which signifies *God's help*, or *assistance*, since he was manifestly sent for this very purpose, that he might be a guide and assistance to Tobias in his journey; and therefore very prudently concealed his quality of an angel, that he might more conveniently execute his commission. So that hitherto there is no incongruity in the whole narration, if we can but have a farther account, why (u) the smoke of the fish's liver and heart should be of any efficacy to put the evil spirit to flight.

Those who are of opinion, (x) that demons, or evil angels, were invested with certain material forms, wherein they snuffed up the perfumes, and feasted themselves upon the odours of the incense and sacrifices that were offered to them, have an easy way of solving this difficulty, by supposing that the smell of the burnt heart and liver of the fish was offensive to Asmodeus, even as they pretend, (y) that in some herbs, plants, stones, and other natural things, there is a certain virtue to drive away demons, and to hinder them from coming into such a determinate place. The Chaldeans, among whom the book of Tobit was wrote, and the Israelites, for whose use and instruction it was wrote, might both be of this opinion: — That demons, as not absolutely divested of all matter, were capable of the

(s) Rev. xx. 1, &c. (t) Tobit v. 12. (u) Tobit viii. 2.
(x) Porphyry. De abstinentia. lib. ii. (y) Origen. contra Celsum. lib. 8.

same sensations and impressions that belonged to corporeal substances; and therefore in accommodation to the vulgar idea, and prejudice of the people, the author of this history might express himself, as though the expulsion of this evil spirit was effected by a natural cause, the smoke of the fish, even though, at the same time, he sufficiently intimates, that it was by a divine power that it came to pass, because we find the angel thus enjoining Tobit, (z) *When thou shalt come to thy wife Sara, rise up both of you, and pray to God, who is merciful, who will pity you, and save you.*

A. M.
3246, etc.
Ant. Christ.
758, &c.
from
1 Kings viii.
to the end
of 2 Chron.

Upon the contrary supposition, viz. that this demon was a being incorporeal, (and this is the supposition concerning the angelical nature which generally prevails), we may safely conclude, that the smoke of the fish's entrails could have no direct and physical effect upon him; that his flying away therefore was occasioned by a supernatural power, in the exercise of which, the angel appointed to attend Tobit was the principal instrument; (a) that he ordered the burning of the fish's entrails, as a sign, when the evil spirit, by his superior power, should be chased away; or, in the same sense, that our blessed Saviour spread clay upon the eyes of the man that was born blind, and ordered him to wash in the pool of Siloah, viz. not as the cause but the proof of his cure; and that he sent him away (b) *into the uttermost parts of Egypt, i. e. into the deserts of the Upper Egypt*, because our Saviour intimates, that such is the usual habitation of evil spirits, when he represents them, (c) *as walking through dry places, seeking rest, and finding none.*

However this be, we cannot hold ourselves concerned for the vindication of every expression in a book, which our church has not thought fit to receive into her canon of Scripture. It is sufficient for our present purpose, that the historical ground-plot of it be true, whatever may be said as to some particular passage in it, and though its figurative and poetical style, as well as near conformity to the theology then in vogue, may give some umbrage to a reader, that will not be so candid as to think with St. Jerom, (d) *Multa in Scripturis sanctis dicuntur juxta opinionem illius temporis, et non juxta quod rei veritas continebat.*

(z) Tobit. vi. 17. (a) Saurin's Dissert. sur le Démon Asmodée. (b) Tobit viii. 3. (c) Matth. xii. 43. (d) Jerom. in Jerem. c. 28.

Whether

A. M.
3246, &c.
Ant. Christ.
758, &c.
from
1 Kings viii.
to the end
of 2 Chron.

That the
book which
Hilkiah
found was
the authent-
ic copy of
Moses.

Whether the book of the law, which Hilkiah the high-priest found in the house of the Lord, in the time of Josiah king of Judah, consisted of the whole Pentateuch, or only of that part of it which is called *Deuteronomy*; and whether it was the authentick copy which Moses committed to the priest's custody, or only some ancient manuscript kept in the temple for the public use, viz. for the king to read to the people once every seven years, or for the priests to consult upon any emergent difficulty, is a matter of some debate among the learned. The testimony of the author of the book of Chronicles seems however to determine the matter, when he assures us, that the book of the law which Hilkiah found, was that *(e)* which was given by the hand of Moses, and consequently the whole Pentateuch, which, by his command, was repositied *(f)* in the side of the ark of the covenant.

That Josiah
had seen the
law before.

It is presumed indeed, that Josiah's three predecessors, Ahaz, Manasseh, and Ammon, as not content to be impious themselves, and to instigate their subjects to idolatry, had made it their business to burn and destroy all the copies of the law that they could any where meet with, so that there was not so much as one left for the king's use; and that this was the reason of his discovering so great a surprise at his hearing the comminations read, because he had never perhaps seen any such volume before. It must be acknowledged indeed, that disuse often cancels the most excellent laws, and, from Josiah's surprize, we have room to suspect, that he had not as yet transcribed a copy of the law with his own hand, and had probably for some time neglected the reading it publicly, *(g)* every seventh year, according to the command. But that he had never seen such a transcript of it before this time, we can hardly believe, because it is not conceivable, how he could so early apply himself to the service of God, even in opposition to the corruptions of the times; how he could begin the reformation of religion, the abolishment of idolatry and superstition, and the establishment of so many wholesome ordinances for the divine worship, without the assistance and direction of this book.

In this very year, we are told, that such a passover was solemnised, *(h)* as had not been kept, from the days of Samuel the prophet, nor among all the kings of Israel; but

(e) 2 Chron. xxxiv. 14. *(f)* Deut. xxxi. 26. *(g)* Ibid. ver. 10, 11. *(h)* 2 Chron. xxxv. 18.

how the priests could have observed all the rites and ceremonies belonging to it, (which are not a few), if every prescribed form of it had been lost, we cannot conceive; since copies of the book, which was now found in the temple, could not be made and transcribed time enough for their instruction in these particulars.

In the reigns of Jehoshaphat and Hezekiah, copies of the law (i) were common enough, and in the reigns of their wicked successors, the sacred history makes no mention of their being burnt or destroyed. The Jewish doctors indeed tell us, that Manasseh blotted the sacred name of Jehovah out of all the books that he could find; but they now here report, that he utterly abolished them: And therefore we may conclude, that the people, at this time, had several copies of the law among them, though some of them perhaps imperfect and corrupt; and that the high-priest might rejoice, when he had found the original, because by it all the other copies might be corrected; and rejoice the more, that he had found it at a time when the king was going to make a reformation in religion, which he could not but look upon as a very remarkable providence.

The four Evangelists, who have recorded the substance of the Christian religion, we have by us, and may read therein every day; and yet, who can say, but that some remarkable passage may perchance escape his observation? (k) But now, if by some lucky accident, we should happen to find the original of St. Matthew or St. John, who can doubt, but that we should both read and listen to it with more seriousness and attention, than we now do to the same books that are every day in our hands? And in like manner we may say, that it was the great reverence which Josiah bore to the original book of Moses, as well as the reasonable and remarkable finding it at this time, that awakened and quickened him to a more attentive consideration of all the passages contained it, than ever he had known before, either in his reading, or hearing the ordinary copies of the law.

Manasseh was certainly, in the former part of his reign, a very impious prince. The Scripture seems to imply, that till his miseries had rectified his notions, (l) he did not believe at all in the God of Israel, nor in the history of his forefathers; but he is not the only son that has degenerat-

A. M.
3246. etc.
Ant. Christ.
758, etc.
from
1 Kings viii.
to the end
of 2 Chron.

Why the
high-priest
rejoiced at
finding it;

and the
king was
surprised at
it.

Why the
kings and
people of
Israel were
so prone to
idolatry.

(i) Chap. xvii. 9. (k) Calmet's Commentary on 2 Kings xxii. 8. (l) 2 Chron. xxxiii. 13.

A. M
3246, &c.
Ant. Christ.
758, &c.
from
1 Kings viii.
to the end
of 2 Chron.

ed from the good example of a pious father ; neither were his subjects the only people that, even in the grossest irreligion and profaneness, have imitated the example of their prince. The wonder is, how both prince and people became, upon every occasion, so prone to fall from the religion of their ancestors into idolatry, notwithstanding the frequent remonstrances on God's part to the contrary ? Now, to this purpose it may be observed, (*m*) that in the whole compass of the law, there is no express revelation made of a future life ; that the hints which are given of it, are too obscure for every common reader rightly to interpret ; and that this obscurity might be a means of throwing the ancient Israelites into idolatrous practices. For as they had no certain hopes of another life to rely on, they could not see neighbouring nations in a more flourishing condition, without some uneasiness and perturbation of mind ; and from hence, by degrees, they might fall into this opinion, ——— That the gods of these nations must needs be more mighty and powerful than the God of Israel, since their worshippers were manifestly more prosperous ; and from hence they were induced to forsake the God of their ancestors, and to worship the gods of the Heathen.

It may be observed farther, that the difficulty of keeping the Mosaic law, especially in what related to its rites and ceremonies, was very great, and the profit which resulted from thence no ways comparable to the trouble which it occasioned ; and from thence they might be tempted to shake off (*n*) a yoke, which neither they, nor their forefathers were able to bear, and betake themselves to the observance of other laws, more easy and commodious in themselves, and such as were productive of much more benefit and prosperity to the observers of them. Nor should it be forgotten, that as a great part of the revenues of Palestine, according to the constitution of the Mosaic law, fell to the lot of the priests and Levites, the laity, upon every occasion, might grow weary of paying so much ; and thereupon be inclined to any innovation in religion that should offer itself, if it could but be supported at an easier expence. And accordingly we may observe, that in the wicked reigns of Ahaz and Manasseh, when the temple was either quite shut up, or converted to idolatrous purposes, the payment of tithes and oblations was suspended,

(*m*) Le Clerc's Commentary on 2 Kings xxi. 11. (*n*) Acts xv. 10.

(which

(which might be a great gratification to the people) until, in the reigns of Hezekiah and Josiah, they were again restored to the ministers of God. These, and such reasons as these, might make the ancient Hebrews so unsettled in their obedience to the law of Moses, until the time that a clearer and more perfect revelation of a future life extended their views and hopes above the things of this world, and made them more constant and immoveable (as the author to the Hebrews (o) bears them testimony) in the worship of the true God.

Josiah may be thought by some to have followed the dictates of his zeal a little too far, in destroying the images and altars, and other monuments of idolatry, in the kingdom of Israel, where he had neither any regal nor judicial authority: But it should be remembered, that his authority in this regard was founded upon an ancient prediction, (p) where he is particularly named, and appointed to this work of reformation by God himself, and that, consequently, he could not be guilty of an infringement upon another's right, even though he had no farther commission. But the ten tribes, we are to consider, being now gone into captivity, the ancient right which David and his posterity had to the whole kingdom of Israel (before it was dismembered by Jeroboam and his successors) devolved upon Josiah. The people, who escaped the captivity, were united with his subjects, and put themselves under his protection. They came to the worship of God at Jerusalem, and did doubtless gladly comply with his extirpation of idolatry; at which the Cushites, the new inhabitants of the country, who worshipped their gods in another manner, were not at all offended.

The kings of Assyria, it is true, were the lords and conquerors of the country; but from the time of Manasseh's restoration, they seem to have conferred upon the kings of Judah (who might thereupon become their homagers) a sovereignty in all the land of Canaan, to the same extent, wherein it was held by David and Solomon, before it was divided into two kingdoms. So that Josiah, upon sundry pretensions, had sufficient power and authority to visit the kingdom of Israel, and to purge it from idolatry, as well as his own.

And this, by the bye, suggests the reason why that good king was so very strenuous in opposing the king of Egypt;

(o) Chap. xi. 35, &c. (p) 1 Kings xiii. 2.

A. M.
3246. etc.
Ant. Christ.
7, 8, etc.
from
1 Kings viii.
to the end
of 2 Chron.

That Josiah
had a right
to carry his
reforma-
tion into
the king-
dom of Is-
rael.

A. M.
3246, &c.
Ant. Christ.
758, &c.
from
1 Kings viii.
to the end
of 2 Chron.

Egypt, when he demanded a passage through his country. (q) He was now, as we said, an homager and allay to the king of Babylon, and under a strict oath to adhere to him against all his enemies, especially against the Egyptians, and to defend the land of Canaan (which was one barrier of the empire) against their invasions; and being under such an obligation to his sovereign paramount, he could not permit his enemy to pass through his country, in order to make war upon him, and not oppose him, without incurring a breach of his oath, and a violation of that fidelity which, in the name of his God, he had sworn to the king of Babylon; and this was a thing which so good and just a man as Josiah was, could not but detest.

and that he
did not dis-
obey God
herein.

It was the sense of his duty therefore, and not any rashness of temper, or opposition to the divine will, that engaged Josiah in this war with the king of Egypt. The king of Egypt indeed sent to him to acquaint him, that (r) God was with him, and that therefore opposing him, would be fighting against God: But Josiah knew very well, that he was an Heathen prince, who had no knowledge of the Lord Jehovah, nor had ever consulted his oracles or prophets, and had therefore sufficient reason to believe, that by the god who, as he pretended, had sent him upon this expedition, he intended no other than the false Egyptian god whom he served, but whom the king of Judah had no reason to regard.

The truth is, whenever the word *god* occurs in this message from Necho to Josiah, it is not expressed in the Hebrew original by the word *Jehovah*, which is the proper name of the true God, but by the word *Elohim*, which, being in the plural number, is equally applicable to the false gods of the Heathens, (and is the word that is used to denote them, whenever they are spoken of), as well as the true God. But even suppose that Necho, in his embassy to Josiah, had made use of the proper name of the true God; yet was not Josiah therefore bound to believe him, because we find Sennacherib, when he came up against Judah, sending Hezekiah word, (s) that the Lord (*Jehovah* in the Hebrew) had ordered him to go up against the land, and destroy it; and yet, it is certain, that Sennacherib, in so pretending, lied to Hezekiah; and why then might not Josiah have as good reason to conclude, that Necho, in the same

(q) Prideaux's Connections, anno 610.
xxxv. 21.

(s) 2 Kings xviii. 25.

(r) 2 Chron.

pretence,

pretence, might have lied likewise? Necho, however, in his message, by using the word *Elohim*, gave Josiah to understand, that, by the false gods of Egypt, he was set upon that expedition, and therefore Josiah could not be liable to any blame, for not hearkening to the words which came from them.

His death indeed, was sudden and immature: he fell in battle against the Egyptians; and yet he may be said to have *gone to his grave in peace*, because he was recalled from life, whilst his kingdom was in a prosperous condition, before the calamities wherewith it was threatened were come upon it, and whilst himself was in peace and reconciliation with God. Thus, when (t) *the righteous are taken away from the evil to come*, though, (u) *in the sight of the unwise they seemed to die, and their departure is taken for misery*; yet, in what manner soever their exit be, they may well be said to die in peace, who, after their dissolution here, (x) *are numbered among the children of God, and their lot is among the saints*.

(y) *Truly the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun*, says the wise preacher. The love of life is natural to us, and in our very frame and constitution is implanted the fear of death; so that it requires no small compass of thought and serious consideration, to receive the sentence of our dissolution with a proper composure of mind. The common excuse of human infirmity might therefore apologize for Hezekiah's conduct, had we nothing more to say in his behalf; but this is far from being all.

The message which God sent him by the prophet Isaiah was, that *he should die*. i. e. that his distemper, according to the natural course of things, was mortal, and above the power of human art to cure. But this denunciation was not absolute and irreverfible. It implied a tacit condition, even as did Jonah's prediction of the destruction of Nineveh, which the repentance of its inhabitants prevented, as Hezekiah's humiliation retarded the time of his death. At this time however, he was no more than nine and thirty years old, nor had he as yet any son; for Manasseh was not born till three years after his illness. The Assyrians too were now making great preparations to invade his kingdom; for his sickness was prior to their invasion, though, in the course of

A. M.
3246, &c.
Ant. Chriſ.
758, &c.
from
1 Kings viii.
to the end
of 2 Chron.

How he
may be ſaid
to die in
peace, tho'
he was ſlain
in battle.

Why Heze-
kiah was
concerned
at his ap-
proaching
death.

(t) Isaiah lvii. 1. (u) Wisd. iii. 2. (x) Ibid. v. 5.
(y) Ecclef. xi. 7.

A. M.
3246, etc.
Ant. Christ.
758, &c.
from
1 Kings viii.
to the end
of 2 Chron.

the history, it is placed immediately after it. Putting all these considerations together then, the king had sundry reasons, besides the natural aversion which all men have to death, to be concerned at its approach, and to desire a prolongation of his life.

Length of days, and a peaceful enjoyment of old age, was a promise which God had made to his faithful servants, and the reward that he usually paid them in hand; (z) and therefore Hezekiah was apt to look upon himself as under the displeasure of God, for his being so hastily summoned away, and this premature death of his, as a kind of token of his final reprobation. In himself he saw the royal family of David extinct, and all the hopes of having the Messiah born of his race become abortive. He saw the storm that was gathering and threatening his country with desolation, while there was none of his family to succeed in his throne, and all things were in danger of running into anarchy and confusion: and therefore, having this prospect before his eyes, he might well melt into tears at the apprehensions of his approaching death, which would extinguish all his hopes, and consummate all his fears, in making him go down childless to the grave.

What his
distemper
was, it is
uncertain.

What his distemper was, the Scripture has no where expressly told us: the original word denotes an *inflammation*; but what kind of an inflammation it was, or what part of the body it affected, we have no intimation given us: and therefore, being thus left to conjecture, some have thought it an imposthume; others, a plague-fore; and others, a squinancy; being all led in their opinions by what (a) the naturalists have told us of the virtue of the medicine that was here applied for cure, viz. that figs, in a decoction, are good to disperse any inflammation about the glands, by gargling the throat; and that, in a cataplasm, they wonderfully soften, and ripen, any hard tumour. But, whatever the quality of the medicine might be, that there was a divine interposition in the whole affair, is evident, both from the speediness of the cure, and the nature of the sign which God gave Hezekiah, in order to convince him of it.

The first in-
ventors of
chronome-
ters.

Some very considerable writers would endeavour to persuade us, that, before the Babylonish captivity, the Jews had

(z) Le Clerc's Commentary on 2 Kings xx. 3. (a) Dioscor. lib. i. c. 183; Pliny, lib. xxiii, c. 7.

no instruments whereby to measure time, nor any terms in their language whereby to denote the distinct gradation of it; which, were it true, would effectually destroy all that the Scripture relates, both concerning this sun-dial which Ahaz set up, and the famous miracle which was wrought upon it: But who the first inventors of such horological instruments were, it is not so easy a matter to determine.

A. M.
3246, etc.
Ant. Chris.
758, etc.
from
1 Kings viii.
to the end
of 2 Chron.

(b) The Egyptians, who always loved to magnify the glory of their nation, and to lay claim to the invention of every learned science or curious art, pretend, that machines of this kind were in use among them many years before they appeared in other nations. To this purpose (c) their historians have observed, that, in Acantha, a town situate on the Nile, there was every day a large vessel filled with water, which, as it sunk gradually by running out at a small passage, distinguished the several hours of the day; and that all the *clepsydræ*, or *water hour-glasses* among the Greeks and Romans, were afterwards formed upon this model.

The Babylonians were a people well versed in all parts of astronomy, and it was from them (as Herodotus (d) observes) that the Greeks had the pole and the gnomon, and the twelve parts of the day. For Anaximander, (whom Pliny, by mistake, calls *Anaximenes*), who first taught them to distinguish time, travelled into Chaldea for improvement of knowledge, and from thence brought away this useful invention. Anaximander, indeed, is said to have flourished about two hundred years after this; but as the Scripture informs us, that there was a good deal of intimacy between Tiglath-Pileser king of Assyria, and Ahaz king of Judah, it is not improbable, that, as he was taken with the figure of a strange altar, when he went to visit that prince at Damascus, he might then likewise see some of the sun-dials (for sun-dials might be common in Chaldea, though not in other countries) which Tiglath-Pileser was accustomed to carry along with him, for the mensuration of time wherever he went; and, being highly delighted with so curious and useful an invention, might either have

How Ahaz
might come
by his sun-
dial.

(b) Vid. Usher ad A. M. 3291.; & Jaquelôt. Differt. i. sur l'exist. de Dieu, c. 16. (c) Herod. lib. i.; & Strabo, lib. ii. c. 109. (d) Lib. 2. p. 76.

A. M. one made on the spot, or take the model of one to be made
3246, &c. at Jerusalem, and set up in his royal palace.
Ant. Christ.

758, etc. It is no easy matter to determine of what form the sun-
dial was, but, (e) if we may be allowed to gather any thing
from the signification of the word *Mahal*, (which is always
1 Kings viii. to the end of 2 Chron. used in this narration) we may, with the learned Grotius,
Of what form it was. suppose, that it was not horizontal, (as sun-dials are com-
monly made), but of a concave hemispherical figure *,
(much like what the Greeks call, *σκάφη*), and that therein
was a gnomon of some kind or other, which cast its shadow
upon the lines engraven in its concavity.

What the
miracle
wrought
upon it
was.

But of what make soever this dial was, we have reason
to believe, that the recess of its shadow was a real miracle,
and not the effect of any natural cause, viz. the interpo-
sition of a cloud, or any other meteor, which might divert
the rays of the sun to another part of the dial, for some
small space of time.

The account which we have of this event, in the second
book of Kings, makes no mention indeed of the sun's go-
ing back, but only of the shadow upon the dial; but, in
the book of Isaiah's prophecy, wherein we have this mi-
racle more minutely related, we are told expressly, that (f)
the sun returned ten degrees; and from hence the opinion
of the ancients, both Jews and Christians, has been, that
the miracle was wrought, not upon the shadow*, but up-
on

(e) Calmet's Differt. sur la retrogradation, &c.

* Other authors are of an opinion quite contrary to this.—

They suppose, that, as there is no mention made of any sun-
dials in all the works of Homer, and the Jews, very probably,
knew nothing of the division of the day into so many hours, till
after the time of the captivity, the invention of such machines
was subsequent to Hezekiah's days; and therefore from the
word *ἀναβαθμὲς*, in the Septuagint, which may properly enough
be rendered *steps* or *stairs*, they infer, that this famous chro-
nometrion of King Ahaz was nothing but a flight of stairs lead-
ing up to the gate of the palace, and, according to the pro-
jection of the sun, marked at proper distances with figures, de-
noting the division of the day, and not any regular piece of di-
al-work; *Universal history*, lib. 1. c. vii. But this is too poor
a thing to be recorded in history, as the invention or erection of
a king, which every private person might have as well as he.

(f) Isaiah. xxxviii. 8.

* Those who maintain the contrary opinion, viz. That the
whole miracle was wrought upon the dial, and occasioned only
by the reversion of the sun's beams, while the sun proceeded in its
ordinary

on the body of the sun; or "that the sun," (as our excellent Archbishop Usher (g) expresses it), "and all the heavenly bodies went back, and as much was detracted from the next night as was added to this day."

A. M.
3246, etc.
Ant. Christ.
753, c. c.
from
1 Kings viii.
to the end
of 2 Chron.

Those who embrace the new philosophy, which places

ordinary course, urge in its defence, — That in 2 Kings xx. 9. where this miracle is recorded, mention is only made of the *shadow's going back*; and though, in Isaiah xxxviii. 8. the sun is said to *return ten degrees*; yet, to put the sun for its beams is a common mode of speech in all languages. That the division of the day into hours (upon which the invention of all horoscopical instruments must depend) was of later date than this: That Daniel is the first writer in the Old Testament who makes any mention of it; and that there is no Hebrew word, in the compass of the whole language, to denote it. As, therefore, the intent of this miracle was not to lengthen the day, as that of Joshua's, but putely to put back the shadow upon the sun-dial, this might have well enough been done, say they, by the sole reflection of the sun's rays, and without giving any interruption to the course of nature. This interruption, if the recess and return of the sun (or the earth if we please) was gradual, must have occasioned great inconveniencies to mankind upon earth; since, if the degrees were horary, or lines of an hour's distance upon the dial-plate, (as we now speak), to make the sun recede ten hours, and after that re-advance ten more, this would have been to prolong that day for twenty hours, which, in hot regions, would be enough to scorch the people of the hemisphere that the sun was over, and, in colder climates, when it was absent so long, to freeze the inhabitants to death. On the other hand, this interruption, if the sun or earth went back in an instant, and returned as hastily again, must have been seen and felt all the world over, been observed by the astronomers then living, and recorded in the writings of subsequent historians, as well as the sun's standing still in Joshua's time; but, since we find no footsteps of this, on the contrary, by Merodach Baladan's sending to Hezekiah to inform himself about this phenomenon, it is rather evident, that the thing had not been observed as far as Babylon, they thence infer, that there was no reason for God's putting himself to the expence of so prodigious a miracle, as to make an alteration in the whole fabric of the universe, when a bare refraction of the sun's rays upon the dial-plate would have answered the end as well; *Le Clerc's Commentary*; *Lowth's Commentary on Isaiah xxxviii.*; and *Universal History, lib. i. c. 7.*

(g) Annal. A. 3291.

VOL. IV.

T

the

A. M. the sun in the centre, and suppose the earth to move round
 3246, etc. it, have, from their hypothesis, no difficulty in admitting of
 Ant. Chris. this miracle, whether it be said to consist in the different de-
 758, etc. termination of the rays, or in the retrogradation of the
 from
 1 Kings viii. body of the sun; because it is the same thing as to all
 to the end. outward effects, whether the earth turn round the sun, or
 of 2 Chron. the sun round the earth: But, in both cases, there is this
 difficulty: ——— (b) That the sudden and violent motion

either of the sun or earth, to make that day and night of
 no greater length than the rest, would be in danger of
 shocking or unhinging the whole frame of nature, as it cer-
 tainly would have done, had it not been guided and directed
 by the steady and unerring hand of the great Creator of
 the universe, whose motion he can either retard or accele-
 rate as he pleases, without occasioning any confusion in the
 order of things, and with much greater facility to himself,
 than any human artificer can cause a machine of his own
 making to go swifter or slower, by the sole suspension of an
 heavier or lighter weight.

Viz. In the
 motion of
 the sun, and
 not in the
 shadow.

Since the Scripture, therefore, in this case, tells us as
 plainly, that the sun did recede, as, in the case of Joshua,
 that it did stand still in the firmament of heaven, we have
 no other warrant but to take words in their literal sense,
 even though it be attended with some difficulties. These
 difficulties arise chiefly from the opposition of some modern
 systems of philosophy; but whether it be just and reason-
 able, that revelation should conform to philosophy, or
 philosophy to revelation, especially when the expressions of
 Scripture are clear, and sentiments of philosophers but
 mere conjectures, is a question that need require no long
 deliberation; especially since heavenly bodies, by reason of
 their vast distance, are inaccessible to our utmost sagacity,
 and the greater part of the secrets of nature are not dis-
 coverable by our most indefatigable search after truth.

That a sign
 future to
 the event is
 significant.

(i) Though at first view we may be apt to think, that a
 sign, which precedes the event, is more significant, because
 better adapted to our manner of conceiving it, than one
 which follows after it; yet, upon a nearer examination, we
 shall find, that a sign which is posterior to the event, is
 not a less, but in some respects a more, convincing proof
 than the other; especially when the person to whom it is
 given lives to see both the sign and the event accomplished.

(b) Calmet's Differt. sur la retrogradation, &c. (i) Calmet's
 Commentary on 2 Kings xix. 29.

The sign which goes before the event proves but one thing, *viz.* that the event was from God, or that the person who foretold it was divinely inspired; but the sign which is future to the event manifests these three things, : 1st, That the person who foretold it was possessed with the spirit of prophecy: 2dly, That God was the author of the miraculous event which he foretold; And, 3dly, That he was the author likewise of the sign which followed the miracle; especially if the sign be miraculous, as it generally is.

A. M.
3246, etc.
Ant. Chris.
758, etc.
from
1 Kings viii.
to the end.
of 2 Chron.

To apply this now to the case before us. To convince Hezekiah of his approaching deliverance, God gave him such things for a sign as would not come to pass until his deliverance was accomplished; but then it should be remembered, that, as the people were to be convinced that what happened to Sennacherib was not the work of chance, or the effect of natural causes, but immediately inflicted by the hand of God, his prophet was to foretel, not only the particulars of what befel him, but such consequences, likewise, as would appear not only to be supernatural, but demonstrations likewise of the divine power and goodness. To this purpose Isaiah is sent, not only to foretel Hezekiah's deliverance, the destruction of the Assyrian army, and the death of Sennacherib; but, to fortify the people against the apprehensions of another enemy, *viz.* a grievous famine, after that Sennacherib was gone, he is ordered to add, that God would find one means or other to preserve his people. Though the enemy will destroy all the corn in the country, *yet ye shall eat this year* (says the prophet) *such things as ye can meet with*: Though the next year be the year of Jubilee, or Sabbatical year, in which ye are to let the land rest, *yet ye shall eat such things as grow of themselves*; (k) God shall take care, one way or other, that ye shall want no provisions these two years; and, in the third year, there shall be no enemy to molest you, and therefore *sow and reap the fruit of your labours*: For, though ye have been brought low with losses innumerable, and persecutions, yet in a short time ye shall be re-established; for *the remnant that is escaped of Judah shall yet again take root downward, and bear fruit upward*.

The meaning of that given to Hezekiah;

The like may be said of the sign concerning the virgin that was to *bear a son, and call his name Immanuel*; though it was some hundred years subsequent to the deliverance

and that to the princes of Judah.

(k) Lowth's Commentary on Isaiah xxxvii. 33.

A M.
3:45, etc.
Ant. Christ.
753, etc.
from
1 Kings v. i.
to the end
of 2 Chron

which God promised Judah, yet was it of great service to confirm the people in their expectations of it. To this purpose we may observe, that it is not to Ahaz that the prophet addresses himself, (for he, out of a specious pretence of not being willing to tempt God, rejected all signs) but to the princes of the blood royal; and therefore he says, (*l*) *Hear ye now, ye house of David, the Lord himself will give you a sign, a virgin shall conceive.* The original word *Alma* (as (*m*) several learned men have observed) signifies almost always a *virgin untainted by a man*, is so rendered by the Septuagint in this place, and cannot, with any propriety, denote (*n*) any indifferent young woman, who should afterwards be married, and have a son. For how can we imagine, that, after so pompous an introduction, the prophet should mean no more at last by a *virgin conceiving*, than that a young woman should be with child? What, does Isaiah offer Ahaz a miracle, *either in the depth, or in the height above?* and, when he seems to tell the house of David, that God, of his own accord, would perform a greater work than they could ask, does he sink to a sign that nature produces every day? Is that to be called a wonder (which implies an uncommon, surprising, and supernatural event) which happens constantly by the ordinary laws of generation? How little does such a birth answer the solemn apparatus which the prophet uses to raise their expectation of some great matter? *Hear ye, O house of Judah, — behold the Lord will give you a sign worthy of himself; and what is that? Why, a young married woman shall be with child.* How ridiculous must such a declaration make the prophet! And how highly must it enrage the audience, to hear a man, at such a juncture as this, begin an idle and impertinent tale, which seems to banter and insult their misery, rather than administer any consolation under it.

That there
is no incon-
sistence in
it, but great
comfort to
the people.

It is to be observed farther, that, in the beginning of this passage, when God commanded Isaiah to go and meet Ahaz, he ordered him to take with him his son Sear-Jashai, who was then but a child. Why the child was to accompany his father, we can hardly suppose any other reason, but that he was to be of use some way or other to enforce the prophecy. It is but supposing then, that the prophet,

(*l*) Isaiah vii. 13, 14.
part ii.
religion.

(*m*) Vid. Kidder's Demonstration,
(*n*) Vid. grounds and reasons of the Christian

in uttering the words, *Before this child shall be able to distinguish between good and evil* (o) pointed at his own son, (for there is no necessity to refer them to Immanuel) who might then either stand by him, or be held in his arms, and all the difficulty is solved: But then the comfort which accrued to the house of David from this seasonable prophecy, was very considerable. (p) For it assured them of the truth and veracity of God's promise. and that he would not suffer them to be destroyed, nor the *sceptre to depart from Judah*, until the Messiah came. It assured them of his almighty power, in that he could create a new thing in the earth, by making a virgin to conceive, and thereby shew himself able to deliver them out of the hands of their most potent enemies; and it assured them likewise of his peculiar favour, in that he had decreed the Messiah should descend from their family, so that the people to whom he had vouchsafed so high a dignation, might depend on his promise, and, *under the shadow of his wings*, think themselves secure.

A. M.
3246, etc.
Ant. Christ.
758, etc.
from
1 Kings viii.
to the end.
of 2 Chron.

DISSERTATION IV.

Of the Transportation of the Ten Tribes, and their Return.

Nothing (q) in history is more common, than to see whole nations so changed in their manners, their religion, their language, and the very places of their abode, as that it becomes a matter of some difficulty to find out their first original. Large empires swallow up lesser states; and, in the course of their conquests, sweeping every thing before them like a torrent, they compel the vanquished to follow the fate of their conquerors, and to inhabit such countries, as were unknown to them before.

The miseries, and yet arrogant pretences of the Jews.

Never was there a people that had a more ample experience of these unhappy revolutions than the kingdom of Israel, which, upon the revolt of Rehoboam, came to be called *the kingdom of the ten tribes*. God, by the mouth of his servant Moses, had denounced this judgment upon them, in case of their obstinate disobedience to his law: (r) *The Lord shall scatter thee among all people, from the*

(o) Usher's Annal. A. M. 3263. (p) Vid. Kidder, ibid.
(q) Calmet's Dissert. sur la pais, ou les dix tribus, &c. (r) Deut. xxviii. 64, 65.

A. M. *one end of the earth to the other; and among all these nations*
 3246, etc. *thou shalt find no ease, neither shall the sole of thy foot have*
 Ant. Christ. *rest.* And accordingly, when by their idolatry, and other
 758, etc. *grievous impieties, they had provoked God to wrath, and fill-*
 from *ed up the measure of their iniquity; in the reign of Pekah*
 1 Kings viii. *king of Israel, (s) he sent Tiglath-Pileser king of Assyria,*
 to the end *who invaded his country, and having overrun great part*
 of 2. Chron. *of it, carried away captive the tribes of Naphtali, Reuben,*
 ~~~~~ *Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh, from the east side of*  
*the river Jordan; and about twenty years after this, in*  
*the reign of Hoshea, sent his son Salmaneser against Sama-*  
*ria, who after a siege of three years, took it, and carried*  
*away all the remainder of that miserable people, according*  
*to what the prophet Hosea had foretold: (t) Ephraim is*  
*smitten, their root is dried up, they shall bear no fruit. —*  
*My God shall cast them away, because they did not hearken*  
*unto him, and they shall be wanderers among the nations.*

Such (with very small exception) has been the case of this unhappy people, ever since the time of the Assyrian captivity; and yet, such is their pride and arrogance, that instead of owning the truth, they have devised fables of their living all along in great prosperity and grandeur, in some unknown land, as a national and united body, in an independent state, and under monarchies or republics of their own. So that before we begin to inquire into the real places of their transportation, and some other circumstances thereunto belonging, it may not be amiss to examine a little the merit of these pretensions, and what foundation they have for such mighty boasts.

The false  
account of  
Esdras,

The author of the second book of Esdras informs us, (u) "That the ten tribes, being taken prisoners by Salmaneser, and carried beyond the river Euphrates, entered into a resolution of quitting the Gentiles, and retiring into a country never inhabited before, that they might there religiously observe the law, which they had too much neglected in their own land; that, to this purpose, they crossed the Euphrates, where God wrought a miracle for their sakes, by stopping the sources of that great river, and drying up its channel for them to pass over; that, having thus wonderfully passed this river, they proceeded in their journey for a year and a half, till they

(s) 2 Kings xv. 29. (t) Hosea ix. 16, 17. (u) 2 Esdras xiii. 40, &c.

" arrived

“ arrived at last at a country called *Arfareth*, where they  
 “ settled themselves, and were to continue until the latter  
 “ days, when God would appoint their return, and work  
 “ the same miracle in passing the Euphrates that he had  
 “ done for them before.”

A. M.  
 3246, etc.  
 Ant. Chris.  
 758, &c.  
 from  
 1 Kings viii.  
 to the end  
 of 2 Chron.  
 confused.

This is the substance of our author's account : But now, who can believe, that a people so fond of idolatry in their own country, should, in their state of captivity, be so zealous for the observation of the law ? *Arfareth*, we are told, is a city in Media, situate beyond the river *Araxes* ; but if this was the place they betook themselves to for the freer exercise of their religion, what need was there for so very long a peregrination ? Or who can suppose, that their imperious masters would suffer captives, upon any pretence whatever, to retreat in a body, out of their country, and set up a distinct kingdom in another place ? (x) In short, this counterfeit *Eldras*, who seems to have been a Christian, and to have lived about the end of the first, or the beginning of the second century, is not only so inconsistent in his account of this, and several other transactions, but so fond of uncertain traditions, and so romantic and fabulous about the divine inspiration which he boasts of, that there is no credit to be given to what he says, concerning the retreat of the ten tribes into an unknown land.

A famous Jewish traveller (y) of the twelfth century, and who seems to have undertaken his travels only to discover the state of his dispersed brethren, assigns them a large and spacious country, wherein reigned two brothers, descendants of the house of David. The elder of these (as he tells us) was *Annas*, who (besides his capital *Thema*) had many other cities, castles, and fortresses, and an extent of ground which could not be travelled over under sixteen days. The other, whose name was *Salmon*, had in his dominions forty cities, two hundred boroughs, and an hundred castles. His subjects (who were all Jews) were three hundred thousand : *Tanai*, which was his capital, contained an hundred thousand ; and *Tilimosa*, a strong city, situate between two mountains, where he usually resided, as many inhabitants.

Benj. de  
 Tudela's  
 romantic  
 account,

Here we have a spacious country of nothing but Jews : But the author, who pretends to have been there, has so

(\*) *Basnag. Hist. des Juif, liv. vi. c. 2.* (y) *Benjamin de Tudela's Itiner. p. 89.*

A. M.  
3246, &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
758, &c.  
from  
1 Kings viii.  
to the end  
of 2 Chron.

mistaken the situation of several places that he mentions, and gives us such fabulous accounts of the manner of the Persians fishing for pearls; of the virtue of the prophet Daniel's tomb; and of some Turks, who had two holes in the midst of their face, instead of a nose; that a man must be very fond of romances, who can give credit to what seems to be calculated on purpose to flatter the pride of a people, who are still foolishly vain, though under the rejection of Almighty God.

Peritful's  
account,  
and the de-  
sign of it.

Another Jewish author (z), in his description of the world, has found out very commodious habitations for the ten tribes, and in many places has given them a glorious establishment. In a country which he calls *Perricha*, inclosed by unknown mountains, and bounded by Assyria, he has settled some, and made them a flourishing and populous kingdom. Others he places in the desert of Chabor, which (according to him) lies upon the Indian sea, where they live in the manner of the ancient Rechabites, without houses, sowing, or the use of wine. Nay, he enters the Indies likewise, and peoples the banks of the Ganges, the isles of Bengala, the Philippines, and several other places, with the Jews, to whom he assigns a powerful king, called *Daniel*, who had three other kings tributary, and dependent on him. But this is all of the same piece, a forged account to aggrandize their nation, and to make it be believed, (a) that *the sceptre is not departed from Judah, nor a law-giver from between his feet*, and that Shiloh, consequently, is not yet come.

Manasseh's  
or Ortellius's  
account.

Manasseh, one of the most famous Rabbins of the last age, has asserted the transmigration of the ten tribes into Tartary, where he assigns them a great province, called *Thabor*, which in the Hebrew tongue signifies *a naval*, because this *Thabor* (as he says) is one of the middle provinces of Tartary. Ortellius, in his Geography, is not only of the same opinion, but in confirmation of it adds, that the ten tribes succeeded the Scythians, its ancient inhabitants, and took upon them the name of *Gauthei*, because they were *zealous for the glory of God*: that *Totaces* (the true name of the Tartars) is Hebrew, and signifies *remains*, as the tribes dispersed in the north were the remains of ancient Israel; that among these people, there are

(z) R. Abi Ben Mordoché Peritful of Ferrara. (a) Gen. xlix. 10.

several

several plain footsteps of the Jewish religion, besides circumcision; and from them, in all probability, have descended the Jews, that in Poland and Muscovy are found so numerous.

(b) It cannot be denied indeed, but that several of the Israelites might pass into Tartary, because Armenia is the only country that parts it from Assyria, whereunto they were primarily carried: But there is no reason for their penetrating Scythia, and thence dispersing themselves in the kingdoms of Poland, and Muscovy; because the tranquillity and privileges which the princes of these countries have granted the Jews, are the true cause and motive of their resorting thither in such numbers. In confutation therefore of what has been said above, (c) the Jewish historian has well observed, that the ancient Scythians were a people too fierce by nature, and too expert in war, for an handful of fugitives (such as the Israelites were) ever to conquer or expel; that the people of this country were all along idolaters, until they were converted to the religion of Mahomet, from whence they received the rite of circumcision, and some other ceremonies conformable to the law of Moses; that the etymology of names is, of all others, the weakest and most precarious argument; and that it is ridiculous to seek for the glory of God among the Tartars, before the introduction of Mahometism, since (according to the account of their (d) historian) “some of them lived like beasts without any sense of God; others worshipped the sun, moon, and stars; and others again made gods of the oxen that ploughed their land, or prostrated themselves before every great tree.”

Manasseh, the famous Rabbih we lately mentioned, published a book, (e) entitled, *The Hopes of Israel*, founded upon the number and power of the Jews in America; but in this he was imposed upon by the fabulous relation of Montefini, who reported, “That he found a great number of Jews concealed behind the mountains of Cordilleras, which run along Chili in America; that continuing his journey in that country, he came at length to the banks of a river, where, upon his giving a signal, there appeared a people, who pronounced in Hebrew these words out of Deuteronomy, *Hear, O Israel*,

A. M. 3246, etc.  
Ant. Christ. 758, etc.  
from 1 Kings viii. to the end of 2 Chron. confuted.

Montefini's fabulous relation.

(b) Basnag. Hist. des Juif. liv. vi. c. 3. (c) Ibid.  
(d) Haitho Armenius, lib. De Tartaris, c. i. (e) Amster-  
dam, 1650.



A. M. 3246, &c. Ant. Christ. 738, &c. from 1 Kings viii. to the end of 2 Chron.

“ *the Lord our God is one Lord*; that they looked upon Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as their great progenitors, and had been conducted into that country by incredible miracles; that the Indians had treated them with great cruelty, and thrice declared war against them; but that, by God’s protecting his people against idolaters, they had been as oft defeated, and were now totally destroyed; and that some of their magi, who made use of incantments, had openly declared, that the God of Israel was the only true God, and that, at the consummation of ages, their nation should become the mistress of the whole universe.”

Manasseh’s conclusion from it.

Deluded with this account, Manasseh endeavoured to find out the road which might possibly lead the Israelites into the West-Indies; and, to this purpose, supposing that Asia and America were formerly one continent before they were divided by the streights of Anian, he asserted, that the Israelites might travel to America, by land, before the separation happened.

Penn’s account.

Sir William Penn, in his *Present state of the lands of the English in America*, tells us, “ That the faces of the inhabitants, especially of their children, are so very like the Jews, that, when you look upon them, you would think yourself in the Jews quarter in London: That their eyes are little and black, like the Jews; that they reckon by moons; offer their first fruits; have a kind of feast of tabernacles; and that their language is masculine, short, concise, and full of energy, in which it much resembles the Hebrew.”

and that of others;

Other historians (*f*) have observed, that some of the Americans have a notion of the deluge, though they relate it in a different manner; that they celebrate a Jubilee every fifth year, and a Sabbath every seventh day; that others observe circumcision, abstain from swine’s flesh, and purify themselves by bathing, whenever they have touched a dead carcase; that marriages, among others, are performed (*g*) in a manner not unlike what Moses prescribes; and that they generally believe a resurrection; (*b*) for which reason they cause their wives and slaves to be buried with them,

(*f*) Vid. Acoſtan, et alios rerum American. scrip. (*g*) Deut. xxv. 9. (*b*) Zaaret’s History of the discovery of Peru, Book i. c. 12.

that, when they arise from their graves, they may appear with an attendance suitable to their quality.

A. M.  
3246, etc.  
Ant. Christ.  
758, etc.  
from  
1 Kings viii.  
to the end  
of 2 Chron.

(i) This conformity of customs, and looks, and sentiments, have induced several to think, that the captive Israelites we are here in quest of, went into America either by way of China or Tartary, and there settled themselves. But how specious soever these arguments may appear, there is no manner of solidity in them. To prove a point of this kind, we should produce a whole nation or province in America, distinct from all others in their ceremonies and way of worshipping God, in a manner exactly agreeing with the Hebrews: but to say, that because, in one place, the people abstain from swine's flesh, and in another, they observe the seventh day; in one, they offer sacrifices, and in another, use baths, when they think themselves polluted, the Americans were originally Israelites; is carrying the consequence a great deal too far, and what indeed we may prove in any other nation under heaven, if we may be allowed to argue in this manner from particulars to generals.

All refused.

The truth is, the devil, in all his idolatrous countries, has made it his business to mimic God in the rites of his religious worship; or if this were not, there is naturally so great a conformity in men's sentiments concerning these matters, that the Americans might agree with the Jews in the oblation of their first-fruits, their computations by moons, &c. without having any commerce or affinity with them; and though there may be something more characteristic in circumcision; yet as several other nations used it, the Americans, upon this account, cannot be Jews, because, (if we may believe Acofta, who had made their customs a good part of his study), they never did circumcise their children, and therefore are thus far excluded from being descendents of that race.

I thus have we endeavoured to find out the situation of the ten tribes of Israel, and yet can meet with nothing, but either the fabulous accounts of the Talmudists, or the uncertain conjectures of modern critics: Let us now have recourse to the Scriptures, and know what the information is that they can supply us with in this our inquiry.

The sacred history thus expresses it,—(k) *The king of Assyria took Samaria, and carried Israel away into Assyria,*

The Scripture account of them inquired into.

(i) Saurin's Dissert. sur le païs, &c.

(k) 2 Kings xvii. 6.

A. M. 3246, &c. Ant. Chris. 758, &c. from 1 Kings viii. to the end of 2 Chron. *and placed them in Halah, and in Habor, by the river Gozan; and in the cities of the Medes; only we must note, that there is some ambiguity in the translation: for, whereas it looks as if Gozan were the river, and not Habor, there is plainly no river to be found of the name of Gozan, and therefore the emendation should be,—He placed them in Halah, and by the river Habor, in Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes.*

The holy penman, we may observe, distinguishes two places, into which the Israelites were carried, (as indeed they were numerous enough to make two different colonies), Assyria and Media. In Assyria we see the river Habor, or Chaboras, which rises from Mount Masius, and, running through Mesopotamia, falls into the Euphrates. Halah, which in Ptolemy, is called *Chalcitis*, is a city and province situate on one side of its banks, and Gozan, which is likewise a city and province, is found on the other: so that the ten tribes were seated in two provinces, which stretched along both sides of this river. An happy situation for them, since they were only separated by a river which watered all the cities that were assigned for their habitation.

(l) As to the cities of the Medes we are more in the dark, because the Scripture does not specify any; but we may presume, that this colony was placed in the mountainous part of Media, because it was less peopled than the lower country. It wanted indeed inhabitants, and if we will believe (m) Strabo, was supplied by strangers, and colonies from abroad.

The truth is, the ancients have extolled Media as a very happy country. Ecbatana, where the king kept his residence in summer, was one of the finest and largest cities in the world. Susa, where he spent the winter, was a very considerable place likewise: but, on the north side, there were high mountains, where nevertheless there was good pasturage, so that what the country wanted was good husbandmen, and such as were used to tillage; for which purpose the Israelites, who had made that their principal business in the Holy Land, were, of all other people, the fittest inhabitants.

In these two provinces were the ten tribes seated at first; and it is not improbable, that, in a short time, those of As-

(l) Basnage Hist. des Juif. liv. vi. c. 4.

(m) Basnage, *ibid.*  
syria

syria might extend themselves into several other parts of the empire; for, in Alexander's time, we meet with \* a great body of them in Babylon; and that those in Media might stretch upon the right, into the provinces bordering upon the Caspian sea, or, as (n) some imagine, even beyond that sea, as far as the river Araxes; but that they ever became so powerful as \* to change the ancient names of places into those of their own language, we can hardly believe; because they fell under so many bitter persecutions, were subject to so many revolutions of the kingdoms where they lived, and, from different princes, underwent such a variety of trans-migrations, that before they could gain any such weight and authority in the world, we find them here and there scattered, in lesser bodies, as it were, over the whole face of it.

A. M.  
3264, &c.  
Ant. Chris.  
758, &c.  
from  
1 Kings viii.  
to the end  
of 2 Chron.

Not only some of the Greek fathers, but some of our modern critics likewise, have maintained, that the ten tribes were restored, with those of Judah and Benjamin, under the conduct of Zorobabel and Nehemiah, when Cyrus and his successors were so kind as to give the Jews in

That they  
did not re-  
turn with  
the tribes of  
Judah and  
Benjamin.

\* Besides those that were carried thither at the captivity, Artaxerxes sent a new colony of that nation thither, who, when Alexander the Great was for rebuilding the temple of Belus, had the courage to resist him. For, whereas other people were eager to furnish materials for the building, they refused to do it, as thinking it had some stain of idolatry; *Basnage, ib.*

(n) Fuller's Miscell. sacr. lib. ii. c. 5.

\* We read of the Cadusians, the Geles, and of Arsareth beyond the Caspian sea; for which reason the learned Fuller supposes, that the Jews spread themselves thus: "For the name of *Geles*, says he, is Chaldaic, and signifies *strangers* or *foreigners*, which title suited with the Jews, whom God had expelled from their country for their sins. The Cadusians have a little altered the word *Chadoschim*, which signifies *saints*, which was a title the Jews, who called themselves an holy nation, much affected. And lastly, Arsareth, the most famous of all the cities built upon the Araxes, had an Hebrew name, signifying *the city of relics*, or, *the remains of Israel*." But the author of the History of the Jews, so often cited upon this subject, has confuted the argument drawn from the etymology of the words; and, in particular, shewn, that the Cadusians were a people much ancients in the country than the Israelites, since Ninus reckoned them among his subjects; *lib. vi.*

c. 4.

general

A. M. 3246, &c. Ant. Christ. 758, &c. from 1 Kings viii. to the end of 2 Chron.

general a full permission to return into their native land. (o) To this purpose they have observed, that several of the prophets who foretold their captivity, with the same breath, as it were, have predicted their return; that, in token of such their return, (p) *twelve goats* (for every tribe one) *were offered at the dedication of the new temple*, which would scarce have been done, had ten of these tribes been left behind beyond the Euphrates; that under Nehemiah, the Levites confessed the sins of the ten tribes; that, in the time of the Maccabees, (q) all Palestine was full of Israelites as well as Jews; that (r) St. Matthew makes mention of the land of Naphtali; and that St. Paul, in his defence before Agrippa, declares, (s) *That for the promise to which the twelve tribes hope to come, he was called in question.*

It cannot be thought indeed, but that the love which the Jews, above all other nations, bore to their native country; and the great encouragement which the princes of the east were pleased to grant to forward the re-establishment, might tempt some of each tribe to take this opportunity of returning with the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin; nor can we doubt, but that, upon their return; they would be apt to assume their former names, and, as far as in them lay, to settle themselves in their ancient possessions. So that what with those that escaped their conqueror's fury, and remained untransported; those who returned with Ezra, pursuant to the commission which Artaxerxes gave him; and those who took the advantage of the revolutions of the empire, and of the frequent journies they made to Jerusalem, great numbers of the ancient inhabitants might be found in the days of the Maccabees, and some of every tribe in our Saviour's time: but that all these returns did never amount to a full restoration of the people, we have abundant testimony to convince us.

Josephus (t) indeed tells us, that Ezra; upon the receipt of his commission from Artaxerxes, communicated the contents of it to all the Israelites that were in exile, some of whom resorted to Babylon, in order to return with him; "but there were then another sort of Israelites, (as his words are), who, being wonted to the place, and settled in their habitations, chose rather to continue where they were." Upon the whole, he computes, that few or none,

(o) Calmet's Dissert. sur les dix tribus, &c. (p) 1 Esdras vii. 8. (q) 1 Maccab. v. 9. 15, &c. (r) Matth. iv. 15. (s) Acts xxvi. 6. (t) Jewish Antiq. lib. xi. c. 5.

but those of the tribe of Benjamin and Judah, came along with Ezra; and this is the reason, (as he tells us), that, "in his time, there were only two tribes to be found in Asia and Europe under the Roman empire; for, as for the ten tribes, they are all planted beyond the Euphrates, (says he,) and so prodigiously increased in number, that they are hardly to be computed." Nay, even those that followed Ezra, (according (u) to the sentiments of some of the Talmudists), were but the dregs of the people, because the nobility and principal men of the house of David still continued in Chaldea.

A. M.  
3246, etc.  
Ant. Christ.  
752, etc.  
from  
1 Kings viii.  
to the end.  
of 2 Chron.

However this be, it is certain, that Philo (x), in his representation to Caligula, tells him, that Jerusalem ought to be looked upon, not only as the metropolis of Judea, but as the centre of a nation dispersed in infinite places: among which he reckons the isles of Cyprus and Candia, Egypt, Macedonia, and Bithynia; the empire of the Persians, and all the cities of the east, except Babylon, from whence they were then expelled. Nay, prior to this, we read, (y) that a great number of these Orientals appeared at Jerusalem, at the feast of Pentecost, when, after our Saviour's ascension, his apostles began to preach the gospel during that festival. It cannot be thought, that they were only proselytes, whom the Jews of the dispersion had converted; they must have been Jews who came to sacrifice at Jerusalem, according to the law; for, by St. Luke's enumeration of them, it appears, that they were the descendants of the tribes that had been long before settled among the (z) Medes, among the Parthians, in Mesopotamia, in Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia Minor, &c.; and therefore we find St. Peter, the apostle of the circumcision, directing his epistle (a) to the *strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia*.

Upon the strength of these authorities we may then conclude, that though Artaxerxes, in his commission to Ezra, (b) gave free liberty to all Jews whatever, that were under his dominions, to return to Jerusalem, if they were so minded, which some, without doubt, most gladly embraced; yet the main bulk of the ten tribes, being loth to remove, continued in the land of their captivity, where they are still

(u) Basnage Hist. des Juif. liv. vi. c. 2. (x) Philo, ad Cajum.  
(y) Basnage, ib. (z) Acts ii. 9. (a) 1 Pet. i. 1.  
(b) 1 Esdras viii. 10, 11.

A. M.  
3246, etc.  
Ant. Christ.  
758, etc.  
from  
1 Kings viii.  
to the end  
of 2 Chron.

That they  
shall return  
and be con-  
verted at  
last.

to be found in great numbers : and therefore all those glorious prophecies, which some by mistake have applied to their thin returns under the Jewish governours sent from Babylon, do certainly relate to a much greater event, even their conversion and final restoration under the kingdom of the Messias.

The prophet Hosea, speaking of the present state of the Jews, gives us this character whereby to distinguish them : (c) *They shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without a teraphim.* In vain do they boast of that power and authority which they never had, but in their own country. The kings and the princes that they talk so much of, are all fictitious and imaginary. From the first time of their transmigration to this very day, they have been a people without any governour, or form of government ; and if, in the midst of so many different nations, and under so severe persecutions, they nevertheless have hitherto been preserved, it must be imputed to the secret and wonderful providence of God, who hath still designs of pity and gracious loving-kindness towards them. To this purpose the same prophet assures us, that (d) *the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured or numbered ; and in the place where it was said unto them, ye are not my people, there it shall be said unto them, ye are the sons of the living God.* For he shall recover the remnant of his people (says another prophet) (e) *that shall be left :—He shall set up an ensign for the nations, and assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth ; for (f) behold the days come, saith the Lord, by another of the prophets, that it shall be no more said, the Lord liveth, that brought the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt, but the Lord liveth, who brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north, and from all the lands, whether he had driven them. And I will bring them again into the land that I gave unto their fathers ; and, when this is done, (g) I will no more hide my face from them, but (h) will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people.* (i) *They shall be no more a prey*

(c) Hosea iii. 4. (d) Ibid. i. 10. (e) Isaiah xi. 11, 12.  
(f) Jer. xvi. 14, 15. (g) Ezek. xxxix. 29. (h) Isaiah  
xv. 19. (i) Ezek. xxxix. 28.

*to the Heathen : (k) violence shall be no more heard in their land, wasting, nor destruction within their borders ; but they shall call their walls salvation, and their gates praise. (l) Their land shall no more be termed desolate, (m) but they shall dwell in the land that I have given to Jacob my servant, even they and their children's children for ever ; and my servant David (not the son of Jesse, who was dead long before Ezekiel prophesied, but the Messiah, who was to be of the lineage of David, as Kimchi explains it) shall be their prince for ever. Moreover, I will make a covenant of peace, which shall be an everlasting covenant with them ; and I will set my sanctuary among them for evermore. My tabernacle shall be with them ; yea, I will be their God, and they shall be my people.*

A. M.  
3246, etc.  
Ant. Christ.  
753, &c.  
from  
1 Kings viii.  
to the end  
of 2 Chron.

(n) Now, though it cannot be denied, that these, and several other prophecies to the like purpose, do denote a great and glorious restoration to God's people ; yet it seems very evident, that scarce any of them can be applied to the return of the Jews from their captivity in Babylon. Long since that time, and almost seventeen hundred years ago, his covenant of peace has been departed from them ; violence has been in their land, which has been laid desolate ; their tabernacle and sanctuary have been consumed ; they have been a prey to the Heathen ; and have long ceased to be God's people, and he to be their God : and therefore these prophecies must be understood of some other event, which can only be the general conversion of the Jews to Christianity, and their re-establishment in the Holy Land. For this mystery the apostle has revealed, (o) *that blindness in part hath happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in, and so all Israel shall be saved, as it is written, (p) there shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob. (q) Then shall the Lord set his hand again, a second time, to recover the remnant of his people, and to assemble the outcasts of Israel, from every kindred, and tongue, and nation, and people, that, at (r) the blowing of the great trumpet, they may come from the land of Assyria, and Egypt, and may worship the Lord in the holy mount at Jerusalem.* When this great event shall happen, it is impossible for us to deter-

(k) Isaiah lx. 18. (l) Ibid. lxii. 4. (m) Ezek. xxxvii. 25, &c. (n) Witby's Treatise of the true millennium. (o) Rom. xi. 25, 26. (p) Isaiah. lix. 20. (q) Ibid. xi. 11. &c. (r) Ibid. xxvii. 13.



A. M. mine ; but our business, in the mean time, is to pray, that  
 3394, &c. (s) the salvation of Israel may come out of Zion, that Jacob  
 Ant Christ, may rejoice, and Israel may be glad.  
 610, &c.

from  
 †Kings viii.  
 to the end  
 of 2 Chron.

(s) Psal. xiv. 7.

## CHAP. V.

*From the death of Josiah to the Babylonish captivity.*

### THE HISTORY.

Jehcahaz's  
 wicked  
 reign, and  
 deposition.

**A**FTER the unhappy death of good Josiah, his son Jehoahaz † (who was also called *Shallum*) was anointed king ; but as he was far from following his father's example, he was soon † tumbled down from his throne into a prison,

† Jehoahaz was not the eldest son of Josiah, as appears from this, — That he was but three and twenty years old when he began to reign, and reigned but three months ; after which his brother Jehoiahim, when he was made king, was five and twenty years old, 2 Kings xxiii. 31, 32. For this reason, it is said, that the people anointed him, because as he did not come to the crown by right of succession, his title might have otherwise been disputed ; for in all disputed cases, and where the kingdom came to be contested, anointing was ever thought to give a preference. At this time, however, the Jews might have some reason to prefer the younger brother, because very probably he was of a more martial spirit, and better qualified to defend their liberties against the king of Egypt. His proper name, it is thought, was Shallum ; but our learned Usher supposes, that the people looking upon this as ominous, (because Shallum, king of Israel, reigned but one month), changed it to Jehoahaz, which proved not much more fortunate to him, for he reigned but three ; *Patrick's* and *Calmet's Commentaries*.

† The Scripture no where tells us, upon what occasion it was that Jehoahaz fell into the king of Egypt's hands, or for what reason it was, that he used him so severely ; but it is presumable, that to revenge his father's death, he might raise an army, and engage him in a pitched battle, though he failed in the attempt. For why should he put him in bands, if he voluntarily went, and surrendered himself at Riblah ? or why be so highly offended at him, for accepting

a prison, where he ended his days, with misery and disgrace, in a strange land. For Pharaoh-Necho, upon his return from the expedition against the Babylonians, (where-  
in he had great success), hearing that Jehoahaz had taken upon him the kingdom of Judah without his consent, sent for him to Riblah in Syria, and on his arrival, caused him to be put in chains, and sent prisoner to Egypt \*, where he died. He had an elder brother, whose name was Eliakim; but Necho, when he came to Jerusalem, changed it into Jehoiakim †; and having constituted him king, and put the land to an annual tribute of an hundred talents of silver, and a talent of gold, he returned with great triumph into his own kingdom.

A. M.  
3394, etc.  
Ant. Chri.  
610, &c.  
from  
1 Kings viii.  
to the end  
of 2 Chron.

Jehoiakim ‖ being thus placed on the throne, went on in his brother's steps to relax all the good order and discipline which

Jehoiakim's  
wicked and  
cruel reign,  
and per-  
secution of  
the pro-  
phets,

accepting of a crown which the people conferred on him? The general opinion therefore is, that he was a man of a bold and daring spirit, and therefore those words in the prophet Ezekiel, are applied to him: *Thy mother is a lioness; — she brought up one of her whelps; it became a young lion; — but he was taken in the pit, and he was brought with chains unto the land of Egypt; for which reason Pharaoh-Necho treated him in this manner, that he might put it out of his power to give him any farther disturbance; Patrick's and Calmet's Commentaries.*

\* This the prophet Jeremiah foretold, where he bids the king, and the people of Judah, *not to weep for the dead, (meaning Josiah), but for him that goeth away, for he shall return no more, nor see his native country. Because, thus saith the Lord concerning Shallum, (which was the original and right name of Jehoahaz), the son of Josiah, king of Judah, who reigned instead of Josiah, his father, and who went forth out of this place, he shall not return thither any more; Jer. xxii. 11.*

† It was an usual thing for conquerors to change the names of the persons they vanquished in war, in testimony of their absolute power over them. Thus we find the king of Babylon, changing the name of Martaniah into Zedekiah, when he constituted him king of Judah, 2 Kings xxiv. 17. But our learned Usher has farther remarked, that the king of Egypt gave Eliakim the name of Jehoiakim, thereby to testify, that he ascribed his victory over the Babylonians to Jehovah, the God of Israel, by whose excitation, (as he pretended, 2 Chron. xxxv. 21, 22.) he undertook the expedition; *Patrick's and Calmet's Commentaries.*

‖ As to the time when Jehoiakim came to the throne, the difference is very remarkable: For in 2 Chron. xxxvi. 9. it is said, that

A. M.  
3394, &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
610, &c.  
from  
1 Kings viii.  
to the end  
of 2 Chron.

which his father had instituted, and the people (who never heartily came into that good king's reformation) took this opportunity to follow the bent of their depraved inclinations; whereupon the prophet Jeremiah went first to the king's palace, where he denounced God's judgments against him, and his family, and afterwards into the temple, and there spoke to all the people after the same manner. The priests, offended at this freedom, caused him to be seized, and brought before the king's council, in hopes of having him put to death: but Ahikam †, who was one of the chief lords thereof, so befriended him, that he got him discharged by the general suffrage, not only of the princes, but also of all the elders of the people that were then present.

But

he was but *eight years old*, but in 2 Kings xxiv. 8. that he was *eighteen when he began to reign*; and yet, considering how common a thing it was for kings to make their sons their associates in the kingdom; thereby to secure the possession of it in their family, and prevent all contention among the other brothers, the difference is easily reconciled, by supposing, that when his father had reigned one year, he took him to reign in conjunction with him, when he was no more than eight years old. With his father he reigned ten years; so that when his father died, he was eighteen years old, and then he began to reign alone, which was no more than three months. The author of the book of Kings makes mention therefore only of the years when he began alone; but the author of the Chronicles speaks of all that he reigned, both with his father, and alone. This is a fair solution; though I cannot see what injury it can do to the authority of the sacred text, if we should acknowledge, that there is an error in the transcriber of the book of Chronicles; because two of the most ancient and venerable versions, the Syriac and Arabic, have rendered it, in that place, not eight but eighteen, which they were doubtless induced to do by those ancient Hebrew copies from whence they formed their translation; *Patrick's Commentary*, and *Pool's Annotations*.

† This Ahikam was the father of Gedaliah, (2 Kings xxv. 22), who was afterwards made governour of the land, under the Chaldeans, and the son of Shaphan the scribe, (who was chief minister of state under king Josiah, 2 Kings xxii. 12.), and brother to Gemariah, Jer. xxxvi. 10. Elasah, chap. xxix. 3. and Jaazaniah, Ezek. viii. 11. who were great men in those days, and members likewise of the council with him; where, in conjunction with them, he could not fail of having a powerful interest, which he made use of

But, (a) Urijah, \* another prophet of the Lord, who in like manner, had declared against the iniquity of the prince and people, did not so easily escape: For though he fled into Egypt, when he understood that Jehoiakim had a design against his life: yet this did not hinder the tyrant from pursuing him thither, where having procured him to be seized, he brought him prisoner to Jerusalem, and there had him executed, and his dead body contemptuously used; which was no small aggravation to all his other crimes.

A. M.  
3394, etc.  
Ant. Christ,  
610, etc.  
from  
1 Kings viii,  
to the end  
of 2 Chron.

He had not been above three years upon the throne, before Nabopollassar, king of Babylon, being now become old and infirm, and perceiving that, upon the late advantage which the king of Egypt had gained against his arms, all Syria and Palestine had revolted from him, took his son Nebuchadnezzar into partnership with him in the empire, and sent him with a strong army into those parts, in order to recover what had been lost.

Nebuchadnezzar invades Jerusalem, takes it, and the king prisoner; but afterwards releases him.

It was in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, when Nebuchadnezzar, having defeated Necho's army on the banks of

of on this occasion, to deliver the prophet from that mischief which was intended against him; *Prideaux's Connection*, anno 609.

(a) Jer. xxvi. 20. &c.

\* About this time also were living the prophets Habakkuk, Zephaniah, and Nahum, who being called to the prophetic office in the reign of Josiah, continued (very likely) to this time, because we find them prophesying the same things that Jeremiah did, viz. the destruction and desolation of Judah and Jerusalem, for the many heinous sins that they were guilty of. As to Habakkuk, neither the time in which he lived, nor the parents from whom he was descended, are any where named in Scripture; but his prophesying the coming of the Chaldeans, in the same manner that Jeremiah did, gives us reason to believe, that he lived in the same time. Of Zephaniah it is directly said, chap. i. that he prophesied in the time of Josiah, and in his pedigree, (which is also given us), his father's grandfather is called *Hezekiah*, whom some take for the king of Judah, and consequently reckon this prophet to have been of royal descent. As to Nahum, lastly, it is certain, that he prophesied after the captivity of the ten tribes, and before that of the other two, which he foretold, chap. i. Though therefore the Jews do generally place him in Manasseh's reign, yet others chuse to refer him to the latter part of Josiah's, as being nearer to the destruction of Nineveh, and of the Assyrian monarchy, to which several prophecies of his do principally relate; *Prideaux's Connection*, anno 609; and *Howell's History*, in the notes.

the

A. M.  
3394, &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
610, &c.  
from  
1 Kings viii.  
to the end  
of 2 Chron.

the Euphrates, marched into Syria and Palestine, in order to recover these provinces, which he soon did; and having besieged Jerusalem, took it, and carried away the king, and part of the vessels of the temple along with him to Babylon. In a short time however, he released him and restored him to his crown, on condition that he should become tributary to him, which he continued to be for three years; but in the fourth, he retracted from that subjection, whereupon Nebuchadnezzar came upon him with a fresh invasion.

Jeremiah  
upbraids  
the people  
with their  
disobedi-  
ence, and  
prophecies  
their capti-  
vity.

Upon the first invasion, the Rechabites, who, according to the institution of Jonadab the son of Rechab, their founder, had always abstained from wine, and hitherto only lived in tents, apprehending themselves in more danger in the open country, came to Jerusalem for safety. By these people God intended to convince the Jews of their disobedience to him; and therefore he ordered his prophet Jeremiah, to bring them to an apartment of the temple, and there offer them wine to drink, which when they refused upon account of its being contrary to their institution, which they never yet had violated, the prophet (after due commendation \* of their obedience) turned it upon the Jews, and reproached them, who were God's peculiar people, for being less observant of his laws than the poor Rechabites, who were not of the stock of Israel, had been of the injunctions of their ancestors.

\* The prophet's words, upon this occasion, are these:—  
*Because ye have obeyed the commandments of Jonadab, your father, and kept all his precepts, and done according to all that he hath commanded you; thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, Jonadab, the son of Rechab, shall not want a man to stand before me for ever,* Jer. xxxv. 18, 19. *To stand before a prince*, or *to see his face*, in Scripture-phrases, denotes the honour which accrues from being in his service; but the Rechabites were neither priests nor Levites. Hitherto they had lived in the fields, separate from towns and villages, and were averse indeed to any employment either in church or state; but from the time of their captivity, (for they were carried along with the two tribes), we find them employed as singers and porters, in the service of the temple. To serve in this capacity, there was no necessity for their being of the tribe of Levi; the declaration of the divine will, by the mouth of the prophet Jeremiah, was, in this case, a sufficient vocation; *Calmet's Commentary* on Jer. xxxv. 19.

Before

Before the next invasion, Jeremiah prophesied, that Nebuchadezzar would again come against Judah and Jerusalem; that he would waste the country, and carry the people captive to Babylon, where they should continue in that condition for the space of seventy years; with many more calamities, and woful desolations, that were ready to fall upon them if they did not repent. But this was so far from making any saving impression upon them, that it only enraged and exasperated them the more against him, insomuch that, for fear of their malice and wrathful indignation, he was † forced to keep himself concealed.

A. M.  
3394, etc.  
Ant. Chris.  
610, etc.  
from  
1 Kings viii.  
to the end  
of 2 Chron.

During his concealment, God commanded him to collect together, and digest into one volume, all the prophecies which he had given him against Israel, against Judah, and against other nations, from the time that he first began to prophesy, (which was in the thirteenth year of Josiah) if haply, by hearing all his judgments summed up together against them, they might be brought to a better sense of their transgressions. To this purpose the prophet employed Baruch †, his disciple and amanuensis, to take

† Jeremiah's words, upon this occasion, are,—*I am shut up, I cannot go into the house of the Lord*, chap. xxxvi. 5. But then the question is, what we are to understand by his being shut up? For, that he was not at that time shut up in prison, is plain from the prince's advising him and Baruch to hide themselves, ver. 19. Junius and Tremellius do therefore suppose three ways of his being shut up, and leave it to our choice which to take. The first is, that the king had forbidden him to go any more into the temple to prophesy such terrible things to the people; but the prophets of God did not use to observe such prohibitions of their prophetic ministry. The second is, that the chief priests had excommunicated him, and therefore he might not go; but this, in all likelihood, he would have less regarded, for the same reason. The third is, that God, to provide for the safety of his prophet, and to punish the obstinacy of the people, would not permit him to go any more among them. This, of the three, seems the most probable: though the phrase may very properly denote no more, than the prophet's concealing himself, and keeping at home, for fear of some mischief from the people; *Howell's History*, in the notes.

† Baruch, the son of Neriah, and grandson of Maaseiah, was of an illustrious birth, and of the tribe of Judah. Seraiah, his brother, had a considerable employment in the court of King Zedekiah,

A. M.  
3394, etc.  
Ant. Christ.  
610, etc.  
from  
1 Kings v. ii.  
to the end  
of 2 Chron.

Zedekiah, but himself kept close to the person of Jeremiah, and was his most faithful disciple, though his adherence to his master drew upon him several persecutions, and a great deal of bad treatment. After the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, Baruch and his master were permitted to stay in the land of Judea; but when the remains of the people which were left behind, after having slain their governor Gedaliah, were for retiring into Egypt, they compelled Jeremiah and his disciple to go along with them, where the prophet died, and Baruch soon after made his escape to his brethren in Babylon, where, according to the tradition of the Rabbins, he likewise died in the twelfth year of the captivity. But of what authority the book, which goes under his name, is, or by whom it was written, and whether any thing related therein be historically true, or the whole of it a fiction, is altogether uncertain. Grotius, in his Commentary upon it, thinks it an entire fiction of some Hellenistical Jew, under the name of *Baruch*: And St. Jerom, long before him, (in the preface to his exposition of Jeremiah), tells us, that the reason why he did not make a comment on this book, (tho', in the edition of the Septuagint, it be joined with Jeremiah), was, because it was not deemed canonical among the Hebrews, and contains an epistle which falsely bears the name *Jeremiah*. This epistle is annexed to the book, and, in the common division of it, makes the last chapter: But the main subject of the book itself is likewise an epistle either sent, or feigned to be sent, by King Jehoiakim, and the Jews who were in captivity with him in Babylon, to their brethren the Jews who were still left in Judah and Jerusalem: Wherein they recommend to their prayers the Emperor Nebuchadnezzar and his children, that, under his dominion, they may lead quiet and peaceable lives; wherein they confess their sins, and ask pardon for what is past, take notice of the threats of the prophets, which they had so long despised, and acknowledge the righteousness of God in what he had brought upon them; wherein they remind them of the advantages which the Jews had in their knowledge of the law of God, and of true wisdom, above all other nations, and thereupon exhort them to reform their manners, and forsake their evil customs, which would be the only means to bring about their deliverance from the captivity under which they groaned. The whole is introduced with an historical preface, wherein it is related, that Baruch, being then at Babylon, did in the name of the captive king and his people, draw up the same epistle, and afterwards read it to them for their approbation; and that, together with it, they sent a collection of money to the high-priest at Jerusalem, for the maintenance of the daily sacrifices. This is the substance of the book itself: And in the letter annexed to it, which goes under Jeremiah's name, the vanity of the Babylonish idols and idolatry is

take a copy † of them from his mouth, and when he had so done, ordered him to go up into the temple, on the day of expiation †, and there read it in the hearing of all the people.

Pursuant to his instructions, Baruch went; and, in Gemariah's † apartment, read the book, first to the people, who

A. M.  
3394, &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
610, &c.  
from  
1 Kings viii.  
to the end  
of 2 Chron.  
who

set forth at large, and with liveliness enough. Of the whole there are but three copies: one in Greek, and the other two in Syriac, whereof one agreeth with the Greek, though the other very much differs from it; but in what language it was originally written, or whether one of these be not the original, or which of them may be so, it is next to impossible to tell; *Prideaux's Connect.* anno 595.; and *Calmet's Preface to Baruch*.

† How Jeremiah could remember all the prophecies that he uttered, for the space of two and twenty years together, we can hardly conceive,, unless we allow, that he had the particular inspiration of God to bring all things to his remembrance, that he might neither forget nor misrepresent them in his recital to Baruch: For, without such a supernatural assistance, what security have we that this part of the Scripture is the work of the Holy Ghost? *Calmet's Commentary* on Jer. xxxvi. 4.

† Some are of opinion, that this was done on the great day of fasting, or solemn expiation, which was observed at the beginning of the civil year, on the tenth day of the month *Tizri*, which answers to the latter end of our September, and the beginning of October; but the context seems to denote, that it was on the fast-day mentioned in the ninth verse to have been proclaimed in the fifth year of Jehoiakim, which must have been a fast extraordinary, and appointed upon some particular occasion of the state, because the law had ordained no such observation on the ninth month: But what that particular occasion was, it is not so well known; though some have imagined, that it was in commemoration of the calamity which had befallen Jerusalem the year before, when Nebuchadnezzar had sent to Babylon part of the vessels of the house of the Lord, and was upon the point of sending away captive the king and all his princes; *Calmet's Commentary* on Jer. xxvi. 4, 9.

† This Gemariah was one of the captains of the temple, whose apartment was near the New Gate, whereof he kept guard, and had a certain number of Levites under him, who constantly stood sentinel. For the temple, we must know, was guarded like a king's palace; and as the upper court, which is mentioned in the text, was, in all probability, the priests court; so the gate,



A. M.  
3394, etc.  
Ant. Chris.  
610, etc.  
from  
1 Kings viii.  
to the end  
of 2 Chron.

who stood below in the courts, and afterwards to the princes, who were met together in the secretary's chamber, and who thereupon advised him and his master Jeremiah both † to keep out of the way, until they had known the king's pleasure concerning it. As soon as king was informed of the book, he sent one of his attendants for it, and commanded him to read it: But he had not gone far, before the king, impatient to hear the judgments denounced against him, snatched it out of his hand, and, notwithstanding the importunity of his nobles to dissuade him, cut it to pieces, and threw it into the fire \*, which was upon the hearth, (for it was then the winter-season), where it was consumed; and then immediately sent out his officers to apprehend the prophet and his amanuensis; but they had both withdrawn to a place of security, and could not be found.

Upon

whereof Gemariah had charge, must have been the east gate of that court, which in the reign of Jehoshaphat, 2 Chron. xx. 5. is called the *New Court*; *Calmet's Commentary*.

† The advice which the princes of Judah give upon this occasion is very remarkable, because it reconciles their duty to God, to justice, and to charity, with what they were obliged to from their prince. Their prince, they knew, was of an hasty and violent temper, and yet the contents of the book were such, that it would not be safe for him to be ignorant of it; and therefore, being in duty bound to acquaint him with it, they advised Baruch and his master to provide for their own security, until they should see what effect it would have upon the king, whereof they promised, no doubt, to give them intelligence; *Calmet's Commentary*.

\* The text tells us, that it was in the ninth month, (which answers in part to our month of November) when *the king burnt the book*. After that the rain began to fall in the month of September, the weather generally grew raw and cold, so that a fire at this time was not unseasonable: The custom, however, in this country was not to have chimneys, as it is among us. The fire was made in the middle of the room, upon an hearth, or in a stove, and the smoke went out either at the door or window, or some opening made on purpose in the roof of the house, as we see in some of our college-halls and some kitchens in ancient monasteries, where the chimney is in the midst of the roof, in the form of a cupola, with several openings for the smoke to fly out at. For, that there were formerly no chimneys in the manner we make them now, is plain from the observation which his annotator makes upon Vitruvius, viz. that,

Upon burning the book, Jeremiah was commanded to make another in the same manner ; to have the same prophecies inserted in it, with some (b) farther denunciations against Jehoiakam and his house, which, in a short time, began to take effect. For Nebuchadnezzar, (as we said), having invaded Judea, and laid siege to Jerusalem, soon took it, and put Jehoiakim in chains to carry him to Babylon ; but, upon his humiliation, and swearing fealty to him, he again restored him to his kingdom, and left Jerusalem in order to pursue his victories against the Egyptians : But before he did that, he \* caused great numbers of the people to be sent captives to Babylon, and gave particular orders to Ashpenaz the master of his eunuchs, that, out of the children of the royal family, and of the nobility of the land, he should make choice of such as surpassed others in beauty and wit, that, when they came to Babylon, they might be made eunuchs too, and attend in his palace. This Ashpenaz accordingly did ; and, among the children that were carried away captive \* for this purpose were Daniel, Hananiah,

A. M.  
3394, &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
610, &c.  
from  
Kings viii.  
to the end.  
of 2 Chron.  
Which ac-  
cordingly  
Nebuchad-  
nezzar ex-  
cutes, and  
slays the  
king.

that, in all his book of architecture, he makes no mention of chimneys, which he questionless would have done, had they been of use in his time ; *Calmet's Commentary* ; and *M. Perault sur Vitruv. liv. vi. c. 8.*

(b) Jer. xxxvi. 30, 31.

\* Since the people were thus carried into captivity ; the sons of the royal family, and of the nobility of the land, made eunuchs and slaves in the palace of the king of Babylon ; the vessels of the temple carried thither, the king made a tributary, and the whole land now brought into vassalage under the Babylonians ; from hence we must reckon the beginning of the seventy years captivity foretold by the prophet Jeremiah, chap. xxv. 11. and xxix. 10. and in the fourth year of Jehoiakim must be the first year in that computation ; *Prideaux's Connection, anno 606.*

\* Some indeed do place their captivity several years later, but it is absolutely inconsistent with what is elsewhere said in Scripture : For these children, after their carrying away to Babylon, were to be three years under the tuition of the master of the eunuchs, Dan. i. 5. to be instructed by him in the language and learning of the Chaldeans, before they could be admitted into the presence of the king, to stand and serve before him. But in the second year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign, after his father's death, (which was but the fourth year after his first taking of Jerusalem), Daniel had not only admission and freedom of ac-

A. M.  
3394, etc.  
Ant. Christ.  
610, etc.  
from  
1 Kings viii.  
to the end  
of 2 Chron.

Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. Daniel, upon his arrival in Babylon, was called *Beltesbazzar*, and the other three were named *Shadrach*, *Mesbach*, and *Abednego*, of whom we have several things to say in another place.

Jehoiakim, after he had lived in subjection to the king of Babylon for three years, rebelled against him; and, refusing to pay him any more tribute, renewed his confederacy with Necho king of Egypt. Hereupon Nebuchadnezzar \*, not being at leisure to come himself to chastize him, sent orders to all his lieutenants and governors of provinces in those parts, to make war against him, which brought upon him inroads and depredations from every quarter; till, in the eleventh year of his reign, all parties joined together against him, and, having shut him up in Jerusalem, they took him prisoner in a sally, which he made upon them, slew him with the sword, and, in the completion

cess to the king, but we find him there interpreting his dream, Dan. ii. and immediately thereupon advanced to be the chief of the governors of the wise men, and ruler over all the provinces of Babylon; and, less than four years instruction in the language, laws, usages, and learning of the country, can scarce be thought sufficient to qualify him for such a trust; nor could he any sooner be old enough for it, because we may observe, that when he was first carried away from Jerusalem, he was but a youth; *Prideaux's Connection*, anno 606.

\* What detained him from going in person against Jerusalem we are not told; only it appears, that, in the tenth year of Jehoiakim, he was engaged in an arbitration between the Medes and Lydians, the occasion of which was this:—After the Medes had recovered all the Upper Asia out of the hands of the Scythians, and again extended their borders to the river Halys, which was the common boundary between them and the Lydians, it was not long before there happened a war between these two nations, which was managed for five years together with various success. In the sixth year, intending to make one battle decisive, they engaged each other with their utmost strength; but in the midst of the action, and while the fortune of the day seemed to hang in an equal balance between them, there happened an eclipse, which overspread both the armies with darkness; whereupon they desisted from fighting, and agreed to refer the controversy to the arbitration of two neighbouring princes. The Lydians chose Siennesis, king of Cilicia; and the Medes Nebuchadnezzar (who, by Herodotus, lib. i. is called *Labyntus*) king of Babylon, who concluded a peace between them, on the terms that Astyages, son of Cyaxares king of Media, should

completion of the (c) prophet's prediction concerning him, [ cast his dead body in the high-way, without allowing it the decency of a funeral. A. M. 3394, etc. Ant. Chris. 610, etc.

After the death of his father Jehoiachin || (who is likewise called *Coniah* and *Jeconiah*) ascended the throne; but for the little time that he continued thereon, persisting in his father's impieties, he drew upon himself (d) a bitter declaration of God's wrath, which was speedily executed. For in the three months after his father's death, Nebuchadnezzar †, coming in person with his royal army to Jerusalem, from 1 Kings viii. to the end. of 2 Chron. Jehoiachin succeeds his father, and is deposed by Nebuchadnezzar,

should take to wife Ariena, the daughter of Halyattis, king of the Lydians; of which marriage, within a year after, was born Cyaxares, who is called *Darius the Mede*, in the book of Daniel; *Prideaux's Connection*, anno 528.

(c) Jer. xxii. 18, 19.

|| In 2 Kings xxiv. 6. we are told expressly, that Jehoiakim *slept with his fathers*, and yet it is very certain, that he was neither buried with them, nor died in his bed, but lay above ground unburied, according to the prediction of the prophet, Jer. xxxvi. 30. *exposed in the day to the heat, and in the night to the frost*; from whence it appears, that *to sleep with one's fathers*, signifies no more than to die as they did; *Patrick's Commentary*.

|| His succeeding his father in the throne of Judah may seem to disagree with the threat which the prophet denounces against his father, Jer. xxxvi. 30. — *He shall have none to sit upon the throne of David*. But as Jehoiachin's reign lasted little more than three months, during which time he was absolutely subject to the Chaldeans, a reign of so short a continuance, and so small authority, may very justly be looked upon as nothing; *Calmet's Commentary*.

(d) Jer. xxii. 24, — 30.

† It is very probable that Nebuchadnezzar heard that he had entered into a confederacy with the king of Egypt as his successor did; and therefore sent an army against him, in the very beginning of his reign, to lay siege to Jerusalem, against which he intended to come himself: But the Jews have a conceit, that Nebuchadnezzar's counsellors represented to him, how unadvisedly he had acted in making him king, whose father had been in rebellion against him, and that, upon their representation, he resolved to depose him. *From an ill dog there never comes a good whelp*, was the proverb, they say, which the counsellors made use of on this occasion; and to make this more feasible, to the father and son they generally apply that passage in Ezekiel, *She took another of her whelps, and made him a young lion*,

A. M.  
3394, etc.  
Ant. Christ.  
610, etc.  
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1 Kings viii.  
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Jerusalem, (which was then blocked up by his lieutenants), caused the place to be begirt with a close siege on every side. This so terrified Jehoiachin, that † taking his mother, his princes, and his chief ministers with him, he went out to Nebuchadnezzar, and delivered himself into his hand; who, though he spared his life, put him in chains, and sent him to Babylon, where he continued in prison until the death of his conqueror: But when Evilmerodach \* succeeded to his father's throne, he not only released him from his imprisonment, (which had continued for seven and thirty years), but treated him with great humanity and respect, allowing him an honourable maintenance, and giving him the precedence of all other princes in Babylon.

At this time, Nebuchadnezzar carried away with him (besides the king and his family) a vast number of other captives, (among whom was Ezekiel the prophet), all the mighty men of valour, and all the useful artificers, out of Jerusalem, || to the number of ten thousand men, together

*on, and he went up and down among the lions. He became a young lion, and learned to catch the prey, and devour men. — Then the nations set against him on every side, from the provinces: They spread their net over him, and he was taken in their pit, chap. xix. 6, &c.; Calmet's and Patrick's Commentaries.*

† It is very probable, that he made this surrender, at the advice of the prophet Jeremiah, who gave the same counsel, more than once, to his successor Zedekiah, Jer. xxi. 9.—xxvii. 17.—xxxviii. 2.

\* During his father's indisposition, who fancied himself metamorphosed into an ox, he took upon him the administration of the government; but, after seven years; when his father recovered his understanding, so as once more to ascend the throne, Evilmerodach, as some believe, was imprisoned by his father, and, in his confinement, contracted an acquaintance and intimacy with Jehoiachin; so that, after his father's death, and his full accession to the throne, he released him out of prison, and heaped many favours upon him: And it was by his advice, (as the Jews tell us), that Evilmerodach took his father out of the ground, after he was dead and buried, cut his body in pieces, and gave them to three hundred ravens, lest he should return from his grave, as he had before recovered from his metamorphosis into an ox; *Calmet's Dictionary*, under the word *Evilmerodach*,

|| This must be understood of the whole number of the people that were at this time carried captive, which (according

gether with all the treasures, and † rich furniture of the temple, and of the royal palace. What he left in the land were only the poorer sort of people, over whom he made Mattaniah, the third son of Josiah, king. Of him he took a solemn oath to be faithful and true in his obedience to the crown of Babylon; and to engage him the more to be so, he changed his name to *Zedekiah*, which signifies *the justice of the Lord*; intending thereby to put him in mind of the vengeance he was to expect from the justice of the Lord his God, if he violated that fidelity which he had, in his name, sworn unto him.

A. M.  
3394, etc.  
Ant. Christ.  
610, etc.  
from  
1 Kings viii.  
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to Abarbanel) was thus made up;—Jehoiachin, and all his court, and great men, were seven thousand; the craftsmen a thousand; and other considerable men in the country two thousand, which completed the number. Jeremiah indeed computes them to be little above three thousand, that were now carried away; but he reckons only those that were carried from Jerusalem; whereas in 2 Kings xxiv. 16. there is an account of those who were carried from other cities, and out of the tribe of Benjamin, which were seven thousand: and this reconciles the difference; *Patrick's Commentary*.

† Nebuchadnezzar carried away the vessels, and rich furniture of the temple, at three different times. 1st, in the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim, when he first took Jerusalem, he carried *part of the vessels of the house of God away, into the land of Shinar, and put them into the house of his God*, Dan. i. 2. These were the vessels which his son Belshazzar profaned, Dan. v. 2. and which Cyrus restored to the Jews, (Ezra i. 7.), to be set up again in the temple when rebuilt. 2dly, in the reign of Jehoiachin, he took the city again, and cut in pieces a great part of the vessels of gold, which Solomon had made, 2 Kings xxiv. 13. and by some chance or other had escaped his former plunder. 3dly, In the eleventh year of Zedekiah, he pillaged the temple once more, when he brake in pieces the pillars of brass, and the bases, and the brazen sea, and took along with them all the vessels of silver and gold that he could find, and carried them to Babylon, 2 Kings xxv. 13. &c. It is somewhat strange, that amongst all this inventory, we hear no mention made of the ark of the covenant, which, of all other things, was held most sacred; but it is very probable, that it was burnt together with the temple, in this last desolation. For what some say of its being hidden by the prophet Jeremiah, in a certain cave in mount Nebo, is a mere fable; *Patrick's and Calmet's Commentaries*, and *Dissert. sur l'arche d'alliance*.

Zedekiah

A. M.  
3394, etc.  
Ant. Christ.  
610, &c.  
from  
2 Kings viii.  
to the end  
of 2 Chron.

Zedekiah is  
made king  
in his room,  
and advised  
by the pro-  
phet Jere-  
miah, to live  
in obedi-  
ence to the  
king of Ba-  
bylon.

Zedekiah was but just settled in the throne, and Nebuchadnezzar departed out of Judea, and Syria, when (e) several kings of the neighbouring nations, viz. the Ammonites, the Moabites, the Edomites, the Zidonians, the Tyrians, &c. sent their ambassadors to Jerusalem, to congratulate him upon his accession to the throne, and to propose a league against the king of Babylon, in order to shake off his yoke, and prevent his return into those parts any more. Upon this occasion, Jeremiah, by God's command, made him bonds and yokes, which he sent by the said ambassadors to their respective masters, with this message from God, viz. "That he had given all their counsels to the king of Babylon, and therefore their wisest course would be to submit to his yoke, which if they refused to do, both they and their countries should most certainly be destroyed:" But to Zedekiah he went in person, and having persuaded him to submit to the king of Babylon, and not to give credit to false prophets, who might flatter him with a deliverance from his power, he prevailed with him, for that time, not to enter into the league that was proposed.

He had, before this, (f) under the emblem of two baskets of figs, foretold Zedekiah the restoration which God intended for those that were gone into captivity, and the misery and desolation which should befall them who were still in the land; and now, in pursuance of his prophetic office, he \* took the opportunity of the king's

(e) Jer. xxxvii.

(f) Jer. xxiv.

\* At what time, and upon what occasion Zedekiah sent this embassy to the king of Babylon, the sacred history is silent; but it is very presumable, that it was at the beginning of his reign, and that as Judea was then tributary to the Chaldeans, the king's policy was to keep up a good understanding with them. Ezekiel however was not as yet possessed of the spirit of prophecy; and for this reason, Jeremiah was obliged to take care of the Jews who were gone captives into Babylon, and to send them instructions in what manner they were to behave, viz. *to seek the peace of the city, whether they were carried away*; Jer. xxix. 7. pursuant to which instruction, we find those in Babylon requiring their brethren at Jerusalem to *pray for the life of Nabuchodonosor king of Babylon, and for the life of Belshazzar his son, that their days may be upon earth as the days of heaven:—That they might live under the shadow of Nabuchodonosor, and under the shadow of his son, and find favour in their sight*, Baruch i. 11, 12.

sending

sending an embassy to Babylon to direct a letter to the Jews of the captivity, advising them not to be deceived with such prophets \*, as made them entertain false hopes of a speedy restoration; that, by the ordination of God, their captivity was to last seventy years; and that the people left at Jerusalem would be of little use to assist them in their deliverance, because God, in a short time, would afflict them with the sword, with famine, and with pestilence, so as to consume the greatest part of them, and scatter the rest over the face of the earth; and therefore he exhorts them to live quietly and peaceably in the country, whither they were carried, without expecting any return, until the time which God had appointed.

A. M.  
3394, etc.  
Ant. Chris.  
610, etc.  
from \*  
1 Kings viii.  
to the end  
of 2 Chron.

Upon the receipt of this letter, one Shemaiah, a popular man among the captive Jews at Babylon, took upon him to write to Zephaniah, the second priest, and to all the priests and people of Jerusalem, representing Jeremiah as a mad-man, and a false pretender to prophecy, and advising them to confine him: Which Jeremiah hearing, was commanded by God to send again to the captives of Babylon, to let them know, that he would punish Shemaiah and his posterity very severely, for his having deluded them with false prophecies; and at the same time, (to convince those that were left in Jerusalem), he shewed them, (g) by the emblem of a potter's vessel, that it was in the Almighty's power to destroy what nation or people he pleased. But all this availed nothing. They still resolved to go on in their

For which  
the prophet  
is grossly  
abused.

\* The two persons mentioned in Scripture, who took upon them to be prophets sent from God, were Abaz the son of Kolaiah, and Zedekiah the son of Maaseiah, two of the captivity among the Jews at Babylon; who feeding the people with false promises of a speedy restoration. hindered them from making any settlements in the places assigned for their habitation: But as the prophet Jeremiah denounced their sudden and fearful destruction, Nebuchadnezzar understanding that they disturbed the people by their vain prophecies, caused them both to be seized, and roasted to death in the fire. The latter Jews say, that these two men were the two elders who would have corrupted Susanna, and that Nebuchadnezzar commanded them to be burnt for this reason: But the whole foundation of this conceit is, that Jeremiah (chap. xxix. 23. where he speaks of these men) says, *that they committed villany in Israel, and adultery with their neighbours wives*; from whence they conjecture all the rest; *Prideaux's Connection, anno 597.*

(g) Jer. xviii.



A. M.  
3394. etc.  
Ant. Christ  
610, etc.  
from  
1 Kings viii  
to the end  
of 2 Chron

Jeremiah.  
at Jerusa-  
lem, pro-  
phesies the  
same things  
that Ezekiel  
did at  
B. bylon.

wicked ways: and, to avenge themselves of the prophet, who gave them some disturbance therein, they abused him with words and blows, and, at length, put him in the stocks.

It was no small comfort to him, however, under all his afflictions, to find that Ezekiel, who, much about this time, was called to the prophetic office, prophesied the same things at Babylon that he did at Jerusalem. At Jerusalem Jeremiah (*h*) foretold the divine judgments which were to be executed upon Chaldea and Babylon, by the Medes and Persians, which he wrote in a book, and (*i*) delivered it to Seraiah || who was then going to Babylon upon an embassy, with instructions to read the contents of it to his captive brethren upon the banks of the river Euphrates; and when he had made an end of reading, to tie a stone to it,

(*h*) Jer. I. and li.

(*i*) Chap. li. 59, 64.

|| The words in the text, according to our translation, are, — *The word which Jeremiah the prophet commanded Seraiah, the son of Neriah, &c. when he went with Zedekiah, the king of Judah, into Babylon, in the fourth year of his reign, and this Seraiah was a quiet prince, Jer. li. 59; and from hence some Hebrew interpreters infer, that Zedekiah went to Babylon in the fourth year of his reign, to make his court, and cultivate the good graces of his patron and paramount Nebuchadnezzar. But this opinion, tho' followed by several, has no foundation in any other part of Scripture; and the passage now before us, may, according to the original, be very properly rendered in this wise. — The word which Jeremiah commanded Seraiah, when he went to Babylon upon an embassy from Zedekiah. The chief business of this embassy was to request of Nebuchadnezzar, a restitution of the sacred vessels of the temple which he had taken away, when he carried Jehoiakim captive into Babylon. Our translation, however, is not at all significant in this place, when it styles this Seraiah a quiet prince. The Septuagint have very properly rendered the words ἀρχων δαψων the prince of the presents, which some apply to the presents which king Zedekiah made to the temple, and others to the things he daily supplied for sacrifices; but the most natural sense in this place is, that he was charged with the presents and tribute which Zedekiah was obliged to send to Nebuchadnezzar; that his business was, to present them to the emperor, and, upon that occasion, to solicit the restoration of the sacred vessels; upon which account, the Vulgate has rendered the words princeps prophetiae, the chief person in the embassy, who, at the time of audience,*

it, and \* throw it into the river, thereby to denote, that as it would naturally sink, so should the Babylonish empire be totally destroyed, and never rise any more.

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At Babylon, Ezekiel, by several types and prophetic revelations foretold the taking of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans; Zedekiah's flight from the city by night; the putting out of his eyes; his imprisonment and death at Babylon; the carrying away the remainder of the Jews into captivity; the desolation of their country, and the many and great calamities which should befall them for their iniquities. But to those of the captivity, who, avoiding these iniquities, did endeavour to keep themselves steady and faithful in God's service, God, by the mouth of his prophet, promised to become a sanctuary in a strange country, and to bring them back again unto the land of Israel, where they should flourish in peace and righteousness, and, once more, (k) become his people and he their God.

Thus did these two great prophets visit the people which were still remaining in Jerusalem, with several warnings; endeavouring, both by significant emblems, and direct predictions, to reclaim them. But, when they still persisted in their obstinacy and disobedience, God at length brought upon them the calamities which he had so often foretold, and so severely threatened.

Before we come to the destruction of Jerusalem, however, there is a memorable transaction, \* which preceded

The siege of  
Bethulia,  
and Judith's  
great exploit  
in killing  
Holofernes.

it, audience, was to make a speech to the emperor, in his prince's name; *Galmet's Commentary.*

\* We have an emblematical action of the like kind described in the book of the Revelation of St. John, — *And a mighty angel took up a stone, like a great mill-stone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus, with violence, shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all,* chap. xviii. 21 where the word *Babylon* is taken in an analogical sense, because the destruction of that great city and empire (as we shall see hereafter) was so remarkable, as to afford a comparison for any other great and opulent state brought to ruin and desolation.

(k) Ezek. xi. 20.

\* It is a great dispute among the learned, whether this history of Judith was transacted before or after the Babylonish captivity. Those who maintain the latter opinion, found a great deal upon the words of the history itself, wherein the author (according to the Greek version, chap. iv. 3.) expressly tells us, that *the Israelites were newly*

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it, viz. the siege of Bethulia, and its deliverance by the courage

*returned from captivity, and all the people of Judea were lately gathered together and the vessels, and the altar, and the house, were sanctified after their profanation: and wherein it is farther affirmed, that they were led captives into a land that was not theirs, that the temple of their God was cast to the ground, and their cities taken by the enemies; but now are they come up from the places where they were scattered, and have possessed Jerusalem,* chap. v. 18, 19. — It is in vain, say they, to endeavour to correct the sense of these passages; the bare reading of them, and the first impression they make upon the mind naturally leads one to say, that this history was not transacted till after the return from the captivity, which, in a great measure, is confirmed by the opinion of almost all the ancients, and a great many of the moderns; but then they widely disagree in their computations of the period of time when this remarkable event happened. For some place it under Cambyfes, the son of Cyrus; others under Xerxes; others under Darius; and others again under Antiochus Epiphanes, in the time of the Maccabees; which last opinion is the most tenible, if we will but allow, that a feast was instituted in commemoration of it, as we read in the Vulgate, but in none of the other translations. Those who maintain, that this transaction happened before the captivity, are, in like manner, divided: for some place it under Manasseh, and others under Zedekiah. Those who contend for Zedekiah's reign, make the Nabuchodonosor in the book of Judith, and the Nebuchadnezzar in the 2d of Kings, the same person; and as it is positively said in the 2d chapter of Judith, that he put his general Holofernes on this expedition, in the first month of the eighteenth year of his reign, which was the ninth of Zedekiah king of Judah, Holofernes's death, and the siege of Jerusalem, happened, they say, in the same year; only it must be supposed, that the attempt against Bethulia was in the beginning of the year, and the siege of Jerusalem at the end of it. The captivity therefore, from which the Jews are said to have newly returned, must be that in Jehoiakim's time, for that in Zedekiah's continued seventy years, before which Nebuchadnezzar had quite subdued Arphaxad king of the Medes, and demolished Ecbatana. And as for the Bethulians enjoying peace during the life of Judith, it may be supposed, that Nebuchadnezzar, being employed two years in the siege of Jerusalem, might spend some years in reducing other parts of the country; and seeing Bethulia was a place naturally strong, and situated among the mountains, he might be unwilling to foil his army before it,

rage and dexterity of a woman, which must † not be entirely omitted.

The author of the book of Judith \* relates that Nabuchodonosor

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it, and (especially considering the ill success of his general) to make any fresh attempt upon it, until he had subdued all the rest. Those, again who contend for Manasseh's reign, make the Nabuchodonosor in Judith, to be the same with Saosduchius in Ptolemy, and Arphaxad the same with Phraortes, mentioned by Herodotus, and that, as these two princes made war with one another, wherein Phraortes was vanquished and perished with his army, all the other things recorded of Saosduchius and his general might happen without inconsistency. For the captivity there mentioned might be that from whence Manasseh, with some of his subjects, had lately returned when the temple which had been profaned was purified again, and the service of the sanctuary restored to its ancient dignity, 2 Chron. xxxiii. 1. &c. This is a short state of the several opinions concerning the date of this transaction, and the last of these, in our judgment, seems to be best founded; *Prideaux's Connections*, anno 665.; *Calmet's Preface a le livre de Jud.*

† For though the Jews and ancient Christians did not receive this book of Judith into their canon of Scripture, yet they always looked upon it as a true history; and accordingly Clement, in his epistle to the Corinthians, has cited it as well as the author of the apostolic constitutions, which go under his name; and as St. Athanasius, or the writer of the Synopsis that is ascribed to him, gives a summary account of it, even as he does of other sacred books, from his example we may be permitted to justify the short abridgement which we have made of it in our *History of the Holy Bible*; *Calmet's Dictionary*, under the word *Judith*.

\* Who this author was, it no where appears. St. Jerom seems to think, that Judith wrote it herself but produces no good authority for his opinion. Others will have it, that the high-priest Jehoiakim, mentioned in this book, was the author of it, but this is equally a bare conjecture; nor is there much more certainty in those, who, supposing the history to have happened in the time of Cambyfes, ascribe it to Joshua, the son of Josedek, who was high-priest at that time. But whoever the author was, he seems to be posterior to the facts which he relates, because he speaks of the festival instituted in memory of Judith's victory, as still continued in his time, Judith xvi. 20. The book was originally written in the Chaldee language, which is not now extant; but from thence, at the desire of Paula  
and

A. M. buchodonosor †, king of Affyria, in the twelfth year of his  
 3394, &c. reign, fought a great battle in the plains of Ragau †, with  
 Ant. Chris. 610, &c. Arphaxad † king of Media, wherein he not only utterly  
 from defeated,

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and Eustochium, St. Jerom formed the translation, (which we now have in the vulgar Latin edition of the Bible), not rendering it word for word, (as himself tells us in his preface to the history), but repairing the corruptions of the various readings, and giving us according to the best of his judgment, the true and entire sense of the original. Besides this translation of St. Jerom's, there are two others, one in Greek, and the other in Syriac. That which is in Greek is attributed to Theodotion, who lived in the time of Commodus, who was made emperor of Rome in the year of Christ 180. But the version was much ancients; for Clemens Romanus, as we said, in his epistle to the Corinthians, (which was wrote near 126 years before), has a quotation from it. The Syriac translation was made from the Greek, and so was also the English, which we, at present, have among the apocryphal writing in our Bible. And of all these three last versions, it may be observed, that there are several particulars in them which are not in Jerom's, and which seems to be those various readings which he professes to have cut off, as vicious corruptions of the text: so that, in this respect, St. Jerom's translation ought to have the preference, whenever there is any remarkable difference between them; *Prideaux's Connection*, anno 655; and *Calmet's Dissert. sur le livre de Judith*.

† This Nabuchodonosor is the same prince whom Herodotus calls Saoluchinus, who, after the death of Esarhaddon, (the same who took the advantage of Mafesimordicus's dying without issue, and united the kingdom of Babylon to that of Affyria), succeeded to his acquisitions; and the reason why the author of this book of Judith, who apparently wrote either in Babylon, or some other part of Chaldea, calls him *Nabuchodonosor*, is, because this was the common name (as Pharaoh was in Egypt) of the kings of that country; *Calmet's Commentary on Judith*; and *Prideaux's Connection*.

† The plains of Ragau are very probably those which lie about Rages a town of Media, standing upon the mountains of Ecbarana, and distant about a small day's journey from that city; *Calmet's Dictionary*.

† Both our learned Prideaux and Primate Usher are of opinion, that this Arphaxad was the person whom profane historians call *Dejoces*, the first king of the Medes, and founder of Ecbarana: but the account which the book of Judith gives of Arphaxad, and of the circumstances of his death, seems to be more applicable to  
 what

defeated, and slew him, but made himself master of several of his cities, and, among others, of Ecbatana †, (the royal

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what Herodotus relates of Phraortes, his son and successor. For, as Arphaxad had many nations under his dominion, and fell in battle against the king of Assyria, Judith i. 6, 15.; so Herodotus (lib. i.) tells us of Phraortes, "That, having subdued the Persians, and made them part of his empire, he soon overcame the rest of the people of the Upper Asia, (*i. e.* all that lay north of mount Taurus, to the river Halys), passing from nation to nation, and always attended with victory; until, coming with an army against the Assyrians. with an intent to besiege Nineveh their capital, he was vanquished and slain, in the two and twentieth year of his reign. Dejoces, indeed, is said, by Herodotus, to have been the first founder of Ecbatana; but as the undertaking was very great, it is not improbable, that he left enough to his successor Phraortes to complete: so that all the works which the author of Judith ascribes to Arphaxad (chap. i.) might be his;" *Calmet's Commentary and Dictionary*; and *Prideaux's Connection*, anno 635.

\* This city, Herodotus says expressly, was built by Dejoces, the first king of the Medes: but that author is wrong, in ascribing the honour of the whole work to him, which his son Phraortes, at least, finished and beautified to such a degree, that, though the Scripture is silent, profane authors have given us a very advantageous account of it. The city, according to them, was situate in a specious eminence, and into it Dejoces had brought together the whole nation of the Medes, who never before had lived in any thing but caves and huts, dispersed up and down in the country, which great concourse of people made it very large and populous. It was encompassed with seven walls, at equal distances from each other. The first was the lowest, and equal in circumference with those of Athens, *i. e.* according to Thucydides, lib. ii. an hundred and seventy eight furlongs. The rest rose gradually, and overlooked each other, about the height of a battlement. The battlements were of different colours. The first was white, the second black, the third red, the fourth blue, the fifth of a deep red, the sixth of a silver, and the seventh of a gold colour; and for this reason, as Bochart has observed, this city was usually called by the ancients, *Agbata*, which, in the Arabian language, signifies *a thing of different and distinct colours*. The royal palace and treasury stood within the seventh wall; and the palace alone (according to Polybius, lib. x.) was seven furlongs round, and built with all the cost and skill that a stately edifice did require; for some of its beams are said to have been of silver, and the rest of Cedar,

which

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royal seat of the Median empire), which he miserably defaced; and afterwards returned in great triumph to Nineveh: That, some time after, inquiring of his officers, nobles, and counsellors, what tributary countries had not gone with them to the war, (for he had summoned them all to attend him), and finding that none of the western provinces had paid that regard to his commands, he made a decree, that Holofernes \*, the chief captain of his army, should not fail, the next year, to chastise their disobedience: that, pursuant to that decree, this general took the field with a vast army †; and, having wasted and destroyed several other nations, at length came unto Judea, where he laid siege to Bethulia ‡, a strong town in the tribe

which were strengthened with plates of gold; *Calmet's Commentary and Dictionary*, under the word; and *Wells's Geography of the Old Testament*, vol. iii.

\* Some annotators are of opinion, that the word *Holofernes* is of Persian extract, in the same manner as *Tisaphernes*, *Intaphernes*, &c. But others imagine, that this general was a native either of Pontus or Cappadocia. Polybius makes mention of one of that name, who, having conquered Capadocia, soon lost it again, because he was for changing the ancient customs of the country, and introducing drunkenness, together with feasts and songs to Bacchus; whereupon Casauban conjectures, that this was the same Holofernes that commanded Nabuchodonosor's forces, as it must be owned, that his riot and debauchery, as well as the rapidity of his conquests, makes him not unlike him; *Vid. Polyb. apud Athen lib. x c. 11.*; and *Casaub. in Athen.*

† The author of Judith's history has thus described it.—*Holofernes mustered the chosen men for the battle, as his Lord had commanded him, unto an hundred and twenty thousand, and twelve thousand archers on horseback.—A great multitude of sundry countries went with them, like locusts, and like the sand of the earth; for the multitude was without number*; Judith ii. 15, 20.

‡ Our modern travellers to the Holy Land do almost unanimously agree, that Bethulia is situate in the tribe of Zebulun, about a league from Tiberius towards the west, where they pretend that some marks of Holofernes's camp are still to be seen: but some great men are apt to suspect the report of these travellers, who are too much accustomed to take up with the traditions of the country, though there is not always the greatest certainty in them. This, however, is incontestable, that both

tribe of Simeon, and, by cutting off its water, reduced it to such extremity, that, through the people's importunity, Ozias the governour had promised to surrender the place, unless it was relieved in five days: That Judith, a widow lady of an ample fortune, but \* of great virtue and piety withal, sent for the governour and principal men of the city, to let them know, that God, by her hand, would find out an expedient to deliver them; but in what manner this was to be effected, she desired them not to enquire: That, having addressed herself to God by prayer for success, and being not insensible of her own beauty, (for she was extremely handsome as well as virtuous), she adorned herself in all her rich attire, and, attended only with one maid †, left Bethulia, and went directly to the Assyrian camp:

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both Judith and her husband were of the tribe of Simeon, Judith viii. 1 and ix. 2; and for what purpose they should remove to so great a distance from their own inheritance, and settle in a different tribe, we cannot see. Since, therefore, the Scripture takes notice of a place in the tribe of Simeon named *Bethul* or *Bethuel*, Joshua xix. 4. a place dependent on Gaza of the Philistines, and famous for its temples, which were very remarkable both for their antiquity and fine structure, (from whence, not unlikely, it had its name of *Bethul*, or *the house of the Lord*), there is much more reason to conclude, that this was the place; since the other, which travellers talk of in the tribe of Zebulun, must be of too modern a date to be the city intended here, because we find neither Joshua, nor Josephus, nor Eusebius, nor St. Jerom, making any mention of it; *Calmet's Dissertation*, and *Commentary, sur le livre de Judith*.

* The character which the historian gives her with respect to this is,—*That there was none who gave her an ill word, for she feared the Lord greatly*, Judith viii. 8.; which is certainly an high commendation, considering how tender and delicate a thing the reputation of a young and beautiful widow is, according as St. Jerom has elegantly expressed his remark upon it: *Tenera res in feminis fama pudicitiae, et, quasi flos pulcherrimus, cito ad levem marcescit auram, levique statu corrumpitur; maxime ubi aetas consentit ad vitium, et maritalis deest autoritas, cujus umbra tutamen uxoris est*; Hieron. ad Salvinam.

† The word, in ancient translations, is *Abra*, which signifies a companion, or maid of honour, (such as ladies of the first condition had), rather than a servant; for the same word in the Septuagint is applied to the women that attended both Pharaoh's daughter, Exod. ii. 5. and the Queen, chap. iv. 4.

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That, being stopped by the out-guard, and carried before the general, he received her with all the civility and respect that her appearance seemed to demand; and, having understood that the design of her leaving her countrymen was, both to escape the destruction which she foresaw was coming upon them, and to inform him in what situation their affairs were, and how he might become master of the place without the loss of one man, he not only promised her his protection, but appointed her and her maid an apartment proper for them; for he was already enamoured with her wit and beauty: That, having thus far succeeded very prosperously, she requested of him, that, as she was a strict observer of the religion of her country, she might be permitted to eat separately † such provisions as she had brought with her; and, without any molestation, to have leave to go out of the camp at night, or before it was day, in order to † perform her devotions; which accordingly was

† There was no law of God that prohibited the Jews from eating several things that the Gentiles made use of. Bread, wine, and fruits were allowed them in common with other people; but, either some tradition then prevailing among the Jews, or some religious vow that Judith might have bound herself under, the fear of giving scandal to her countrymen when she returned, or the prayers and Pagan invocations which were made over the meat that was served up to Holofernes; some of these reasons, I say, very likely hindered her from accepting the offer which the general made, of provisions from his table, and inclined her to desire to eat alone: A restraint which we find Daniel putting himself under in the court of Nebuchadnezzar, chap. i. 8. and Tobit, in that of Salmaneser, chap. i. 10. &c. where he says of himself, that—*when all my brethren, and those that were of my kindred, did eat of the bread of the Gentiles, I kept myself from eating, because I remembered God with all my heart*; Calmet's Commentary.

† As prayer, no doubt, is best performed in places of retirement, and the hurry of a camp must needs be inconvenient for religious offices, Judith, who professed herself a woman of strict piety, had a good pretence to request of the general a liberty to retire out of the camp, (when she thought proper, and without any questions asked her), to perform her devotions, which she foresaw would be a means to favour her escape, after she had executed the design she came about. For it was on this precaution, rather than any obligation, either from the law or from custom, that this devotion of her praying without the camp was founded; Calmet's Commentary.

readily

readily granted her : That having lived in this manner for three days, on the fourth Holoernes invited her to a splendid entertainment, where she appeared in her choicest ornaments of dress; and the general, in hopes of enjoying the beautiful stranger that night, gave a loose to mirth, and drank more plentifully than ever he was known to do: That in the evening, all the company being dismissed except Judith, who was left alone with the general, intoxicated with liquor, and now fallen fast asleep upon the bed, she thought this a proper opportunity to put her design in execution; and therefore approaching the place where he lay, and taking down his scymitar, which hung by him, she first prayed to God to strengthen her in the enterprise, and then, at two strokes, severed his head from his body, which she gave to her maid, (who by her order was waiting † at her tent-door), to put in the bag wherein her provisions were brought: That having thus accomplished their design, they passed through the camp unobserved, and made the best of their way to Bethulia, where Judith, acquainting the governour and elders of the city with what she had done, and in testimony thereof, producing the head of Holoernes, advised them to hang it out upon the walls, as soon as the morning appeared, and then every one to arm, and sally out of the gates, as if they meant to attack the enemy, but, in reality, only to give them an alarm, that thereupon they might have recourse to their general, (as she supposed they would), and so come to know what fate had befallen him: That upon the Bethulians appearing in arms, the outguards gave notice to their officers, and the officers sent to their general; but when they understood that their general was dead, his head gone, and nothing left behind, but a senseless trunk wallowing in blood, such a general consternation overspread the camp, that instead of preparing themselves to fight, the Assyrians threw away their arms, and fled; while the Bethulians, and other neighbouring people (to whom Ozias had sent intelligence of this their disaster) attacked them, in small parties, from several quarters; and having slain a considerable number

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† *Viz.* No go along with her out of the camp to prayers, as she had done the nights before: For it does not appear, from the whole history, that Judith had communicated her design to her woman, but rather that she took upon herself the risk of the whole affair, which could not be conducted with too much secrecy and prudence; *Calmet's Commentary.*

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of them, greatly enriched † themselves with their spoils : That a deputation of the elders from Jerusalem, with their chief priest accompanying them, came to Bethulia to compliment Judith upon this her great achievement, with whom she repaired to the temple at Jerusalem ; where public thanks were given, and burnt sacrifices offered to God, for this signal victory, and Judith's oblation *, upon this occasion, was the plunder of Holofernes's tent, with all his rich equipage, which the soldiers had presented her with : And, lastly, that after these public rejoicings † she went back to Bethulia again, where she lived in great splendour and renown, and, after a good old age, died; and was buried with her husband Manasseh, much beloved, and much lamented, by the people. But to look back to the affairs of Judea.

Jerusalem-
besieged by
Nebuchad-
nezzar, Je-
remiah pro-
phesies its
destruction,
and is bar-
barously u-
sed for it.

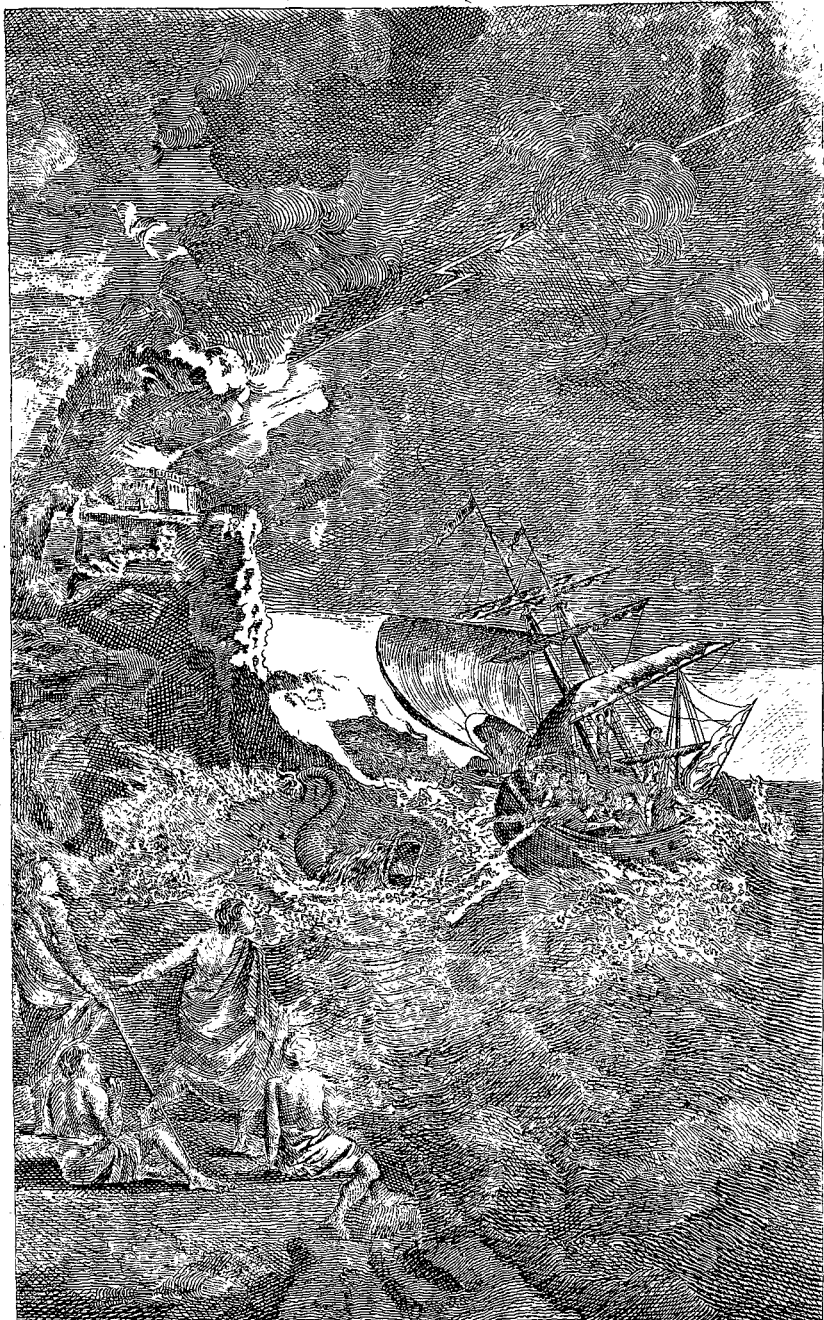
In the seventh year of his reign, Zedekiah being grown impatient of the Babylonish yoke, had sent his ambassadors;

† So great was the number of these, that the text tells us, the Bethulians were thirty days in gathering them, chap. xv. 11: For considering the largeness of the camp of the Assyrians, and the several detachments they might have, some on the mountains, and others on the plains; the many valuable things which might be hid, or thrown aside in their flight; and the much time it would cost the Bethulians to search diligently, and collect them all, and to provide carriages to bring them home to the city, there to be distributed equally among the people, and according to the prescription of the law; Numb. xxxi. 27.; considering all this, I say, thirty days may not be thought an unreasonable space; though it must be owned, that the Syriac version reads it only three; *Calmet's Commentary*.

* Nothing is more common, both in sacred and profane history, than to meet with several kinds of spoils taken in war dedicated to God, in acknowledgment of his goodness, and in memory of the victory, which, by his blessing and assistance, was then obtained; *Calmet's Commentary*.

† The joy which the people of Jerusalem expressed upon Judith's entry is thus related:—*Then all the women of Israel ran together to see her, and blessed her, and made a dance among them for her; and she took branches in her hand, and gave also to the women, that were with her, and they put a garland of olive upon her, and on her maid that was with her, and she went before all the people in the dance, leading the women, and all the men of Israel followed with garlands, and with songs in their mouths; Judith xv. 12, 13.*

and



*Jonah cast into the Sea Jonah Ch. 1.st P. Gavins Sculp.
Engraved for M.^r Stackhouses History of the Bible*

and made a confederacy with Pharaoh Hophra King of Egypt; which when Nebuchadnezzar understood, he drew together a great army out of all the nations that were under his dominion, and, in a short time, marched towards Judea, to punish him for his perfidy and rebellion. His victorious army soon overran the country, and having taken most of the cities, in the ninth year of Zedekiah's reign, the tenth month of the year, and the tenth day of the month, it came before Jerusalem, and blocked it close up on every side; so that, in a short time, the famine began to prevail: And, in memory of this, the Jews have ever since observed the tenth day of Tebeth, (the month when this happened), as a day of solemn fasting and humiliation even to this time.

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On that very day of the month when the siege of Jerusalem began, Ezekiel, then a captive in Chaldea, had it revealed to him by the type of a boiling pot, what a dismal destruction should be brought upon that city; and, in the beginning of the next year, Jeremiah was ordered to declare to the king, that the Babylonians who were then besieging the town, would certainly take it, and burn it with fire, make him prisoner, and carry him to Babylon, where he should die: Which provoked Zedekiah to such a degree, that he ordered him to be clapped up close in prison.

As Nebuchadnezzar's army was approaching Jerusalem, Zedekiah, and his people, in dread of what might follow, made a shew of returning unto the Lord their God. They entered into a solemn covenant thenceforward to serve him only, and to obey his laws; and, in pursuance of that, agreed to proclaim a manumission, or liberty to all Hebrew servants of either sex, according to what the law † in-
joined;

† The words of the law are these:—*If thy brother, an Hebrew man, or an Hebrew woman, be sold unto thee, and serve thee six years, then, in the seventh year, thou shalt let him go free from thee; and when thou sendest him out free from thee, thou shalt not let him go away empty; thou shalt furnish him liberally out of thy flock, and out of thy floor, and out of thy wine press; of that wherewith the Lord hath blessed thee, thou shalt give unto him: And thou shalt remember, that thou wast a bondman in the land of Egypt, and the Lord thy God redeemed thee. — It shall not seem hard unto thee, when thou sendest him away free from thee; for he hath been worth a double hired servant to thee, in serving thee six years, and the Lord thy God shall bless thee in all that thou doest, Deut. xv. 12.*
&c.

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joined ; but upon the coming of Hophra king of Egypt, to the relief of Jerusalem, and Nebuchadnezzar's raising the siege to meet him and give him battle, the Jews were generally of opinion, that the Chaldeans were gone for good and all, and thereupon repented of their covenant of reformation, and caused every man his servant, and every man his handmaid, to return to their servitude : Which base and inhuman prevarication so provoked God, that he ordered his prophet to proclaim liberty to the sword, and to the famine, and to the pestilence, to execute his wrath upon them, and their king, and their princes, and all Judah and Jerusalem, to their utter destruction.

Jeremiah indeed, in all the answers which he returned the king, (who upon the departure of the Chaldeans, sent frequently to consult him), was always positive, that the

&c. Now, for the better understanding of this, we must observe that there were two periods of time, wherein this release of Jewish bond-slaves was enjoined, the year of Jubilee, which was every fiftieth, and the sabbatical year, which was every seventh year. The sabbatical year is what is here intended : It now happened in the eighth year of Zedekiah's reign, but as Prideaux, in his preface, remarks, had not been observed for above 360 years before ; for which reason the Jews, being now in a state of compunction, were for restoring it to its primitive institution ; but upon the removal of their fears, by the withdrawing of Nebuchadnezzar's forces, they repented of their good intentions, and recalled their servants to their slavery again. Why the observation of such a year in seven was enjoined, the reasons are pretty obvious : For besides the commemoration of the Israelites release from the Egyptian bondage, which the text specifies, the general release of servants, and the restoration of lands and tenements to their first owners, which were then to be transacted, were to hinder the rich from oppressing the needy, and reducing them to perpetual slavery ; that debts should not be too much multiplied, nor the poor, consequently, entirely ruined ; but that a liberty of people's persons, an equality of their fortunes, and the order and distinction of their tribes and families (as far as it was possible) might be preserved : And as it was something like this that Lycurgus established among the Lacedemonians, in his instituting an equality among persons, banishing slavery, and (preventing as far as he could) any one's becoming too powerful, or too rich ; *Bedford's Scripture chronology*, lib. iv. c. 4.; and *Calmet's Dictionary*, under the word *Sabbath*.

Egyptians

Egyptians, whom he depended upon, would certainly deceive him; that their army would return without giving him any assistance; and that the Chaldeans would thereupon renew the siege, take the city, and burn it with fire. During their absence however, he thought it no improper time to endeavour to avoid the approaching siege, by retiring to Anathoth, his native place; but as he was passing the gate of the city which led that way, the captain of the guard seized him as a deserter, and brought him before the princes, who, in much rage, fell upon him, and beat him, and then committed him to the common jail, where he continued for many days.

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In the mean time, the Egyptians not daring to engage the Chaldean army, retired before them into their own country, leaving Zedekiah and his people, with their unequal strength, to contend with Nebuchadnezzar, who now returned more exasperated than ever, to reinvest the city of Jerusalem. Nor had he been long before it, ere the king sent messengers to Jeremiah to inquire of him, then in prison, concerning the fate of the present war: But his constant answer was, "That God being highly provoked against him and his people, for their manifold iniquities, would fight against the city, and smite it; that both king and people should be delivered into the hands of the king of Babylon; that those who continued in the city, during the siege, should perish by the pestilence, by the famine, and by the sword; but that those who endeavoured to escape, though they fell into the hands of the Chaldeans, would have their lives preserved." At which several of the princes, and chief commanders, being very much offended, pressed the king against him, as one who, by his speeches, discouraged the soldiers and people, and was enough indeed to occasion a defection.

Is cast into a
dismal dun-
geon, and
has his last
interview
with the
king.

In this conjuncture of affairs, the king was obliged to deliver him into their hands; and they, with unrelenting cruelty, cast him into a nasty dungeon †, where inevitably

† Some think, that, when he was in this dismal place, he made those mournful meditations, which are set down in the 3d chapter of the Lamentations: *They have cut off my life in the dungeon, and cast a stone upon me.—I called upon thy name, O Lord, out of the low dungeon. and thou hast heard my voice, &c.* ver. 53, 55, 56.; Lowth's Commentary on Jer. xxxviii.

A. M. he must have perished, had not Ebed-Melech †, one of the
 3394, &c. king's eunuchs, interceded with his master to have him re-
 Ant. Christ. leased from thence, and sent him back to his former prison;
 610, &c. for which favour, the prophet assured him from God, that
 from he should not perish at the sacking of the city.

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As the city began to be pressed more by the siege, the king desired a private conference with Jeremiah, who accordingly was sent for to an apartment of the temple; but the prophet could give no other answer to his questions, than what he had done before; only he advised him to surrender to the enemy, as the best expedient to save both himself and the city. The king, though urged by the prophet, could by no means bring himself to think of that. At his breaking off the discourse, however, he obliged him to secrecy, though he did not forget to remand him to prison: And this is the last interview that the prophet had with the king.

Jerusalem,
 taken: and
 Zedekiah
 the king
 made pri-
 soner, and
 had his eyes
 put out.

In the mean time, the siege began to draw towards a conclusion. The people within the walls, through the scarcity of provisions, were reduced to the last necessity, even (1) to feed on one another; and those without had now finished their works, and provided all things for a general assault; when, in the eleventh year of king Zedekiah, and on the ninth day of the fourth month of that year, the city was taken by storm, about midnight, and every place filled with blood and slaughter. Through the favour of the night, Zedekiah and his friends * endeavoured to make their

† This charitable intercessor for the prophet in his distress, is, in the text, said to have been an Ethiopian; accordingly Hueius (in his treatise *De navigatione Solomonis*, cap. vii.) observes from Josephus, that Solomon, in his voyage to Tarshish, (1 Kings x. 22.), amongst other merchandize, brought slaves from Ethiopia, which was likewise the practise of the Greeks and Romans in after-ages, as he there proves by several testimonies: And such an one he supposes this Ebed-Melech to have been originally, though afterwards he was promoted to be an eunuch, or chief officer of the king's house; *Lowth's Commentary* on Jer. xxxviii.

(1) Lament. iv. 4, 5; and Ezek. v. 10.

* It is a hard matter to conceive how the besieged could make their escape, seeing that the Chaldeans had begirt the city round about. Josephus indeed gives us this account. — “ That as the
 “ city was taken about midnight, the captains, with the rest of the
 “ soldiers, went directly into the temple; which King Zedekiah
 “ perceiving,

their escape towards the wilderness; but he had not gone far, before he was taken, and carried to Nebuchadnezzar, who was then at Riblah †, where, after some severe reproaches *, he first caused his sons, and the princes of Judah

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“perceiving, he took his wives, children, commanders, and friends, “and they slept all away together, by a narrow passage, towards “the wilderness.” But then what this narrow passage was, is still the question. The Jews indeed think, that there was a subterraneous passage from the palace to the plains of Jericho, and that the king, and his courtiers, might endeavour to make their escape that way. Dion, it is true, tells us, lib. 66. that in the last siege of Jerusalem, the Jews had covert ways, which went under the walls of the city, to a considerable distance into the country, out of which they were wont to sally, and fall upon the Romans that were straggling from their camp: But since neither Josephus, nor the sacred historian, takes notice of any such subterraneous conduit at this siege, we may suppose, that the Chaldeans having made a breach in the wall, the besieged got away privately between the wall and the outworks, in a passage which the enemy did not suspect. The words in the second book of Kings are:—*They went by the way of the gate, between the two walls, which is by the king's garden*, chap. xxv. 4. which in Jeremiah are thus expressed:—*They went by the way of the king's garden, by the gate between the two walls*: So that as the king's garden faced the country, very likely there was some very private and imperceptible gate, through which they might attempt to escape, and the besiegers perhaps might not keep so strict a watch at that part of the town, (especially in the hurry of storming it), because it led to the plain, and made their escape in a manner impracticable; *Jewish Hist. lib. 10. c. 11.*; *Patrick's, Le Clerc's, and Calmet's Commentaries*.

† Riblah was a city of Syria, in the country of Hamah, which country is the nearest to Judea, and which city, according to St. Jerom, was the same with that which was afterwards called *Antioch*; and as it was the most pleasant place in all Syria, here Nebuchadnezzar lay, to attend the success of the siege of Jerusalem, to send his army proper supplies, and to intercept any relief that might come to the besieged; *Patrick's Commentary*.

* Nebuchadnezzar no sooner cast his eye upon him, says Josephus, (*Jewish Antiq. lib. x. c. 11.*), but he called him all the faithless and perfidious names that he could think of. “Did you “not promise me to manage the power and authority that I put “you in possession of, for my advantage and behoof? And am “not I well requited, do you think, for making you a king in your “brother Jehoiakim's place, by your employing of the credit and

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The city
and temple
plundered
and burnt;
the nobles
and great
men execu-
ted, but Je-
remiah the
prophet
preserved,
and hon-
ourably
treated.

Judah taken with him, to be slain before his face, and then command his eyes || to be put out, and himself to be bound in fetters of brass, to be sent to Babylon, and put in prison for life, to the full accomplishment of * what the two prophets, Jeremiah and Ezekiel, had foretold concerning him.

As soon as Nebuchadnezzar had advice of the taking of Jerusalem, he sent Nebuzaradan, the captain of his guards, with orders to raze the place, plunder the temple, and carry the people that were left captives to Babylon; which he failed not to execute with the utmost rigour and cruelty.

“ interest that I gave you, to the ruin of your patron and benefactor? But that God is great and just, who, for the punishment of your treachery and ingratitude, hath now made you my prisoner.” But there is a mistake in this speech of Nebuchadnezzar’s, viz. his making Zedekiah succeed his brother Jehoiakim, whereas he was put in the place of his nephew Jehoiachin; but his nephew’s reign was so very short, (little more than three months), that this imperious monarch might look upon it as nothing at all.

|| Josephus takes notice, that the seeming contradiction in the prophecies of Ezekiel and Jeremiah, concerning the fate of Zedekiah, made that prince give no heed to what was foretold: Ezekiel’s prophecy is delivered in these words:—*I will bring him to Babylon, to the land of the Chaldeans, yet shall he not see it, tho’ he die there*, chap. xii. 13.; and Jeremiah’s words in these:—*He shall be delivered into the hands of the king of Babylon, and shall speak with him mouth to mouth, and his eyes shall behold his eyes*, chap. xxxii. 4. both of which were literally accomplished: for Zedekiah was carried to Riblah, where he saw the king of Babylon, and spake to him, and beheld his children executed; but had afterwards his eyes put out, and was then carried to Babylon, where he was incapable of seeing the city, because he had lost his eyesight; *Jewish Antiq. lib. x. c. 11.*; *Calmet’s and Patrick’s Commentaries*.

* The reflection which Josephus makes upon this occasion is very good and moral:—“ This may serve to convince even the ignorant,” says he, “ of the power and wisdom of God, and of the constancy of his counsels, through all the various ways of his operations. It may likewise shew us, that God’s foreknowledge of things is certain, and his providence regular in the ordering of events; besides that, it holds forth a most exemplary instance of the danger of our giving way to the motions of sin and infidelity, which deprive us of the means of discerning God’s judgments, which are ready to fall upon us;” *Jewish Antiq. lib. x. c. 11.*

For,

For, having taken all the vessels out of the house of the Lord, and gathered together all the riches that he could find, either in the king's palace, or in any great mens houses, he * set both the temple and city on fire, and overthrew all the walls, fortresses, and towers thereunto belonging, until he had brought the whole to a perfect desolation : and upon these two sad occasions, viz. the taking of the city, and the destruction of the temple, the prophet Jeremiah composed a mournful poem, which is called his *Lamentations* †, and the Jews observe two annual fasts, the one in the fourth month, which falls in with our June, and the other in the fifth month, which answers part of our July, even to this day.

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Having thus destroyed the city and temple, Nebuzaradan made all the people that he found in the place captives. Some of the chief of these, such as Seraiah the high-priest, Zephaniah

* The temple was burnt, from the time that it was built, four hundred years, says Sir John Marsham ; four hundred and twenty-four years three months and eight days, says Primate Usher ; four hundred and thirty years, says Abarbinel, and other learned Jews : but Josephus computes the thing still higher ; for he tells us, that temple was burnt four hundred and seventy years six months and ten days, from the building of it ; one thousand and sixty years six months and ten days, from the Israelites coming out of the land of Egypt ; one thousand nine hundred and fifty years six months and ten days from the deluge ; and three thousand five hundred and thirty years six months and ten days from the creation of the world. Josephus stands amazed, that the second temple should be burnt by the Romans in the same month, and on the very same day of the month, that this was set on fire by the Chaldeans, and as some of the Jewish doctors say, when the Levites were singing the same psalm in both destructions, viz. xciv. 23, *He shall bring upon them their own iniquity, and he shall cut them off in their own wickedness ; yea, the Lord our God shall cut them off ;* Patrick's Commentary ; and Jewish Antiq. lib. x. c. 11.

† The Hebrews call this book *Echa* (*how*) from the first word in the text, *How does the city sit*, &c. or *Kinnoth*, which signifies *lamentations*, and the Greeks call it *θῆνοις*, a word of the like import. In the two first chapters, the author is employed in describing the calamities of the siege of Jerusalem ; in the third, he deplores the persecutions which himself had suffered ; in the fourth, he bemoans the fate of the city and temple, and Zedekiah's sad misfortune ; and, in the fifth, he addresses his

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Zephaniah † the second priest, and about seventy others, he carried to Riblah, where Nebuchadnezzar † caused them all to be put to death. The poorer and labouring part of the people, such as could till the ground, and dress the vineyards, he left behind him, and made Gedaliah † their governor; but as for all the rest, he carried them directly away to Babylon; only Jeremiah (of whom Nebuchadnezzar had given him charge to take particular care) he not only took out of prison when he first came to Jerusalem, but as the rest were upon their departure, gave him his op-

prayer to God in behalf of his brethren the Jews, under their dispersion and captivity. The whole is wrote in a very lively, tender, and pathetic style, and all the chapters, except the last, (which seems to have been of later composition than the rest), are in acrostic verse, *i. e.* every line or couplet begins in an alphabetical order, with some letter in the Hebrew alphabet. In the third chapter, each letter is successively thrice repeated; but in the second, third, and fourth chapters, there is this thing peculiar, *viz.* that the letter *Pe* is set before *Ain*; whereas, in the first chapter, as well as in all the acrostic psalms, *Ain* is continually first; but the reason of this is hard to tell: for what some advance, *viz.* that as the letter *Ain* signifies *seventy*, the transposition seems to denote the confusion which the prophet was in, when he considered that this captivity was to last *seventy years*; this has too great an air of a fiction in it; *Bedford's Scripture-chronology*, lib. vi. c. 3.; and *Calmet's Dictionary*, under the word *Lamentations*.

† The Jews call their second priest their *Sagan*, whose business it was to supply the function of the high-priest, in case he was sick, or any other incapacity attended him. We find no such particular institution under the law; but Eleazar, the son of Aaron, who is styled *the chief over the chief of the Levites*, and *who had the oversight of them who kept the charge of the sanctuary*, Numb. iii. 32. and whose authority was not much inferior to that of the high-priest, may (not improperly) be deemed one of that order; *Calmet's Commentary*.

† Because, very probably, he looked upon them as the king's principal counsellors, who advised him to rebel against him; *Patrick's Commentary*.

† Gedaliah, we understand, was the son of Ahikam, Jeremiah's great friend; and it is not unlikely, that, by the prophet's advice, who exhorted all, both king and people, to surrender themselves to the Assyrians, Jer. xxxviii. 5, 17. he made his escape from the city, and went over to the king of Babylon, and for this reason was promoted to the government of Judea; *Calmet's and Patrick's Commentaries*.

tion,

tion, whether he would go with him to Babylon, where he should be maintained very plentifully at the king's charge, or else remain in the country; and when the prophet had chose the latter, he dismissed him honourably, with an handsome present, and with letters of recommendation to the governour Gedaliah, wherein he gave him a strict charge to take particular care of him.

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The O B J E C T I O N.

“ **B**UT how careful soever the Babylonians might be of the prophet Jeremiah, because they might suppose that his predictions had done them service; yet certainly they would have entertained no great opinion, either of him or them, had they been informed, in what a wild and frantic manner, both he, and some other prophets, were accustomed to deliver them. For, (*m*) what can we say less, of his making (*n*) bonds and yokes to put upon his own neck, and to send to several kings, neighbouring upon Judea, by the hands of their ambassadors then residing in Jerusalem, to put them in mind of their future captivity to the king of Babylon? A notable present for any great minister to make to his prince, upon his return from abroad! (*o*) What can we say less, of (*p*) his taking a journey, at two several times, from Jerusalem, to the river Euphrates, of about five hundred and fifty miles, merely to hide his girdle in the hole of the rock, that, when he fetched it again, he might find it all mouldered and tattered, and, upon that presumption, have it to say to his countrymen, that (*q*) *God would in like manner, mar the pride of Judah, and the great pride of Jerusalem?*

“ (*r*) What can we say less of his brother Ezekiel's drawing figures upon a slate, (the common amusement of fools and children), and (*s*) pourtraying Jerusalem, with a fort, and mount, and camp, and battering-rams, and an iron-pot, to represent its walls; and all this, for a sign to the people, that their city, in like manner, should be besieged? What less, of (*t*) his shaving his head and beard, (which was contrary to the law), his

(*m*) Christianity as old as the creation, p. 250. (*n*) Jer. xxvii. 2, 3. (*o*) Christianity, *ibid.* p. 255. (*p*) Jer. xiii. 1. (*q*) *Ibid.* ver. 9. (*r*) Christianity, *ibid.* 255. (*s*) Ezek. iv. 1. (*t*) *Ibid.* v. 1.

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“ dividing and burning his hair, and his (u) baking his bread with human dung, to prefigure the fore famine that would fall upon them in the siege? (x) What less, of his digging through the wall of his house to bear off his goods at noon day, packing them up, and carrying them upon his shoulders, from place to place, to denote the suddenness of their flight from the vanquished city? What less, of his lying three hundred and ninety days on his left, and forty days on his right side, without being once allowed to turn himself, to signify the continuation of Israel's and Judah's captivity?

“ These are actions. one would think, unbecoming the wisdom of God to enjoin, or the gravity of his prophets to perform; and yet (y) there is something more absurd and indecent in requiring Hosea (z) to marry a known whore, that he might (with a better grace) upbraid the people with their apostasy; and (a) Isaiah, to go three years together naked. to exemplify the captivity of the Egyptians, when the Assyrians should lead them away prisoners, young and old, naked and barefoot, even with their buttocks uncovered, to the shame of Egypt, as the prophet expresses it. But allowing that prophets were persons extraordinary, and that great allowances should be given to their actions, yet what shall we say to the history of Judith?

“ (b) It speaks of Nabuchodonosor as king of Assyria; whereas all history makes mention of none under that name, but only of the king of Babylon. It speaks of Arphaxad as the first builder of Ecbatana; whereas Herodotus expressly tells us, that Dejoces was the founder of that fair city. It makes Arphaxad to be vanquished and slain by Nabuchodonosor; whereas the same historian assures us, that, after a long and prosperous reign, he died in peace. It speaks of Joakim as high-priest at this time; and yet it is certain, that there was no person of that order so named before the captivity. It places the chief management of public affairs in his hands; and yet it is evident, that, whether we suppose that this happened in Manasseh's, or in Zedekiah's reign, the whole administration was in the power of the king. It represents Holofernes, as behaving rather like a Persian, than

(u) Ibid. iv. 12. (x) Ibid. xii. 3. &c. (y) Christianity as old as the creation, p. 256, (z) Chap. i. 2. (a) Chap. xx. 3, 4. (b) Calmet's Preface sur le livre de Judith.

“ a Chaldean ; and yet the name of the Persians was hard-
 “ ly known in the days of Nabuchodonosor. It gives him
 “ the honour of conquering more provinces in the space
 “ of three months, than another general would have
 “ marched through in that time ; and yet it leaves upon
 “ him the disgrace of having the career of his conquests
 “ stopped by the little town of Bethulia.

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“ How the Bethulians durst adventure to oppose so suc-
 “ cessful a conqueror, or how one single woman could take
 “ it in her head, to rescue her country from so formidable
 “ an enemy, it is hard to conceive ; but certainly the author
 “ of the history does not his heroine justice, to make her act
 “ and talk in a manner not so well comporting with all the
 “ sense of virtue and religion (c) which she pretends to have.
 “ For, to say nothing of the base and perfidious murder
 “ which she commits ; when he puts in her mouth so ma-
 “ ny lies and prevarications ; when he represents her as a
 “ woman void of modesty, who endeavoured to ensnare
 “ Holofernes in a sinful passion, and answered to the decla-
 “ rations of that passion with too little modesty and re-
 “ serve ; when, (d) in her prayer to God, he introduces
 “ her as commending Simeon’s cruel perfidy to the Sechem-
 “ ites, (e) (though the patriarch Jacob held it in detesta-
 “ tion), as requesting, that the (f) deceit of her lips might
 “ be successful to the accomplishment of her bloody design ;
 “ as declaring, that her design, in deserting the city (g)
 “ was purely to deliver it up to the general, without so
 “ much as the loss of one man ; and as replying to the sug-
 “ gestions of the eunuch, in favour of his master’s lust, (h)
 “ *Who am I that I should gainsay my lord ? surely whatsoever*
 “ *pleaseth him, will I do speedily :* When we find him pro-
 “ ceeding at this strange and incongruous rate, I say, we
 “ cannot but agree with the learned Grotius, that the whole
 “ is a parabolical fiction, written in the time of Antiochus
 “ Epiphanes, when he came into Judea to raise a persecution
 “ against the Jewish church ; and that the design of it was
 “ under that persecution, to confirm them in their hopes
 “ of some speedy and wonderful deliverance ; that accord-
 “ ingly, by Judith is meant *Judea*, which is called a *wi-*
 “ *dow*, because she was destitute of relief ; by *Bethulia*, the
 “ *temple of God* ; by *Nabuchodonosor*, the *devil* ; by *Holofer-*

(c) Judith xi. 17. (d) Ibid. ix. 2. (e) Gen. xxxiv.
 (f) Judith ix. 10. (g) Chap. x. 13. (h) Chap. xii. 14.

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Answered,
by showing
the truth,
though not
divine au-
thority, of
the book of
Judith.

“ *nes*, the instrument of the devil in that persecution, viz.
“ Antiochus Epiphanes ; and by *Judith's word*, the prayers
“ of the saints which prevailed with God for their deliver-
“ ance.”

We who have not received the book of Judith in our canon of Scripture, are not under the like necessity of vindicating its divine inspiration and authority, as are they who, (i) by a public act of council, have thought proper to admit it; but still we see no reason why we should recede from the opinion of the ancients, merely because some modern commentators (who, by the same freak of fancy, might have turned the plainest narrative in Scripture into an allegory) have adventured to call it a Parable. Mysteries, indeed, may be made of any thing, and, in a pregnant brain, fit allusions will never be wanting, when once a full scope is given to the imagination, and a writer is permitted to invent what he pleases : but it would be madness, to give up the truth of historical facts, merely because the man has ingenuity enough to apply them to a foreign purpose, especially when, upon examination, we find, that there are sufficient proofs and testimonies of their reality, and no insuperable objections to the contrary.

Let us suppose, then, that the events contained in this history happened before the Babylonish captivity, and in the reign of Manasseh king of Judah ; that Nabuchodonosor in Judith was the same with Saosduchinus in Ptolemy who reigned over the Assyrians and Chaldeans, having subdued Esarhaddon king of Assyria ; that Arphaxad is the same with Phraortes, mentioned in Herodotus, and that these two kings waged war with each other ; that Saosduchinus having overcome Arphaxad, resolved to reduce all the nations spoken of in Judith under his dominion, and, to that purpose, sent Holofernes at the head of his forces, to subdue those countries that would not submit ; that, at this time, Manasseh, who had been a little before delivered from the captivity in which he had been carried to Babylon, dwelt at Jerusalem, concerning himself but little with the government, and leaving the care of public affairs to Joakim the high-priest ; that the inhabitants of Bethulia resolved by God's assistance, to preserve their religion and liberties, and, accordingly, shut their gates against Holofernes ; and that Judith, a woman of great courage and conduct, seeing the extremity to which the city was re-

(i) Concil. Trid. sess. 4.

duced,

duced, undertook to destroy Holofernes, and, in her attempt, succeeded. Supposing all this, I say, (and this is the substance of the whole), where do we find any thing contrary to the rules either of history or chronology?

The war, we suppose, commenced between Nabuchodonosor and Arphaxad, in the year of the world 3347; the expedition and death of Holofernes were both in the next year 3348; Manasseh was taken and carried to Babylon 3349; he returned some years after, and died 3361; So that here we find a proper space for the things related in this history to be transacted; and that they were really thus transacted, we have the concurring testimony both of the Jewish and Christian church, who, though they deny the book a place in the number of their sacred and divine writings, yet did always esteem it as one of their apocryphal pieces, and a true and incontestable history, well contrived for the edification of the vulgar, though not of authority enough to determine any controversy in matters of religion.

(k) Josephus indeed makes no mention either of the book of Judith, or of her famous exploit in killing Holofernes; but his silence is no argument against what we assert, because he nowhere professes to take notice of every thing that occurred in the Jewish republic; on the contrary, (l) he openly declares, that his purpose was to relate only such things as were recorded in books which were originally written in Hebrew, and declared canonical, which that of Judith never was.

It is some confirmation of its genuineness, however, that, in writings which are of undoubted authority, we meet with some citations out of it; and therefore when we find St. Luke, in Elizabeth's salutation of the Virgin Mary, using the words, — (m) *Blessed art thou among women*, which are manifestly taken from the compliment which Ozias makes Judith, (n) *Blessed art thou of the Most High God, above all the women upon earth*; and St. Paul, in his exhortation to the Corinthians, using these, — (o) *Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer*, which he certainly borrows from the tenth chapter of Judith, according to the Greek interpretation; we cannot forbear concluding, that, in the

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3394, etc.
Ant. Christ.
610, etc.
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(k) Huetius's Demonst. propof. 4. (l) Jewish Antiq. lib. x. c. 11. (m) Luke i. 42. (n) Judith xiii. 18. (o) 1 Cor. x. 10.
VOL. IV. C c apostolic

A. M. 3394, &c. Ant. Christ. 610, &c. apostolic age, this book was looked upon as a piece of true and uncontroverted history.

Difficulties, indeed, there will occur in relation to names, dates, and other particulars, almost in all histories, and especially in the oriental (*p*), when we shall find, not only in writers of different characters, the Greek and Hebrew, the sacred and profane, but even in writers of the same nation, the same person under different appellations. Though, therefore, in strictness of speech, it may be accounted an error in history to call the king of Nineveh by the name of *Nabuchodonosor*; yet, as it was the style and manner of the Jews to denote any prince who lived beyond the Euphrates by that name, we need not wonder, that we find an author, who lived in an age when the fame and reputation of Nabuchodonosor the Great had quite eclipsed the name of all his predecessors, calling another prince, who lived at a far distance, *i. e.* Saosduchinus the king of Assyria, by the name of the king of Babylon, which perhaps, at that time, might be the standing name of every great and distant monarch.

Why Arphaxad may be said to have built Nineveh.

Nor is there any great trespass against the truth of history (*q*) in this author's asserting, that Arphaxad built the walls, the towers, and the gates of Ecbatana; since by *Arphaxad* he does not mean the *Dejoces* in Herodotus, but his son Phraortes, who succeeded him in the kingdom of Media: For, that he must mean so, is plain, because he gives us to understand, that this Arphaxad was defeated, and (*r*) himself slain by the Assyrian archers, which even Herodotus (*s*) himself makes to be the fate, not of Dejoces the father, but of his son Phraortes, who, having subdued the Persians, (as he tells us), and made himself master of almost all Asia, was not content therewith, but coming at last to attack Nineveh and the Assyrian empire, was overcome, and killed in the bold attempt.

His father indeed might lay the foundation of Ecbatana, and, during his lifetime, carry on the building; but a work of this kind is not so soon effected, but that he might leave the completion of it to his son, who, being a prince of a warlike spirit, and having many forces under his command, is therefore, in the book of Judith, not improperly said to have made the gates of this royal city (*t*) in

(*p*) Calmet's Preface sur le livre de Judith. (*q*) Judith i. 2, &c. (*r*) Ibid. ver. 15. (*s*) Lib. i. c. 97. (*t*) Judith i. 4.

height seventy cubits, and in breadth forty cubits, for the going forth of his mighty armies, and for the setting in array of his footmen.

Whoever looks into the order and succession of the Jewish high-priests, as we have them delivered to us in the first book of Chronicles (u) in the books of Ezra (x) Nehemiah (y), and in the history of Josephus (z), will find them so intricate and perplexed, so many omissions and mislocations, such a diversity of names and numbers, and such seeming contrariety in the several accounts, as will cost him no small pains to reduce them to any tolerable regularity. The reason is, because the Scripture no where professes to give an exact catalogue of all such as had been admitted to that office and dignity until the captivity.

That in the book of Chronicles seems to bid fairest for it: But, upon examination, it will appear (a) to be only a direct lineal descent of the pontifical family, from Aaron to Jesodak the son of Seraiah, who was high-priest at the captivity; and not a succession of such as had born the pontifical office, because several in that pedigree are inserted that were never high-priests †, and several are omitted that were. The pedigrees of the high-priests in Ezra and Nehemiah are but imperfect parts of that which we have in the book of Chronicles; and as for the Catalogue of Josephus, it is so corrupted, that scarce five of the names in it do agree with any thing that we have in Scripture: So that, considering the defect of these accounts, we may be allowed to infer, that Joakim or Eliakim (for they are names both of the same import) might have been high-priest in the time of Manasseh; even though we should suppose, that there was no mention made of him as such, either in the Holy Scriptures, or in the history of Josephus.

(u) Chap. vi. 3, &c. (x) Chap. ii. 36, &c. (y) Chap. vii. 39. (z) Lib. viii. c. 15. (a) Prideaux's Connection, anno 655.

† The high-priests of the family of Eli are instances of the latter; for they are left out of that pedigree, though they were high-priests: And those of the true race, who were excluded by them, are instances of the former; for they are in it, though they were never high-priests: And it is very likely, that, from the time of Solomon to the captivity, many more such instances might have happened, to hinder that pedigree from being an exact catalogue of the high-priests; *Prideaux's Connection, anno 655.*

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The succeſſion of the high-prieſts is ſo imperfectly recorded, that Joakim's might be omitted;

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of 2 Chron.
tho' there
is reason to
think that
he is not;
and why he
only might
be men-
tioned.

(b) The Scripture, however, takes notice of one Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, whom (according to the prophet (c) Isaiah) God promised *to clothe with a robe, and to strengthen with a girdle*, i. e. to invest with the pontifical habit and office; and therefore, his being *a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and to the house of Judah, and his having the key of the house of David laid upon his shoulder*; so, *he should open, and none should shut, and he should shut and none should open*, does very well agree with the part which Joakim is said to have acted in the book of Judith. For though the supreme power was doubtless in Manasseh, yet, since his return from the captivity, having either sequestered himself from public business, or, (d) being engaged in the defence of his country in some other place, he might intrust the management of his affairs in Jerusalem to the high-priest, who, having such an amplitude of power, and acting as chief minister in that place, might be well enough mentioned in this transaction of Judith, and (e) in the deputation of the elders from Jerusalem to thank her for it, without naming his master at all.

Holofer-
nes's acting
like a Per-
sian.

What the manners and customs of the Persians were, we may in some measure learn from the Greek historians, who, upon the dissolution of that monarchy by the conquest of Alexander, were obliged to say something of a people whom they succeeded in the dominion of the East; but, as these historians did not write till after the kingdom of Persia was destroyed, they have taken little or no notice of other Oriental nations; and therefore, what affinity there might be in their manners and usages, we cannot tell; and (f) consequently must not blame the author of the book of Judith, for making Holofernes act out of character, (as we think), unless we know how far the customs of the Assyrians and Persians did conform or disagree.

The rapi-
dity of his
conquests,
and being
stopt at Be-
thulia, ac-
counted for.

Herein, however, we know, that all Oriental nations were unanimous, *viz.* in affecting pomp and grandeur; and therefore (whether it was a Persian custom or no) we need not wonder, that we find Holofernes, the captain-general of the Assyrian army, (g) *resting upon his bed*,

(b) Calmet's Differt. sur l'ordre et la succession, &c. (c) Chap. xxii. 21, 22. (d) Prideaux's Connection, anno 655. (e) Judith. (f) Judith xv. 8. (g) Calmet's Preface sur le livre de Judith. (g) Judith x. 21, 22.

under

under a canopy, which was woven with purple, and gold, and emeralds, and precious stones; and, when Judith was introduced, coming out before his tent, † with silver lamps going before him. We need not wonder at the rapidity of his conquest, since, doubtless, he had several lieutenant-generals under him, who, with strong detachments from the grand army, might, in separate bodies, invade all the provinces which the historian mentions; and, since he no where met with any opposition until he came into Palestine, but expected a great deal in Egypt, he thought it adviseable to halt, for some time, in the neighbourhood of Bethulia, and to put his men into quarters of refreshment, until the forces which he had detached upon sundry expeditions were come up, and had joined him. And for this reason he was not so eager to press the siege of Bethulia, that he might not harass and fatigue his men in fighting against rocks and inaccessible mountains, but preserve them fresh and unfoiled, for their great and more important expedition against Egypt.

The truth is, the king of Nineveh was resolved not only to subdue the several nations from the Euphrates to Ethiopia, but intended likewise to oblige them all to (b) adore and acknowledge him only to be God *; and therefore the Bethulians,

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Why the  
Bethulians  
and Judith  
durst venture  
to oppose him.

† Holofernes may be thought, in this piece of state, to imitate the custom of the Persians, among whom it was usual to carry fire before their kings, as it was afterward done before the Roman emperors, and is at present before the emperor of the Turks; but the reason of this might be no more, than either that Judith and her maid were apprehended, and brought to Holofernes, before it was quite day, or that the inner apartment of his tent was so very dark, that he had lights continually burning in it; *Calmet's Commentary* on Judith x. 22.

(b) Judith vi. 2.

\* How great soever the folly and impiety was in desiring to pass for a god, yet the king of Nineveh was not the only prince that we find infected with it. The flatterers of Nebuchadnezzar the Great proposed to him to make a decree, that, under pain of being cast into the den of lions, no one should dare to ask a petition of any god or man, but of him only, for the space of thirty days, Dan. vi. 7. When Alexander the Great took it in his head to exact the same divine honours of his people, that they had formerly paid to the kings of Persia his predecessors, he found people about him base and prostitute enough to commend the design, and to maintain, that thus to advance kings  
above

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3394, &c.  
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Bethulians, who could not, without impiety, and a renunciation of their religion, submit to the dominion of such a king, had reason to promise themselves the assistance of God, in the prosecution of this war : And Judith, who found herself under a divine and irresistible impulse to go upon so adventurous an exploit, had good reason to hope for success against a prince, who had declared himself an enemy to the God of heaven, and an usurper of that honour and adoration which belonged to him alone.

Why the  
might justly  
slay him,

(i) *If thy brother, the son of thy mother, or thy son, or thy daughter, or the wife of thy bosom, or thy friend which is as thine own soul, entice thee secretly, saying, Let us serve other gods, which thou hast not known, thou, nor thy fathers—Thou shalt not consent unto him, nor hearken unto him, neither shalt thine eye pity him, neither shalt thou spare, neither shalt thou conceal him, but thou shalt surely kill him : And, in pursuance of this law, much more might Judith, or any other inhabitant of Bethulia, whom God had inspired with the like courage and magnanimity, endeavour to counterplot the designs of any person, who, in an hostile manner, should come, not only to invade their civil rights and liberties, but to extirpate their religion; and, instead of enticing, to compel them, by force of arms, to receive a form of idolatry which neither they nor their fathers knew.*

tho' her  
conduct in  
this affair  
is not to be  
entirely ju-  
stified.

Many things may be alleged against Judith's method of proceeding in this affair, but they are most of them reducible to the common stratagems of war, which not only the law of arms, but the commands of God, in some

above the rank of mortal men, was not only a pious, but a prudent and advantageous thing; for so the historian expresses it: *Persas non tantum piè, sed etiam prudenter, reges suos inter deos colere; majestatem enim imperii salutis esse tutelam*, Quint. Curt. lib. 8. The Egyptians had their princes in the like veneration, and looked upon them as highly raised above the condition of other men: But the Grecians, it must be owned, had all this baseness and abject flattery in a just detestation, insomuch that the Athenians put Timagoras to death, for having prostrated himself before the king of the Persians; and Sperchius and Bulis, two Lacedemonians, though then in a state of captivity, could not be brought to pay that adoration to Artaxerxes, which he required of every one that approached him; *Plut. in Artax.*

(i) Deut. xiii. 6, &c.

cases,

cases, and the examples of several of the best men in sacred history, have declared to be allowable. What comes not under this denomination, we shall not pretend to vindicate; (*k*) for the notion of mental reservations and ironical speeches, which are not allowed in common conversation, are but the poor subterfuges which commentators have used to apologize for the conduct that they can by no means justify.

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The history, indeed, represents this Judith as a woman of great courage; but it no where intimates, that she was without faults. The manner of her preparation for the undertaking, and the success wherewith it was attended, may make us presume that its design was originally from God; but then the continued train of falsehood and dissimulation wherewith it was carried on, must needs persuade us, that the means of conducting it was left to the woman, who, on this occasion, has given us a very remarkable specimen of the cunning and sagacity, the guile and artifice, of her sex.

One thing however may be said, and that without any forced explication in favour of her conduct: ——— That her answer to the eunuch's suggestion she might design for no more than a common compliment, which the situation of her affairs, at that time, obliged her to make. (*l*) She might perceive, very likely, the bad design which the Assyrian general had upon her; but she did not think herself concerned to discover that she perceived it. She pretended in some measure to be ignorant of it; and to pretend an ignorance in what is proposed, when the thing is naughty, and will not bear examination, is a point of modesty as well as prudence; as, where it will admit of a double construction, there to take it in the better sense, is even reputed an act of candour and good breeding. *Let not this fair damsel fear (says the old pander) to come to my Lord, and to be honoured in his presence, and drink wine, and be merry with us, and be made this day as one of the daughters of the Assyrians, who serve in the house of Nabuchodonosor.* How the daughters of Assyria, who served in this capacity, were used, Judith very probably had been informed; but, since the eunuch seemed to put it on the foot of a great favour and dignation done her, she could not do less than return

Her answer  
to the eu-  
nuch in  
some mea-  
sure just-  
ified.

(*k*) Calmet's Commentary on Judith x. 13. (*l*) Calmet's Preface sur le livre de Judith.



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him a compliment: But then we all know, (*m*) that the offers of service, which, upon every occasion, we are so apt to make to one another, and those expressions of submission and respect which so commonly pass among us, are not to be taken in a literal sense, because they always imply a tacit condition: And therefore the answer which the historian puts in Judith's mouth, *Surely whatever pleaseth him, I will do speedily*, will fairly admit of this construction, "Whatever Holofernes shall desire of me, 'so far as it is consistent with my duty, my honour, and my religion, 'I will not fail to do."

Why some  
things in  
this book  
cannot be  
accounted  
for.

Thus we have endeavoured to satisfy most of the popular objections, and to reconcile most of the seeming inconsistencies, that occur in the history of Judith; and if there still remain any that cannot sufficiently be cleared up, they ought in justice to be imputed to our ignorance and want of better information. Had we the ancient books of the chronicles of the kings of Israel and Judah, (to which we are so often referred in Scripture), or had we the histories of the Assyrians, Chaldeans, Medes, Persians, and Egyptians, (with whom the Jewish nation had so long an intercourse), perfect and entire, it is not to be doubted, but that many of the difficulties which at present seem unfurmountable, would then easily subside and sink into nothing. The plain truth is, "There was scarce ever an history written, (according to our learned Prideaux's (*n*) observation), but what in the very next age will seem to have inconsistencies enough in it as to time, place, and other circumstances, when the memory of men concerning them begins to fail; and therefore we may be much more apt to blunder, when we take our view at the distance of above two thousand years, and have no other light to direct us to our object, but such glimmerings from broken scraps of history, as are in effect next to nothing."

The pro-  
phets way  
of writing  
thought  
proper in  
their days.

The like is to be said of the several seeming absurdities that may be observed in the writing and behaviour of the prophets: ——— That were we sufficiently acquainted with the style and manner of writing that was in use in those days, and especially in the Eastern countries, we should think it no strange thing to find them expressing themselves by types and figures, parabolical representa-

(*m*) Calmet's Preface sur le livre de Judith.  
nécession, anno 655.

(*n*) Con-  
nections,

tions, and emblematical actions. For, however it comes about, so it is, that mankind have all along been marvel-  
lously taken with story and picture. (o) These excite the curiosity of our nature: they tempt us to learn, help us to remember, and convey instruction to the mind, in a more pleasing and effectual manner than plain documents can: And hence it came to pass, that a great part of the learning of the wise men of the east consisted in (p) *prophecies, in subtle and dark parables, and in the secrets of grave sentences*, as the author of the book of Ecclesiasticus has branched it out; for (q) *to understand a proverb, and the interpretation; the words of the wise, and their dark sayings*, was the very best description that Solomon himself could give of wisdom. (r) Among the ancients, indeed, mythology was in the highest esteem. The Egyptians, who were in great reputation for learning, delivered their notions in hieroglyphics; and from them the Grecians took the mode of couching their meaning in fable. Hesiod (s), who contends with Homer for antiquity, is supposed by Quintilian to be the author of the fables which go under the name of Æsop; but, however this be, the very supposition of his being so, makes it probable that he did write fables, as, perhaps, most men of learning and note in those days accustomed themselves to this form of writing.

(t) But, besides this parabolical way of writing which was in great vogue among the ancients, and to which the Jews, by a kind of natural genius, were wonderfully inclined, the people of the East had a way of expressing themselves by actions as well as words, and, to enforce the matter they were upon, would frequently make use of outward and visible signs and representations. (u) This, our learned Mr. Mede shews, was the practice of the Indians, Persians, and Egyptians; and, even among the Romans, (who were a people that used great modesty of style, and more gravity in their actions, than many other nations), it was a customary thing in their orations and pleadings, to use all arts to raise the passions, by actions and representations as well as words; inasmuch, (x) that

(o) Reeve's Sermons. (p) Ecclus. xxxix. 1. &c.  
(q) Prov. i. 6. (r) Jenkins's Reasonableness of Christianity, vol. ii. c. 6. (s) Quintil. Instit. lib. v. c. 11.  
(t) Lightfoot's Heb. and Talmud. exercit. in Matth. xiii. 3.  
(u) Comment. in Apocal. part. i. p. 470. (x) Cic. pro P. Sexto.

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they would frequently hang up the picture of the thing they were to speak to. Cicero tells us of himself, that he sometimes took up a child, and held it in his arms to move compassion; and to excite horror and indignation, nothing was more common than for the accusers to produce, in open court, a bloody sword, or the garments of the wounded; to shew the bones that had been taken out of the wound, or the scars that it had left behind it: *Quarum rerum ingens plerumque vis est*, (says (y) Quintilian), *veluti in rem presentem animos hominum ducentium*; for it can hardly otherwise happen, but that by this means they should fix the attention of their hearers, when, at one and the same time, they speak to their eyes and ears both.

The differ-  
ent ways of  
interpre-  
ting them.

From these few remarks, it appears in general, that the figurative expressions of the prophets, their actions, and types, and parables, were not incongruous to the customs of the times and places where they lived, and yet very proper means to give a lively and affecting representation of the message they had to deliver: And so proceed we to the passages which seem to give disgust.

To take several of these in their literal sense, would be an effectual way to disparage the divine precept, which, according to this acceptance, would put the prophet upon acting in a manner quite inconsistent with common prudence: And therefore interpreters are generally agreed, that the things of this kind, which will not come under a literal construction, were either transacted in vision, *i. e.* the prophet in a dream, or some other deliquium, imagined that he did such and such things, and then related them to the people; or that they were parables, which God dictated to the prophet, and the prophet recited to the people: Only it must be observed, (z) that the literal interpretation of a text always claims the preference, if there be not some weighty reason against it, or some intimation in the text itself, that the words are figurative and enigmatical.

Jeremiah's  
carrying the  
cup, and  
sending  
yokes, and  
carrying his  
girdle, ex-  
plained.

The prophet Jeremiah (a) is ordered by God, *to take the wine-cup of his fury at his hand, and to carry it up and down, far and near Jerusalem, and the cities of Judah, and the kings and princes thereof; to Pharaoh king of Egypt, and his servants, princes, and people; to all the Arabians, and kings of the land of Uz; to the kings of the land of the Philistines, Edom, Moab, and Ammon;*

(y) Instit. lib. v. c. i. (z) Scripture vindicated, part iii, p. 72. (a) Chap. xxv. 15, &c.

to the kings of Tyre and Zidon, and of the isles beyond the sea, <sup>A. M. 3394, &c.</sup> Dedan, Tema, and Buz; to the kings of Zimri, of the Medes, <sup>Ant. Christ. 610, &c.</sup> and Persians, and all the kings of the north. Now, since it was morally impossible for the prophet to visit all these kings and nations in person, and the nature of the thing would not admit of any real performance, it could be no otherwise done than in vision. *The cup of God's wrath*, is a common figure in Scripture, to denote the severity of his judgments; and therefore, when the prophet says, that *he took the cup at the Lord's hand, and made all the nations drink thereof*, he can mean no more, than that he prophesied against these several nations, and, by virtue of the spirit of foreknowledge which God had imparted to him, pronounced their doom. <sup>from 1 Kings viii. to the end of 2 Chron.</sup>

(b) In like manner, his sending yokes and bonds to several kings, whose ambassadors were then at Jerusalem, can hardly be understood in a sense altogether literal; because it is not probable, either that the ambassadors would take the yokes at his hands, or carry them to their respective masters; but then, as yokes and bonds are common figures in Scripture, to denote *captivity*, and the miseries that do attend it, his sending the yokes and bonds may signify no more, \* than his declaring from God the fate of these princes, when the king of Babylon was let loose upon them. Only it must be observed, that the prophet might really make some of these yokes and bonds (as the Scripture says expressly, that he put one upon himself) to enliven the idea, and make the impression of what he was to say more strong and emphatical. For these ornamental figures, and affecting images interspersed with it, added new force and dignity to the prophet's message, made it more awful and solemn in the delivery, and gave it the advantage of a deeper and more durable impression.

In like manner again, the whole affair of this prophet's girdle, his carrying it to the Euphrates, hiding it in a rock, and, at such a determinate time, going for it again, and

(b) Scripture vindicated, part iii. p. 88.

\* Potest enim phraseologia esse allegorica, Jeremiæ haud infueta, ita ut dimissio jugi et lorarum, per legatos sit regibus, per ipsorum legatos, significare servitutem hoc ipso signo ipsius portendi; cum præsertim vix credibile sit harum gentium legatos (qui et ipsi hariolorum blandities irritati erant, v. 9.) vel voluisse, vel ausos fuisse, juga a Jeremia oblata dominis suis perferre; *Henric. Michael Bib. Heb. in notis ad locum.*

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finding it quite rotten and spoiled, can hardly be taken in a literal sense; because the vast † distance of the place, and trivialness of the errand, as well as the impossibility of getting out of Jerusalem, if it was then invested by the Babylonians, make strongly against it; and, therefore, we may suppose, that all this was transacted in the prophet's imagination only; that, in the night-time, God sent upon him a vision, wherein all this series of things seemed to be performed by him, to imprint it the deeper upon his understanding, viz. that the kingdom of Judah, which was once as nearly united to God as the girdle is to a man's loins, should be utterly ruined and destroyed; and though the river Euphrates be at a wide distance from the prophet's place of abode, yet, in the vision, (which is never confined to places), it might be more aptly made choice of than any other, thereby to denote to the Jews, that over that river they were to be carried captive to the city of Babylon.

Several  
commands  
to Ezekiel  
never in-  
tended to be  
done.

The short of the matter is, — Several things which the prophets set down as matters of fact, might not be actually done, but only represented as done, to make the more lively impression upon their readers and hearers. Nay, there are several commands which God gives Ezekiel in particular, such as, his *lying for 390 days on one side*, (which was next to a thing impossible), his *baking his bread with man's dung*, (which was a thing unseemly), and his *shaving his head and beard*, (which, as he was a priest, (c) was a thing expressly forbidden him), that the prophet is never once said to have performed, nor were they indeed given him with an intent that he should perform them, but only relate them to the people, and so make them signs unto the house of Israel; i. e. either resemblances of things past, or prognostications of things to come.

St. Peter, we may observe, (d) was commanded, in his vision, to do what he never did; *Rise, Peter, kill and eat* :

† The learned Bochart has invented a new solution of this difficulty. He supposes, that as it is a common thing for the initial letter to be dropped, in the names of places and persons, the Hebrew word *Phrath* may be supposed to stand for *Eprath* or *Ephratah*, which is *Bethlehem*, about five or six miles distant from Jerusalem; by which means the prophet's journey is greatly shortened, and the pains of going thither once again is not much. But whether this solution (as ingenious as it is) will bear the test, is left to the examination of the critics; *Calmet's Commentary*, and *Scripture vindicated, in locum*.

(c) Levit. xxi. 5.

(d) Acts x. 13, 14.

Nay,

Nay, by his reply, it appears, that himself did not think that he was any wise bound to obey the command ; *Not so, Lord ; for I have never eaten any thing that is common or unclean.* And yet the use which he made of this vision was, to report it to the church as a sign or emblematical indication of God's having accepted the Gentiles into the gospel-terms of salvation. And, in like manner, when Ezekiel, in his vision, received the command of *shaving his head and his face*, his answer might have been in St. Peter's strain, *Not so, Lord ; for, by the law, I am forbidden to make baldness upon my head, or to shave off the corner of my beard ;* and yet he might relate this vision to the people, the better to enforce the threats which God had authorised him to denounce against Jerusalem : *(e) Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold I, even I am against thee, and will execute judgments in the midst of thee, in the sight of the nations ; and I will do in thee that which I have not done, and whereunto I will not do any more the like, because of all thy abominations.*

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In a word, the prophets, in their visions, might receive several commands concerning things illegal or indecent ; *(f)* but then they considered these not as formal commands, but as types, emblems, and predictions, delivered to them in a perceptive form, in order to imprint the things intended the deeper upon their minds, and to make the representation thereof to the people with whom they had to do more lively and affecting ; nor should it seem strange, that the divine wisdom, in this case, makes choice of things improper, and sometimes impracticable, since his purpose in so doing is to make the prophet perceive at once, that it was all symbolical, and not designed to direct him how and what to act, but how and what to apprehend, foresee, and foretell of things to come.

And why  
improper.

Whether the command given to Hosea, to marry a woman that either had been or would prove a prostitute, is to have a literal or figurative construction, commentators and critics, both ancient and modern, are not a little divided ; but since in the figurative there is no violence offered to Scripture, and in the literal there is nothing immoral or absurd, it matters not much in which sense we take it. In Scripture, it is a common thing to represent the defection

Hosea's  
marrying an  
adulteress,  
may be taken  
either  
figuratively  
or literally.

(e) Ezek. v. 8, 9. (f) Scripture vindicated, part iii. p. 94.

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of a people from the service of God, (g) by the metaphors of adultery and fornication; and therefore, to introduce the prophet as marrying a woman that proved an adulteress, as having several children by that marriage, and as calling these children by such names as denoted the destruction of a rebellious nation, is no bad manner of expressing the near relation between God and his people; his constant care in preserving and multiplying them; their vile ingratitude in revolting from him; and the great severity wherewith he intended to punish their revolt. Or take the words in a literal sense, and that the prophet was really commanded to marry a woman of a bad repute; yet might there not be many prudential considerations to make such a match eligible? The Scripture, we may observe, in the appellations which it gives persons and things, has less regard to what they actually are, than to what they once were; and hence it is, that Moses's rod, when turned into a serpent, (h) is still called his Rod; and those whom our Saviour healed of their several infirmities, are still the deaf (i); the lame, &c. even after they are cured. Now, if the woman whom Hosea was ordered to marry, (though once she had lived an incontinent life), was now become chaste and virtuous, where was the great absurdity of his actually doing it, since (besides other motives to us unknown), he was, in this action, to be a sign to the Israelites, and to set an example to them, *who had gone a-whoring after other gods* (k), that, if they would forsake their false deities, and return to their true God, the God of their fathers, he would still accept, and receive them, in the like manner as the prophet had taken an adulteress to his wife, upon assurance that ever, for the future, she would prove faithful to his bed?

Ezekiel's  
moving his  
goods and  
delineating  
the siege of  
Jerusalem.

The account of Ezekiel's packing up his household goods, removing them by night, and breaking through the walls of his house to carry them away more secretly, though some interpreters have looked upon it as the mere narration of a vision, or the recital of a parable, yet to me it seems more probable, that the whole was transacted just in the manner wherein it is described; especially considering the near resemblance between the prediction and the event.

(g) Levit. xvii. 7. Numb. xv. 29. Jer. iii. 1. Ezek. xvi. 15. — xxiii. 3, &c. (h) Exod. vii. 12. (i) Matth. xi. 5. and John ix. 17. (k) Jenkin's Reasonableness of Christianity, vol. ii. p. 53.

For

For after that the prophet, by the symbolical action of removing his goods in a fright, had typified the taking of Jerusalem, he proceeds to apply what he had done in this prediction. — (l) *I am your sign; like as I have done, so shall it be done unto them: they shall remove, and go into captivity; they shall dig through the wall to carry out thereby; and the prince that is among them shall bear upon his shoulder in the twilight, and shall go forth.* — My net also will I spread upon him, and he shall be taken in my snare; and I will scatter, toward every wind, all that are about him to help him, and all his bands. And accordingly the event happened; for (m) *when the city was broken up*, says the historian, *all the men of war fled by night, by the way of the gate, between two walls, which is by the king's gardens, (for the Chaldees were against the city round about), and the king went the way toward the plain. But the army of the Chaldees pursued after the king, and overtook him in the plains of Jericho, and all his army were scattered from him.*

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The like is to be said of the same prophet's being ordered by God to delineate upon a slate the city of Jerusalem, and the Babylonish camp investing it, viz. that the portrayal of the fort, the mount, the camp, and battering rams, against it, (n) are so very like to what happened at the siege, that we can hardly forbear presuming, that the whole narration is literal, or that the prophet did really draw a sketch of the siege of the city, as God commanded him. For since (as we observed before) it was a practice sometimes among the best of orators to represent, in a picture, the particular thing they were to speak to, thereby to gain the readier attention of their hearers, why should it be thought inconsistent with the character of a prophet, or any diminution of his discretion, or gravity, to do the same thing, in order to gain the same end?

His portraying the city in a siege,

To walk naked indeed for three years together, as the prophet Isaiah (o) is said to have done, does not so well comport with the rules of decency, and seems to carry in it an appearance of frenzy or madness; but we are to remember, that, in Scripture-phrases, those are said to go naked, who either go without (p) their upper garment, or without

and Isaiah's walking naked, to be taken literally.

(l) Ezek. xii. 11. &c. (m) 2 Kings xxv. 4. 5. (n) Josephus's Jewish Antiq. lib. x. c. 11. (o) Chap. xx. 3, 4. (p) John xxi. 7. Acts xix. 16. Mark xiv. 51. Matth. xxv. 36. the



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the (q) habit that is proper to their station or quality ; and that the Hebrew text does not say, that Isaiah walked in this manner for three years together, but that he thus walked as a type or sign of the three years calamity which would come upon Egypt and Ethiopia. So that the sense of the passage is this : — That Isaiah went about without his upper garment, in token that the Egyptians and Arabians should undergo a calamity of three years continuance from the king of Assyria ; but how long, or how often he did this, the Scripture is silent ; only it may be presumed, that he did it in such a manner (whether three days together, or thrice the same day) as might best prefigure the three years calamity : and since the action was to be typical, the prophet, who, through the iniquity of the times, could scarce gain the audience of the people at any rate, was to appear in an uncommon garb, and with something particular in his manner, to strike the eyes and awaken the observation of all around him : for, had not there been some visible impropriety in the action, something seemingly inconsistent with the character of so grave a man, it would not have answered the purpose of exciting the curiosity and attention of the people for which it was intended.

The sum of  
the whole.

Thus we have endeavoured to vindicate the actions of the prophets, or rather the wisdom of God which put them upon such actions, from all imputations of weakness and folly ; and shall only observe farther, that our misconceptions of these things must, in a great measure, proceed from our ignorance of the prophetic style, (says a learned examiner of this style) : “ (r) For all places of Scripture that “ are expressed in allegorical or proverbial forms of speech, “ or by types and resemblances of things, (as all prophecies “ more or less are), must needs have been better understood in those times, when they were written, than they “ can be now, because we have but an imperfect notion of “ many things to which the allusion is made, and from “ whence the similitude is taken.”

(q) 1 Sam. xix. 24. 2 Sam. vi. 20. (r) Jenkin's Reasonableness, vol. ii. c. 7.

DIS-

DISSERTATION V.

*Of the sacred Chronology, and profane History, during this Period.*

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THE particular differences, and seeming incongruities, in point of chronology, that have occurred in this period of history, we have endeavoured to solve and reconcile in the notes that are annexed to it: but there is a passage in the prophet Ezekiel, generally supposed to relate to this time, wherein some learned chronologers do not so well agree.

The passage is this:—(s) *I have laid upon thee the years of their iniquity, according to the number of days, three hundred and ninety days; so shalt thou bear the iniquity of the house of Israel. And when thou shalt accomplish them, lie again on thy right side, and thou shalt bear the iniquity of the house of Judah forty days. I have appointed thee each day for a year.* The generality of commentators, who take God's laying upon the prophet the years of his people's iniquity, to denote his forbearing to punish them for their offences for such a determinate time, do agree, (t) that there is an exact sum of three hundred and ninety years mentioned in this place; that this sum is to begin from the time that Jeroboam first set up the golden calves; and that the 390 and 40 years are not distinct numbers, but that the less is to be included in the greater; but then the question is, where we are to end these 390 years? or to which of the captivities do they extend?

Several learned men of great authority make these years to end (u) at the last captivity by Nebuzaradan, captain of the guards under Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and four years after the last destruction of Jerusalem, which happened in the eleventh year of Zedekiah; for, from the time of the setting up the calves, (x) say they, to this last instance of God's severity, are just 390 years; from the eighteenth year of Josiah (when the kingdom of Judah entered into covenant with God) to this time, are just 40

(s) Ezek. iv. 5, 6. (t) Bedford's Scripture-chronology, lib. vi. c. 1. (u) Jer. lii. 30. (x) Primate Usher, Dr. Prideaux, and Marshal, in their chronological tables.

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years; and, by this last captivity, all the predictions of the several prophets, relating thereunto, were perfectly fulfilled.

It is to be observed, however, that this last captivity was so small, so sudden, and attended with so little difficulty, as can by no means come up to the pomp and solemnity of the prophet's description, in that very chapter wherein this epocha is mentioned. The account which we have of the invasion is this: (y)——“ Whilst Nebuchadnezzar lay at the siege of Tyre, he sent Nebuzaradan with part of his army to invade the land of Israel, on purpose, as is supposed, to revenge the death of Gedeliah; because there was no other reason for his falling upon the poor remains of those miserable people, whom he himself had left, and settled there. In this expedition Nebuzaradan seized upon all the Jews whom he found in the land, made them captives, and sent them to Babylon; but they all amounted to no more than seven hundred and forty-five persons.” Here was no resistance made, no siege maintained, no famine incurred. The people fell a cheap and easy prey, because they were ruined and destroyed before. But now, in the expedition to which the prophet (z) alludes, Jerusalem was besieged, and the defendants reduced to the necessity of (a) *eating bread by weight, and with care, and of drinking water by measure, and with astonishment*, as he expresses it.

For this reason, we should rather incline to the hypothesis of those who end both the computations at the destruction of Jerusalem in the eleventh of Zedekiah; who, according as they compute the time from Jeroboam's apostacy, make the period of God's forbearing the house of Israel, from thence to the destruction of Jerusalem, to contain just 390 years; and who begin the 40 years of God's forbearance of the house of Judah, from the mission of the prophet Jeremiah to preach repentance to them, *i. e.* (b) from the thirteenth year of Josiah, when he was first called to this office; from which time, to the last year of Zedekiah, when Jerusalem was destroyed, were exactly 40 years. For (c) since the 120 years of God's forbearing the old world is reckoned from the mission of Noah to preach repentance, there seems to be some parity of reason, that his

(y) Prideaux's Connection, anno 584. (z) Ezek. iv. 1, 2, 3.  
(a) Ibid. ver. 16: (b) Jer. i. 1, 2. (c) Gen. vi. 3.

40 years forbearance of the kingdom of Judah should be reckoned from the like mission of Jeremiah.

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But there is another way of explaining this passage: for if by the word *iniquity*, which God imputes to the *house of Israel and Judah*, we are to understand the punishment of their iniquity, (which is very common, and seems to be the most natural sense in this place), it is plain, that as the whole tenor of the prophet's discourse seems to denote an event future, and far distant, it may not improperly relate to the continuation of God's punishment upon the tribes of Israel and Judah, for their great and manifold provocations.

from  
1 Kings viii.  
to the end.  
of 2 Chron.  
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plain the  
passage.

(d) Now the punishment of Israel for their iniquities may be said to commence at the taking of Samaria, in the reign of Hoshea; as that of Judah did, at the taking of Jerusalem, in the reign of Zedekiah. If then we reckon from the destruction of Jerusalem to the time when Cyaxares the Second (whom (e) the Scripture calls *Darius the Median*) became king of Babylon, we shall find it about forty years; and as he was a known favourer of the Jews, and might therefore give them leave to return home, we may be allowed to infer, that here the term of their punishment did expire. And, in like manner, if we reckon from Salmeser's taking Samaria to the last victory which Alexander the Great obtained over Darius Codomannus, whereby he became sole monarch of all Asia, we shall find it to be much about 390 years: And as his kindness to the Jews was very remarkable, we may here date the restoration of their liberty, and consequently their release from the punishment which God inflicted on them for their sins.

Thus, accordingly as we take the sense of the words in the prophet, the history which is alluded to puts on a different aspect, and relates to a different period: But we now proceed to the profane history itself.

What dealings and intercourse, in the space of these last four hundred years, viz. from the building of Solomon's temple, to the captivity of Babylon, the Jewish people had with the Philistines, the Ammonites, Moabites, Phœnicians, Syrians, and other neighbouring nations; and what relation and dependence they had on the great and powerful kingdoms of Assyria, Babylon, and Egypt, has, in some measure, been observed in the course of this history. What

The pro-  
fane history  
of this pe-  
riod.

(d) Calmet's Dissert. ou l'on examine si les dix tribus, etc.

(e) Dan. v. 31.

A. M. 3394, etc. we are farther concerned to do, is to take notice of some more remarkable events, which during this period of time, Ant. Christ. 610, &c. are supposed to have happened in the world.

from (f) In the thirty-fifth year of the reign of Uzziah king of Judah, and while there was an interregnum in the kingdom of Israel, the Olympic games were instituted in Greece.

The institution of the Olympic games. The use and design of them was to train up the youth in active and warlike exercises, that, if occasion required, they might be capable of doing their country service in the field: And it was not from the mountain Olympus in Thessaly, but from the city Olympia, (since called Pisa, near Elis, a city in Peloponnesus, where they were celebrated in the adjacent plains, near the river Alpheus), that they took their names. Here was the splendid temple of Jupiter, which had vast treasures belonging to it, by reason of the oracles which were there given out, and these games which were there celebrated in honour of that deity; and here was likewise that famous statue of Jupiter \*, made by Phidias,

(f) Bedford's Scripture-chronology, lib. vi. c. 2.

\* This statue of Jupiter is described by Pausanias, in the following manner: — “ He is made sitting on a throne of gold and ivory, with a crown on his head, which seems to be made of olive-branches. In his right hand he holds an image of victory, made of ivory likewise, that has on its head a crown of massy gold; and in his left a sceptre, made of all kinds of metals mixed together, with an eagle on the top of it. His shoes and stockings are all of gold, and the rest of the drapery is of the same metal, adorned with figures of various animals, and a great number of flower-de-luces. His throne is embellished with ivory, ebony, gold, precious stones, and a great multitude of embossed figures. At the four feet, or pedestals of the throne, are four victories, and two others at the feet of the statue. At the two feet, on the fore-side of the throne, on one hand, are the figures of sphinxes, who are carrying off some Theban youths; and on the other side, are represented the figures of the children of Niobe, whom Apollo and Diana shot to death with their arrows. Between the feet of the throne is represented Theseus, and the rest of the heroes who accompanied Hercules to the war against the Amazons, together with several Athletæ of diverse kinds; and the place is all around adorned with pictures, representing the labours of Hercules, together with several other of the most renowned historical subjects. On the upper part of the throne, on “ the

Phidias, which was accounted one of the wonders of the world, and from which he obtained the name of *Jupiter Olympius*. A. M. 3394, etc.  
Ant. Christ. 610, etc.

It was about four hundred and forty years before this time, that these games and exercises were at first instituted by one Hercules; not the son of Jupiter and Alcmena, so much celebrated by the Greek and Latin poets, but one of the priests of Cybele called by that name, who came into Greece from Ida, a mountain in Phrygia, (whence he and his companions were called *Idæi*, *Dactyli*, and *Corybantes*), and brought in many superstitious rites with them. After the death of this Hercules, these games were discontinued for many years, till, by advice from the oracle of Apollo, Iphitus established them again, even in the lifetime of Lycurgus, who is no where said to have opposed them; and so they continued until the time of Constantine the Great, who, upon his profession of the Christian faith, first slighted the *ludi seculares*, and afterwards all other games, as monuments of Pagan superstition; so that, falling by degrees into disesteem, in the time of Theodosius the Great, if not before, they were utterly unfrequented, and dwindled into nothing. from Kings viii. to the end of 2 Chron.

These games were used to be performed at the end of every four years, (and so every four years made an Olympiad), and lasted for five days; when the youth of Greece contended for mastery in five sorts of exercises, one for each day, *viz.* the cæstus or whirl-bat, the coit, leap- Their pri- mary.

“ the one side are engraven the Graces, and on the other the Hours, because, according to the poets, both these were the daughters of Jupiter. On the footstool of the statue are golden lions, and a representation of the combat of Theseus with the Amazons; and on a basis thereof, are innumerable golden figures, such as that of the sun going into his chariot, of Jupiter and Juno, Mercury, Vesta, and Venus, who has Cupid standing by her; of Apollo, Diana, Minerva, Hercules, Amphitrite, Neptune, and the Moon, which is here represented sitting upon an horse.” This is the substance of what Pausanias says of this famous statue: But notwithstanding that its workmanship was the wonder of all the ancients, and the curiosity of seeing it might increase the number of those who came to the Olympic games, yet Strabo finds great fault with it for want of a due proportion, because it was of such a prodigious bigness, that if it had stood upright, it must have made a hole in the roof of the temple; *Bedford's Scripture-chronology*, lib. vi. c. 2. in the notes.

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ing, wrestling, and racing, either on foot or horseback, or in chariots; all which exercises were thought so honourable, that even kings themselves did not disdain to become competitors for the victory; and accordingly we find Pindar, the most celebrated poet in those days, addressing his first Olympic to Hiero king of Syracuse, for having won the prize in one of the horse-races.

The prize however was not great: It was no more than a garland of palm, or olive: but the victor was treated with such tokens of respect and esteem, and was attended by the people with such loud acclamations, while he rode into the city in a coach through a breach in the wall, which, upon this occasion, was made for his more pompous entrance; and while he was sure to have the best of poets to celebrate his praise, and rank him even among the gods, that to come off conqueror, and be crowned in this place, was thought an honour not inferior to that of a triumph in Rome; and this the rather, because the inhabitants of Elis, who were the presidents of these games, were so remarkably impartial in giving sentence according to merit, that whoever was crowned by their order and determination was always thought justly to deserve it.

and second-  
dary use.

Thus (g) it appears, that the original use of these Olympic games was to encourage activity of body: But in process of time, they came to be employed to a quite different purpose, even to fix the chronology of the history of the Greeks, among whom, † it grew a custom to reckon by Olympiads; for before that custom prevailed, their historians were vastly negligent in fixing the date of such transactions as they related. Varro, the most learned person among the Romans, both for history and antiquity, reckons three sorts of times. The 1st, from the beginning of mankind to the first flood, which he calls *uncertain*, because no account is given of it by any Heathen writer. The 2d, from the flood to the first Olympiad, which he calls *fabulous*, because many strange stories are reported of

(g) Bedford's Scripture-chronogy, lib. vi. c. 2.

† It is to be observed however, that it was not from the first Olympiad, that they began their computation, but from the 27th, when Choroëbus, a native of Elis, was victor, because there was no register kept of the preceding Olympiads; and therefore the commencement of this æra was an hundred and eight years after the establishment of the games which occasioned it; *Calmet's Dictionary*, under the word *Olympiad*.

the

the gods and demigods in those times, but without any method or order. The 3d, from the first Olympiad to his time, which he calls *historical*, because thenceforward all transactions were laid in their proper places; but before the institution of this method of computation, *every thing was confused in the Grecian history*, (as Eusebius (*h*) tells us), and (*i*) *no one thing written with any tolerable exactness*.

In the 11th year of Jotham † King of Judah, which was the twelfth of Pekah, king of Israel, another famous æra commenced, and was in use throughout all the empire, upon the building of the city of Rome, the history of which is as follows.

After the destruction of Troy (*k*), Æneas landing in Italy, was at first opposed by Latinus, king of the Latins, or Aborigines; but being overcome in battle by the Trojans, Latinus made peace with their leader, and permitted him, and his men, to live independent in his kingdom. Enraged at this treatment, Turnus king of the Rutuli, fomented a fresh war against Æneas; but in the conclusion, he was slain in single combat by the Trojan chief, and his mistress Lavinia (who was the occasion of all this contention) was, by her father Latinus, given to the conqueror for a wife. Æneas (it must be observed) had another son by a former wife, named *Creusa*, who was lost in the siege of Troy; and after his death, his relict Lavinia, being great with child, and fearing the power of Ascanius, (for that was his name), fled into the woods, and was there delivered of a son, who, for that reason, was called *Sylvius*, and because he was born after his father's funeral, was

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of 2 Chron.  
The histo-  
ry of 'the  
building of  
Rome.

(*h*) Africanus, ad Euseb. Præparat. evan. lib. x. c. 10.

(*i*) Justin Martyr, ad Græcos cohortatio.

† Of the time when this city was built, there are two accounts, the Varronian and the Capitolian. The Varronian places it in the year before, but the Capitolian in this year, and yet they may be both easily reconciled; for as it was customary in those times, when they began to build a city, to go round it with a plough, and make a furrow where the walls were to be built, but leave a void space for the gates; the year before they might thus mark out the city, dig the foundation of the walls, and provide stones, timber, and other materials, and this year lay the foundation; so that the computation might easily begin from either year, though the Capitolian is the general account; *Bedford's Scripture-chronology*, lib. vi. c. 2.

(*k*) Sir Walter Raleigh's History, lib. ii. c. 24. sect. 4.

likewise



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likewise called *Posthumus*. It was not long, however, before the people began to express their resentment of this hard usage of Lavinia, so that Ascanius was obliged to recall her; and to avoid all occasions of disagreement for the future, he left to her, and her son Sylvius, the city of Lavinia, which Æneas had built, and called after her name, whilst himself removed to Alba Longa, a city of his own erecting, and where he lived for the remainder of his days, highly delighted with the situation of the place.

After the death of Ascanius, there happened a contention between this Sylvius the son of Æneas, and Iulus the son of Ascanius, about the succession to the kingdom; but as the relations of Lavinia had the more prevalent interest in the country, the matter was so compromised, that Iulus was made high-priest, and Sylvius king, in whose family the kingdom continued for several generations, and every succeeding prince was named *Sylvius*.

Of this race was Latinus the Second, grandson to Sylvius, who built several towns on the borders of Latium; and their inhabitants, standing much upon the honour of their original, were afterwards called *Prisci Latini*. Of this race was Tyberinus, who, as some say, was drowned in the Tiber, and from that unhappy accident gave name to the river. Of this race was Aventinus, who, by being buried in the place, gave name to one of the mountains on which Rome was built: and of this race was Procas, who, after his death, left his two sons, Numitor and Amulius, to reign alternately every year: But Amulius the younger deposed Numitor, slew his son Ægisthus, and to cut off the whole race, compelled his daughter Ilia to enter into a vow of perpetual virginity, by becoming a priestess to the goddess Vesta. Her vow however did not last long; for a certain soldier found means to get her with child, but to cover the disgrace, a report was raised, that all this was done by Mars, the god of war. At length she was delivered of two sons, Romulus and Remus, whom their uncle Amulius commanded to be drowned, and their mother to be buried alive, as being the punishment which the law inflicted, when vestal virgins had violated their chastity.

Whether the mother underwent this punishment, or, (as some will have it), upon the intreaty of Antho, the daughter of Amulius, obtained her pardon, it is certain that the two children were thrown into the Tiber, in order to be drowned: But as the stream was low, and much mud

was

was in the place, a certain woman, named *Lupa*, found them before they were dead, and having suckled them for some time, (from whence the story of their being nursed by a she-wolf took its rise), brought them at length to Faustulus, the king's shepherd, who recommended them to the care of his wife *Laurentia*, and so they were both preserved.

A. M.  
3394, &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
610, &c.  
from  
1 Kings viii.  
to the end  
of 2 Chron.

As soon as they came to a proper age, they lived at first in the capacity of shepherds; but being naturally of a brave and martial temper, they applied themselves, not only to the business of hunting wild beasts, but of clearing the country likewise of such gangs of robbers, as came to plunder and infest it; so that, in a short time, the fame of their adventures made multitudes of the neighbouring youth, who were of the like complexion, resort unto them. Enraged at their proceedings, a strong company of these robbers set upon them at a certain time, and tho' Romulus defended himself against their attack, took Remus prisoner, and pretending that he had plundered the estate of his grandfather Numitor, delivered him to King Amulius, who sent him to his brother Numitor to be executed for the fact.

When Remus was brought before Numitor, he behaved with such courage and intrepidity, that he could not but suspect something uncommon in him; and thereupon hearing that he had another brother, and that they were twins, and comparing their age with the time when his daughter *Ilia*'s two children were exposed, he began to think, that these, without doubt, must be the boys, whom some good providence had wonderfully preserved; and being confirmed in his opinion by the information of Faustulus, who had brought them up, he entered into a conspiracy with them, against his brother Amulius, wherein it was agreed, that Romulus with his men should privately enter the city, and being joined with such forces as Remus could muster up in Numitor's family, should, all on a sudden, attack the palace, and seize the king.

The plot succeeded. Amulius was taken and killed: And after that Numitor had congratulated his grandsons upon their success, he ascended the rostrum, and in a full assembly of people, declared how wicked and inhuman his brother Amulius had been; that these were his two grandchildren; how they were born, and bred up, and came to be discovered; and that by their contrivance it was, that the tyrant was taken off; whereupon the people immediately

A. M.  
3394, &c.  
Ant. Chriſt.  
610, &c.  
from  
1 Kings viii.  
to the end  
of 2 Chron.

came to a reſolution, that Numitor ſhould be their king, and that, next under him, Romulus and Remus ſhould be held in the greateſt veneration.

As ſoon as theſe matters were ſettled and adjusted, the two young princes (to perpetuate the memory of their preſervation) reſolved to build a city upon the ſpot where they had been nourished and brought up; and ſeveral of the neighbouring people, as well as their own men, came in to their aſſiſtance. It was not much doubted, but that this new city would, in proceſs of time, outvie all the other towns in Italy; but then, as the two brothers were twins, and it was not well known which was the elder, they agreed to determine, by the flight of birds, who ſhould give the name to the city, and upon the grandfather Numitor's deceaſe, which of them ſhould reign firſt.

To this purpoſe they went each of them to the top of an hill. Romulus aſcended what was afterwards called *Palatinus*, and Remus *Aventinus*, from whence he diſcovered ſix vultures firſt; but his brother afterwards ſaw twelve, ſo that the diſpute was never the nearer an end. Remus laid claim to the ſovereignty, becauſe he ſaw the firſt vultures, and Romulus becauſe he ſaw the moſt: inſomuch that from words proceeding to blows, Remus was unhappily ſlain by his brother, and, in his death \*, put an end to the controverſy.

When the city was built, Romulus called it *Roma*, which, in the Greek tongue, ſignified *ſtrength*, and not by his own name *Romula*, becauſe it was a diminutive. As the city, however, when finiſhed, had not a ſufficient ſtock of inhabitants, he found out any expedient to remedy this defect, by making a neighbouring grove an aſylum, or place of refuge, to all malefactors and diſcontented perſons; ſo that, in a ſhort time, vaſt numbers of all nations, that could not live in their own country with ſafety, fled hither for protection, and peopled the city. Theſe inhabitants however could laſt but for one age, becauſe they were

\* Florus makes the occaſion of the death of Remus, to be another matter: For having obſerved that Romulus, by the greater number of the vultures which he ſaw, had got the better, and built his city, with good hopes that it would be remarkable for warlike affairs, becauſe thoſe birds were accounted birds of prey; ere the walls were raiſed to any great height, his brother Remus made a jeſt of them; which exaſperated the other to that degree, that he ordered him immediately to be ſlain.

moſt

most of them men, and, when they desired to marry with their neighbours, were rejected with scorn; so that they were under a necessity to get themselves wives by some stratagem or other. To this purpose Romulus proclaimed a feast, and public games, in the honour of Neptune, to be celebrated near his new city; and when the virgins from every quarter came thither to see and divert themselves, upon a signal given, they were all seized by force, carried into the city, and compelled to become wives to those that wanted them. Exasperated with this base treatment, the neighbouring people immediately prepare for war; but are repulsed with loss by the Romans: Till the Sabines, who were their most formidable enemy, and principally concerned in the late affront, marched against them, and, under the command of their King Tatius, were just upon giving them a total defeat; when their daughters, who were now become wives to the Romans, ran between the two armies, and with their hair torn, and all other indications of sorrow, acquainted their parents, that they had been used civilly, and that, if matters were carried to such extremities, nothing could be expected on their side but ruin and destruction. Hereupon their parents, being overcome by their prayers, and tears, and arguments, laid aside all angry resentment, and entered into a treaty with their sons-in-law, which succeeded so well, that several of them left their ancient habitations, and came with all their substance, and lived in Rome. From so small a beginning did this city gradually increase to be the seat of the western empire, and the mistress of the then known world!

One very remarkable event more, which happened the very next year after the building of Rome, viz. in the twelfth year of Jotham king of Judah, and the thirteenth of Pekah king of Israel, was, the dissolution of the Assyrian monarchy upon the death of Sardanapalus, as several Heathen authors have thus related it. This emperor exceeded all his predecessors in sloth and voluptuousness. He clothed himself in womens attire; he painted his face, and decked his body more like a strumpet than a king; he affected an effeminate voice; spun fine wool and purple among his concubines, and proceeded to such a degree of luxury and shamelessness, that he wrote verses in commemoration of his dissolute manner of life, and commanded, after his death, to have them inscribed on his tomb.

A. M.  
3394, etc.  
Ant. Christ.  
610, &c.  
from  
1 Kings viii.  
to the end  
of 2 Chron.

The dissolution of the Assyrian monarchy.

A. M.  
3394, *etc.*  
Ant. Christ.  
690, *etc.*  
from  
1 Kings viii.  
to the end  
of 2 Chron.

The kings of the East seldom appeared in publick : But Sardanapulus was never seen by any, but such only as were either assistants or associates in his lasciviousness ; until Arbaces, the general of the Median forces, bribed one of his eunuchs, by giving him a golden cup, to be introduced into his presence ; where, seeing his vile, degenerate behaviour, he began to think it a disparagement, that so many brave and gallant men should be under the dominion of a worthless wretch, that affected to be a spinster rather than a king. This he communicated to his friends and acquaintances, to the governours of several provinces, but, more especially to Belesis the governour of Babylon, with whom he entered into a close confederacy to depose the present emperor, and to divide his dominions between them, whereof Belesis was to have Babylon, Chaldea, and Arabia, and himself all the rest.

(1) When matters were thus agreed on, Arbaces endeavoured, by all sorts of arts and insinuations, to make himself acceptable to the Medes ; to persuade them to invade the Assyrian empire, and (in hopes of regaining their liberty) to draw the Persians into the like confederacy. On the other hand, Belesis prevailed with the Babylonians to revolt, and gained the king of Arabia (with whom he had a very great intimacy) to his party ; so that, when all their forces were joined together, the army is said to have consisted of four hundred thousand men.

Sardanapalus, seeing such a strong confederacy and combination of arms against him, thought it high time to shake off his sloth ; and having drawn forth the forces of the rest of the provinces, he engaged the enemy thrice, and as many times defeated them. In the first action he pursued them to the mountains, seventy furlongs beyond Nineveh. In the second he so defeated them, that they were all upon the point of returning home, had not Belesis (who was a Babylonish priest, and pretended to great skill in astrology \* and divination) given them assurance, that

(1) Bedford's Scripture-history, lib. vi. c. 2.

\* Whatever skill he might pretend to in astrology, it is certain, that he was an excellent astronomer, and, when he came to Babylon, and was made emperor there, set himself to rectify the Chaldean year, which seems to have stood unalterable from the flood till that time. The ancient year of the Chaldeans consisted of three hundred and sixty days, or of twelve months, with thirty days to each

that God would at last reward their labours with success. A. M. 3394, etc. Ant. Chris. 610, etc. from 1 Kings viii. to the end of 2 Chron.  
 In the third engagement Arbaces himself was wounded, and his army routed, and pursued as far as the mountains of Babylon; so that the chief officers were for dispersing and shifting for themselves, when Belesis gave them once more assurance, that if they would but continue together for five days longer, every thing, in that time, would have a different turn.

With much intreaty was the army prevailed on not to disperse, when suddenly news was brought, that a great reinforcement was coming from Bactria to join the king, so that the only game which Arbaces had to play was, to march against them, and, by all means imaginable, prevail with them to revolt; wherein he succeeded beyond all mens hopes and expectations, and so gave another turn to the face of affairs.

each month; but as this was five days and a quarter less than the revolution of the sun to the same point of the equinox, the Egyptians, in the time of Thoth (their second king, and grandson of Ham) added five days to the year, so that every year consisted exactly of three hundred and sixty-five days: But then, in four years, there was one day less than in so many Julian years, which in a great length of time (*viz.* in 1460 years) made the beginning of the year run through all the seasons. To prevent this inconsistency, the Chaldeans, about every six years, added to their year of 360 days an intercalary month, which made their years unequal; and therefore Belesis, being well acquainted with the Egyptian astronomers, and finding that their year was equal, though not absolutely perfect, reduces the Babylonian year to the same standard, *i. e.* he makes it consist of three hundred and sixty-five days, which were divided into twelve months, of thirty days each, and five days, which were added at the end of the year. But then, because, in each of these years there would be a redundant quarter of a day, and, in four years, one whole day, instead of the Bissextile day (as it is in the Julian computation) he began every fourth year a day sooner. This alteration he ordered to begin in the first year of his reign, and from thence it was called *the famous era of Nabonassar*, (for so Belesis was likewise named), which continued in Egypt to the death of Anthony and Cleopatra, and was afterwards in use among the mathematicians and astronomers to the time of Ptolemy, who made his canon by this account, which is justly esteemed the surest and most useful guide of ancient chronology, where the sacred historians are silent; *Bedford's Scripture-chronology*, lib. vi. c. 2.; *Whiston's Theory*, lib. 2.; and *Chronology of the Old Testament*, p. 12.

Sardanapalus,

A. M.  
3394, &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
610, &c.  
from  
1 Kings viii.  
to the end  
of 2 Chron.

Sardanapalus, in the mean time, knowing nothing of this, and being elated with his repeated successes, was indulging his sloth and luxury, and preparing beasts for sacrifice, with plenty of wine, and other things necessary to feast and entertain his soldiers; when Arbaces, having intelligence by deserters in what condition his army lay, fearless of any foe, and overcome already with surfeiting and drunkenness, broke into their camp by night, and, having made a terrible slaughter of most of them, forced the rest into the city.

The king, after this defeat, took upon him the defence of the place, and committed the charge of the army to Salamenus, the queen's brother; but Salamenus was worsted in two pitched battles, one in the open field, and the other before the walls of Nineveh, where himself was slain, and most of his men cut to pieces; so that all the resource which Sardanapalus had, was to sustain the siege as long as he could, until the succours (which he had sent for out of all his provinces) should come to his assistance: and this he had some hopes of being able to do, because there was an ancient prophecy, "That Nineveh never could be taken by force, "until the river became its enemy."

Arbaces, on the other hand, was much encouraged by his successes, and carried on the siege with the utmost vigour; but the prodigious strength of the walls, which were an hundred feet high, and so very broad, that three chariots might go a-breast upon them, and the vast plenty of all manner of stores and provisions, necessary for a long defence, hindered him from making any considerable progress.

Thus two years were spent, without any prospect of relief on the one side, or of taking the town on the other. In the third year, a continued fall of rain made the Tygris overflow to such a degree, that coming into the city, it tore along with it twenty fathoms of the wall, which Sardanapalus concluding to be the accomplishment of the oracle, because by this means the river was apparently become an enemy to the city, he grew quite dispirited, and gave up all for lost. However, to prevent his falling into the hands of the enemy, he caused a large pile of wood \* to be made in

\* Concerning this pile, Athæneus informs us,——That it was 400 feet high, upon which he placed 150 golden beds, and as many golden tables; that he had thrown into it some millions of talents of gold

in the court of his palace, and there heaped up together all his gold, silver, and royal apparel, and having inclosed his eunuchs and concubines in the midst of it, ordered it to be set on fire, and so burnt himself and them together. The only action wherein (*m*) these historians, who make no mention of his victories, represent him as a valiant man. Arbaces, being informed of this, marched his army thro' the breach of the wall, and took the city. After this he rewarded his followers according to their merit; made Belesis governour of Babylonia, Caldea, and Arabia, according to their compact, and took the rest of the empire to himself; which put an end to the Assyrian monarchy, after it had governed all Asia (*n*) above thirteen hundred years, and (according to the vision which Daniel (*o*) had of it) in it conquest had been as swift as an eagle, but now its wings were plucked.

A. M.  
3394 &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
610, &c.  
from  
1 Kings viii.  
to the end  
of 2 Chron.

gold and silver, besides the richest furniture of purple, and the finest garments; and that this pile was fifteen days in burning. To which Diodorus adds, that Belesis, by craft, obtained leave of Arbaces to carry off the ashes, under pretence of building an altar with them at Babylon, by which means he gained an immense treasure. But all this looks more like a romance than a true history. *Bedford's Scripture-chronology*, lib. vi. c. 2. in the notes.

(*m*) Justin, lib. 1. and Athæneus, lib. 12. c. 12. (*n*) Justin, lib. 1. (*o*) Dan. vii. 4.



## OF THE

Containing an Account of things from the Babylonish Captivity to the birth of Christ; in all 588 Years.

*From the Captivity, to the death of Cyrus.*

A. M.  
3417, &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
587, &c.  
from Jer.  
xl. 7. to xlv.  
all Daniel,  
and from  
Ezra i. to v.

**A**FTER the return of Nebuchadnezzar, and his victorious army, to Babylon, all those Jews who, for fear of him, had taken refuge among neighbouring nations, or had hid themselves in the fields and deserts of their own country, hearing that Gedaliah was made governour of the land, resorted to him at Mizpah †, where

Gedaliah is made governor of Judea, and murdered by Ishmael.

† In the history of Jacob, we read, that after a stay of several years at Hiran, making his escape from thence, he was overtaken by Laban, his father-in-law, in a mountainous tract, which was afterwards called *Gilead*, i. e. *an heap of stones*, as also *Mispeh*, i. e. *a watch-tower*, because, at the covenant which was made between Laban and him, an heap of stones

where he set up his residence. Among these were Johanan and Jonathan, the sons of Kereah, and Ishmael, the son of Nethaniah, with divers others : But Ishmael came to him out of a treacherous intent only ; for being of the blood-royal, he reckoned to make himself king of Judea, now that the Chaldeans were gone, and to that purpose had formed a conspiracy to kill Gedaliah, and seize on the government, wherein Baalis †, king of the Ammonites, was confederate with him.

A. M.  
3417, etc.  
Ant. Christ.  
587, etc.  
from Jer.  
xl 7. to xlv.  
all Daniel,  
and from  
Ezra i. to v.

was gathered to remain a monument of it, and upon that occasion, Laban's expressions are these,—*The Lord watch between me and thee, when we are absent one from another. If thou wilt afflict my daughters, or if thou wilt take other wives, besides my daughters, no man is with us ; see, God is witness between me and thee,* Gen. xxi. 49, 50. From that time, the place where this covenant was made, and where probably in memory of it a city in after-ages was built, was called *Mizpah*. It was situate on the east side of the river Jordan, and in the division of the land, fell to the tribe of Dan ; and here it was, that Gedaliah chose to fix his habitation, or perhaps was ordered to fix it here, because it lay nearest of any to Babylon, from whence he was to receive his instructions as to the administration of the government ; *Wells's Geography of the Old Testament*, vol. 1.

† That Ishmael, who was of the blood-royal of Judah, should attempt to take away the life of Gedaliah, is no wonder at all. His envy of the other's promotion, and his ambition to make himself a king, might be strong incitements to what he did ; but why Baalis should have any hand in so black a design, we can hardly imagine any other reason than the ancient and inveterate hatred which the Ammonites always had against the Hebrews ; and therefore this king of theirs, seeing that the Jewish nation was, at this time, in a manner, brought to nothing, was minded to take revenge for all the injuries that his ancestors had received from them, and to give the finishing stroke to their ruin, by cutting off their governour, and so dispersing all the remains of that unhappy people, which was now gathered together at Mizpah. But whatever their views might be, it is certain that they put their design in speedy execution ; for the murder of Gedaliah happened but two months after the destruction of the city and temple of Jerusalem, viz. in the seventh month, (which is Tizri, and answers in part to our September and October), and on the thirtieth day of the month : For that day the Jews have kept as a fast, in commemoration of this calamity (which indeed was the completion of their ruin) ever since ; *Calmet's Commentary* on Jer. xl. 14. ; and *Prideaux's Connection*, anno 588.

A. M.  
3417, &c.  
Ant. Chhrif.  
587, &c.  
from Jer.  
xl. 7. to xlv.  
all Daniel,  
and from  
Ezra i. to v.

His design however was not carried on so secretly, but that Johanan, the son of Kereah, got notice of it, and acquainted the governour with it : But he being a man of a generous temper, and not apt to entertain jealousies of others, took no notice of Johanan's information, but continued the same friendly correspondence with Ishmael that he had ever done. This gave the traitor an advantage against him ; for pretending to pay him a visit one day, he and his confederates (at a time when the people were gone out to harvest-work) fell upon him, and slew him, even while he was entertaining them at his table. With him he murdered all the Jews and Chaldeans that were at Mizpah, except some few, whom he made captives ; and having kept the matter private, the next day but one, he destroyed fourscore Israelites, who were coming, in a mournful manner \*, with their oblations, into the town, and there put them all to the sword, except ten, who, for the redemption of their lives, offered him all the \* treasures they had in the field.

After this massacre, Ishmael not thinking himself safe in Mizpah, took the captives with him, (among whom were King Zedekiah's daughters), and was making the best

\* The tokens of their mourning are said to be,—*That they had their beards shaven, and their cloaths rent, and that they had cut themselves*, Jer. xli. 5. For though it was an exprefs prohibition in the law, *You shall not make any cuttings in your flesh for the dead, nor print any marks upon you*, Levit. xix. 28. ; yet this seems to relate only to such practices, when they became superstitious, and were done in honour to false gods ; for in cases of ordinary mourning for the dead, or for any other grievous disaster, the words of the prophet seem to imply, as if they had been permitted in common use: *Both the great and the small shall die in the land: They shall not be buried, neither shall men lament for them, nor cut themselves, nor make themselves bald for them, neither shall men tear themselves in mourning to comfort them for the dead*, Jer. xvi. 6, 7.

\* Treasures (according to the common phrase of Scripture) signify any thing that is hid or kept in reserve, whether it be gold, silver, corn, wine, oil, apparel, or any other thing: And among the people of the east, it was an usual thing to bury their corn, and other provisions, in deep holes, and caverns, which they dug and filled up so very dextrously, that no one could perceive that the earth had been moved, nor could any find them out, but those who made them ; *Calmet's Commentary*.

of his way to the king of the Ammonites, when Johanan and the rest of the captains of Judah, hearing of this detestable deed, made after him with what forces they could get together: But when he perceived them coming, he left all his train behind him, and with only eight men, made his escape into the land of Ammon.

Johanan, and the rest of the captains, being thus left with all the people, and now reflecting on what Ishmael had done to Gedaliah, began to be apprehensive, that the Chaldeans might possibly revenge his death upon them; and therefore, for fear of the worst, they retired to Chimham †, not far from Bethlehem, that in case they were called to an account, they might more readily make their escape into Egypt.

Jeremiah, from the time that he parted with Nebuzardan had taken up his abode with Gedaliah the governour; but after his death, among the rest of the captives, was carried from thence by Ishmael the conspirator, and now, upon his defeat, accompanied Johanan, and the rest of his countrymen, to their new habitation at Chimham. Here they had not been long, before Johanan, and the other princes of the people, came to request of him, that he would consult the Lord concerning their intended journey into Egypt, with warm professions however of a ready compliance with whatever he should think fit to enjoin them. The prophet did so: And in ten days time, returned them this answer from God,——“ That if they would tarry  
“ in Judea, and live peaceably under the king of Babylon,  
“ he would screen them from their present danger, and  
“ incline the heart of their conqueror to be favourable to  
“ them; but that if they persisted in their intention of  
“ going into Egypt, he would infallible cause every thing  
“ they dreaded, the sword, the famine, and the pestilence,

† This place may be supposed, from 2 Sam. xix. 38. to have been anciently given by King David to Chimham, the son of old Barzillai the Gileadite, and which, at this time, bore his name, though near five hundred years after the first donation. It was in the neighbourhood of Bethlehem, about two leagues from Jerusalem, and hither the poor people betook themselves, because it was at a much farther distance from Babylon than Mizpah, and in their straight way to Egypt, in case they should determine to go thither, as they seemed inclinable to do, because there they supposed they should have no war, nor hear the sound of the trumpet, nor have hunger of bread, Jer. xlii. 14.

A. M.  
3417, etc.  
Ant. Christ.  
587, etc.  
from Jer.  
xl. 7. to xlv.  
all Daniel,  
and from  
Ezra i. to v.  
The Jews  
that were  
left after  
his escape  
retreated into  
Egypt.

A. M. 3417, etc. Ant. Chriſt. 587, etc. from Jer. xl. 7. to xlv. all Daniel, and from Ezra i. to v. “to purſue them.” But notwithstanding both their own profeſſions, and the prophet’s declarations, (wherein they † blamed Baruch, as being acceſſory), they were reſolutely bent upon going into Egypt; and accordingly, taking all the remnant of Judah, men, women, and children, the king’s daughters, Jeremiah the prophet, and Baruch his ſcribe, with them, they went and ſettled in the country, until the judgments wherewith God had threatened their diſobedience came upon them.

where they fall into idolatry, and are reproved by Jeremiah.

The Jews † were no ſooner ſettled in Egypt, than they gave themſelves wholly up to idolatry, worſhipping the queen † of heaven; and the other falſe deities of the land, whereupon Jeremiah made loud remonſtrances; but all the effect which they had upon them, was only to make them more obſtinate in their impiety: So that the prophet was obliged to denounce God’s ſevereſt judgments againſt them in expreſs terms, and at the ſame time to foretel, that

† The words in the text are, — *The Lord our God hath not ſent to thee to ſay, Go not into Egypt to ſojourn there; but Baruch, the ſon of Neriah, ſetteth thee on againſt us, for to deliver us into the hands of the Chaldeans, that they may put us to death, and carry us away captives into Babylon*, Jer. xliii. 2, 3. But what foundation the people ſhould have for this their accuſation againſt Baruch, it is no eaſy matter to conceive; only we may ſuppoſe, that as Baruch was preſerved, and taken care of by the Chaldeans, as well as his maſter, and was equally againſt maintaining the ſiege of Jeruſalem, when Nebuchadnezzar came before it; and that as he had been ſome time at Babylon himſelf, (*Vid.* Baruch i. 1, 3.) and was probably not ſo virulent in his ſpeeches againſt the Chaldeans as the other Jews were; this, to a blind and mutinous mob, was reaſon enough to ſuſpect him of being engaged in the enemy’s party; *Calmet’s Commentary*.

† The places in which the Jews are ſaid to have ſettled themſelves in Egypt, were Migdol, Tahpanhes, Noph, and the country of Pathros, Jer. xlv. 1. Migdol is the ſame place in Egypt, which Moſes makes mention of, Exod. xiv. 2. over-againſt Baalzephon, not far from the Red-ſea. Tahpanhes is Daphne, not far from Peluſium, the firſt city in Egypt, in the road from Judea, and, as it were, its key. Noph is Memphis, ſituate above the parting of the Nile, or where the Delta begins, and not a little famous for its pyramids; and the country of Pathros is the ſame with Thebais, or the Upper-Egypt, ſo called from the city Thebes, which was the firſt capital of it.

† By which is meant the moon at leaſt, if not all the planets; for what we render *queen*, in the marginal note, is called *the frame of heaven*.

the king of Egypt (under whose protection they lived secure, as they thought) should be delivered into the hands of Nebuchadnezzar †, God's agent for that purpose, in like manner as Zedekiah was; which, in the space of eighteen years afterwards, accordingly came to pass.

After this we have no more of the prophet Jeremiah \*, and very little of his cotemporary, Ezekiel \*.

A. M.  
3417, etc.  
Ant. Christ.  
587, etc.  
from Jer. xl.  
7. to xlv. all  
Daniel, and  
from Ezra i.  
to v.

They Some account of his prophecies, and those of Ezekiel.

† It is very observable, that in several places of Jeremiah's prophecy, (*viz.* chap. xxv. 9. chap. xxvii. 6. and chap. xliii. 10.), Nebuchadnezzar is called *God's servant*, on purpose to show us, that, as great a prince as he was, he was no more than the executioner of his commands; that he was the general of his troops, and that all the victories he gained, and the conquests he won, were by his direction and appointment; for no writers speak with so much deference of God, as do the prophets, because they only knew, by the inspiration of the Divine Spirit, to express, with a proper dignity, what the greatest monarchs are in comparison with the Divine Majesty; *Calmet's Commentary*.

\* St. Jerom (in the life of this prophet) and Dorotheus (in his *Synopsis* of the lives and deaths of the prophets and apostles) tell us, that he was stoned to death in Egypt by his own renegado countrymen the Jews, for preaching against their idolatry; and of this some interpret St. Paul's ἐλθιδόθησαν, *they were stoned*, Heb. xi. 37. It appears indeed by the account we have of their behaviour, Jer. xlv. 16. that they were bent both against him and his reproofs; and therefore it is more likely that they were the authors of his death, than (as some say) the Egyptians were, for his prophesying against them, and their king Pharaoh-hophra. For the Egyptians (according to the same tradition) having by the prophet's prayers, been freed from the crocodiles, which very much infested them, had him in such great honour and esteem, that, in testimony thereof, they buried him in one of their royal sepulchres. The truth is, Jeremiah was, all his lifetime, exposed to the ill treatment of the Jews, whose irregularities, and sad apostasy, he was always reproofing; and therefore the author of the book of Ecclesiasticus, in the encomium which he gives of this prophet, seems to draw his character from the persecutions he endured: *They intreated him evil, who nevertheless was a prophet, sanctified in his mother's womb*, Ecclus. xlix. 7.

\* St. Jerom, in his life of this prophet, tells us, that he was put to death by a prince of the children of Israel, whom he reprov'd for his idolatry; but who this prince of the Jewish nation should be, upon

A. M.  
3417, &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
587, &c.  
from Jer.  
xl. 7. to xlv.  
and Daniel,  
and from  
Ezra i. to v.

They both, no doubt, continued in their prophetic office until their death; but when or where that happened, or by whose means it was occasioned, the Scripture is silent, and tradition is uncertain. This however we may learn from their own writings, that after they had discharged their duty to their own people the Jews, they were directed by God to address the rest of their predictions chiefly to the Gentiles. Accordingly we find Jeremiah prophesying against Egypt in the 46th chapter; against all the Philistines, in the 47th; against the Moabites, in the 48th; against Ammon, Edom, and other people in the 49th; and against Babylon, in the 50th and 51st; with some promises here and there interspersed concerning the redemption of Israel. In like manner we find Ezekiel prophesying against the Ammonites, in the 25th chapter; against the Tyrians, and those that traded with them in the 26th and 27th; against the prince of Tyre in the 28th; against Egypt, in the 29th, 30th, 31st, and 32d; against the Shepherds of Israel, in the 34th; against the Edomites in the 35th; and against the enemies of the church of God, under the name of *Gog* and *Magog*, in the 38th and 39th; with promises of a restoration (especially in the 36th and 37th) to his captive countrymen, and a long description of the rebuilding of the temple and city (wherewith he concludes) as a sure confirmation of it.

Daniel's  
name changed,  
and his  
great proficiency  
in  
learning in  
Babylon.

Daniel, who was descended from the royal family of David, in the first captivity of Judah (which happened

on the river Chebar, where Ezekiel, in the time of his captivity, lived, it is difficult to tell. He was buried as some say, in the same cave wherein Shem and Arphaxad were deposited, upon the banks of the Euphrates; but Benjamin of Tudela (in his *Travels*) tells us, that at some leagues from Bagdat, he saw a magnificent Mausoleum, which was said to be this prophet's tomb, upon the top of which there was a famous library, wherein (as they say) was the original of the prophet's predictions, written with his own hand; that in the prophet's tomb, there is a lamp continually burning, maintained at the expence of the head of the captivity of Bagdat; that every year, this tomb is frequented by the several heads of the captivity, who resort thither with a numerous retinue; and that not only the Jews, but the Persians, Medes, and many of the Mussulmen, made this a place of devotion, and came thither to make their presents, and perform their vows; *Calmet's Dictionary*, under the word *Ezekiel*.

under

under King Jehoiakim) together with his friends Hananiah, <sup>A. M.</sup> Mishael, and Azariah, was carried to Babylon, when he <sup>3417, &c.</sup> was as yet but a youth. The custom among conquerors <sup>Ant. Christ.</sup> then was to change the names of their captives, (especially <sup>587, &c.</sup> when they were to serve in any capacity about the court); <sup>from Jer.</sup> and therefore, by the order of Aspenaz † master of the eu- <sup>xl. 7. to xlv.</sup> nuchs, Daniel † was called *Belteshazzar*, Hananiah, *Shadrach*, <sup>all Daniel,</sup> *Misrael Mesbach*, and Azariah *Abednego*. <sup>and from</sup> <sup>Ezra i. to v.</sup>

For three years they were instructed in all the learning of the Chaldeans, and had a daily allowance of meat and wine from the king's table; but Daniel, who was a devout observer of the religion of his country, desired of the chief Eunuch, that they might be excused from that, and have only a sufficient quantity of water and pulse allowed them, which accordingly was granted; and, by the time that they had finished their studies, they were

† What we render *master of the eunuchs*, may very likely signify the chief minister of Nebuchadnezzar's court. Such officers, in the palaces of eastern princes, were usually called *Eunuchs*; because they who had the controul of the king's household (as we say) were ordinarily such, though many times it might be otherwise. The Jews have a notion, that Daniel and his three companions were, by the order of Nebuchadnezzar, made eunuchs, that the prophecy of Isaiah might be fulfilled: *Thy sons, that shall issue from thee, shall they take away, and they shall be Eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon*, chap. xxxix. 7. But that is no conclusive reason; because, in that prophecy, as well as in the passage we are now upon, the name of *eunuch* might mean no more than any person who had an employment at court; *Calmet's Commentary*.

† It is very remarkable, that, as all their former names related to the true God, so all the names which on this occasion were imposed upon these four Jewish youths, had some reference or other to Babylonish idols. *Daniel*, in Hebrew, signifies *God is my judge*; *Belteshazzar*, in Chaldee, is *the treasure of Baal*; *Hananiah*, in Hebrew, is *well pleasing to God*; *Shadrach*, in Chaldee, *the inspiration of the sun*; *Misrael*, in Hebrew, *proceeding from God*; *Mesbach*, in Chaldee, *belonging to the goddess Shephach*; *Azariah*, in Hebrew, *God is my help*; and *Abednego*, in Chaldee, *the servant of Nego*, i. e. *the sun*, or *the morning-star*, both deities among the Babylonians, and so called because of their brightness; *Calmet's Commentary* on Dan. i. 7.

found



A. M.  
3417, etc.  
Ant. Christ.  
587, etc.  
from Jer.  
xl. 7. to xlv.  
all Daniel,  
and from  
Ezrai. to v.

He tells the  
king his  
dreams, and  
their inter-  
pretation.

found to excel, in the several parts of learning there in vogue, all the magicians in the country †; and especially Daniel was become very famous for his singular skill in the knowledge and interpretation of dreams.

It so happened one night, that King Nebuchadnezzar had a dream, which left strong impressions upon his spirits; but the thing which made him uneasy was, that he could not recollect the substance of it. To assist his memory in this respect, he summoned all his wise men together, (those especially that pretended to divination), demanding of them what his dream was; but when they endeavoured to excuse themselves upon the presumed impossibility of the thing, he fell into such a passion, that he ordered all who professed magic † in his dominions to be instantly put to death.

Under

† The prophet Daniel makes great mention of these sort of people, and ranks them under these four different kinds: The *Chartumim*, the *Asaphim*, the *Mecaphim*, and the *Chasdim*, chap. ii. 2. *Chartumim*, according to the Septuagint, signifies *sophists*; but, according to St. Jerom, *diviners*, *fortune-tellers*, *casters of nativity*, &c. *Asaphim*, has no derivation from the Chaldee tongue, but no small resemblance to the Greek word σοφός, (whether the Greeks took this word from the Babylonians, or the Babylonians from them); and therefore the Septuagint have rendered it by *philosophers*. *Mecaphim* is thought by some to be *necromancers*, such as pretended to raise the dead, to gain intelligence of things future; but the Septuagint have rendered it by a word that denotes such *enchanters* as made use of noxious herbs and drugs, the blood of victims, and the bones of the dead, for their superstitious operations. The other word *Chasdim* is the same with *Chaldeans*, and here signifies a sort of *philosophers* among the Babylonians, who dwelt in a separate part of the city, and were exempt from all public offices and employments. Their study was natural philosophy, astrology, divination, or the foretelling of future events by the observation of the stars, the interpretation of dreams, the science of auguries, the worship of their gods, &c. as Diodorus Siculus, lib. i. gives us an account of them; *Calmet's Dictionary*, under the word *Magicians*.

† Magic is properly of three kinds, natural, artificial, and diabolical. The first of these is no other than natural philosophy, but highly improved and advanced; whereby the person that is well skilled in the power and operation of natural bodies, is able to produce many wonderful effects, mistaken by the illiterate for diabolical performances, but such as lie perfectly within the verge of nature.

Under this denomination and sentence were Daniel and his three friends included ; and therefore, understanding the reason of this sudden decree, Daniel applied himself to Arioch captain of the guard, desiring a short respite of its execution, in which time he did not in the least doubt but to give the king full satisfaction, both as to his dream †, and the interpretation of it : And so proceeding to his three friends, he acquainted them with what he had undertaken, and desired their joint prayer to God, that he would be pleased to reveal this great and important secret to him ; which accordingly was done that very night.

The next morning, after he had returned praise and thanksgiving to God for this singular vouchsafement, he repaired to the palace, and being introduced by the captain of the guard, was asked by the king, if he had found out his dream ? “ You saw \*,” says he, “ O king, an  
“ image

ture. Artificial magic is what we call *legerdmain*, or *sight of hand*, (the merry tricks of jugglers, as we corrupt the *joculatores*), far from exceeding the power of art, though many times they pass with the vulgar for diabolical likewise. Diabolical magic is that which is done by the help of the Devil, who, having great skill in natural causes, may assist those that are in league and covenant with him, to do many strange and astonishing things. It seems, however, by the discourse which passed between Nebuchadnezzar and his magicians, that they had no knowledge in the sciences they pretended to ; that the king himself looked upon them as no better than a pack of impostors : And that they had no familiarity with any wicked demons, who might have helped them out at this dead lift ; otherwise they would not have told the king, *It is a rare thing which the king requireth, and there is none other, that can shew it before the king, except the gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh*, Dan. ii. 11. *Vid.* Edward's Body of divinity, vol. i.

† Some are of opinion, that Nebuchadnezzar's dream, and the interpretation thereof, were both revealed to Daniel, while he was asleep, but others rather think that it was in a vision, while he was awake, because the prayer and thanksgiving which he made to God seem to insinuate, that he was awake ; though we cannot see, why he might not receive the revelation in his sleep, and return God thanks for it as soon as he awoke ; *Galmet's Commentary*.

\* Josephus introduces Daniel as making this preamble to his discovery and explanation of the king's dream : “ It is not any high conceit of my own wisdom, as if I understand more than the Chaldeans do, or any designed reproach upon them for  
Vol. IV. H h “ not

A. M. 3417, etc.  
Ant. Christ.  
587, etc.  
from Jer. xl.  
7. to xlv. all  
Daniel, and  
from Ezra  
i. to v.

“ image of a vast dimension †, excellent in bright-  
ness, but terrible in aspect. The head of this image  
“ was of fine gold, the breast and arms of silver, the  
“ belly and thighs of brass, the legs of iron, and the  
“ feet partly iron and partly clay. You saw, like-  
“ wise, O king, a stone cut out of the mountain, but  
“ from whence it came you knew not. This stone, fall-  
“ ing upon the feet of the image, brake them into  
“ pieces, and then the rest of the image mouldered into

“ not being able to resolve a question which I am able to unriddle, that I engage in this matter; for I am not a person that  
“ pretends to more skill than my neighbours; but it is purely  
“ the work of God, in pity to the miserable, and in mercy to  
“ my prayers, for the life and safety of myself and my friends,  
“ that has now laid open this dream to me, and explained the  
“ meaning of it. Nor have I been so solicitous for the safety  
“ of myself and my companions under your displeasure, as for  
“ your own honour and glory, lest you should tarnish them, by  
“ putting to death (contrary to all right and justice) so many  
“ worthy men, merely because they were not able to do a thing  
“ that is impossible for flesh and blood to perform;” *Jewish  
Antiq. lib. x. c. 11.* This is to be observed, however, that  
though a great part of the book of Daniel be in Hebrew, yet  
this speech of his to the king, as well as the dialogue which  
passed between the king and the magicians; the king’s decree,  
wherein he orders the golden statue to be worshipped; and that  
other, wherein he declares his dream of the vast large tree,  
which Daniel expounded; the history of the feast which Bel-  
shazzar made; of his profanation of the sacred vessels, and the  
terrible vision of the hand-writing which he saw upon the wall;  
the beginning of the reign of Darius; the honours he conferred  
on Daniel, and the vision of the four beasts, denoting the  
four monarchies; that all these, I say, (*viz.* from the 4th verse  
of the 2d chapter, to the beginning of the 8th chapter), are  
wrote in the Chaldee or Syriac language, which, at that time,  
were both the same, and both as familiar to our prophet as was  
his mother-tongue; *Calmét’s Commentary*, on Dan. ii. 4.

† Grotius accurately observes, that the image appeared with  
a glorious lustre in the imagination of Nebuchadnezzar, whose  
mind was wholly taken up with admiration of worldly pomp  
and splendour; whereas the same monarchies were represented  
to Daniel under the shape of fierce and wild beasts, (chap. vii.)  
as being the great supporters of idolatry and tyranny in the  
world; *Lowth’s Commentary* on Dan. ii.

“ dust,

“ dust, which the wind dispersed, so that it was no more  
 “ to be seen ; but the stone which, in this manner, destroy-  
 “ ed the image, increased to a great mountain, and filled  
 “ the earth. This, O king, was the dream ; and the in-  
 “ terpretation † of it is this.—You, who are supreme a-  
 “ bove all other kings, and to whom the God of heaven  
 “ hath given power, and strength, and glory, are signified  
 “ by this *head of gold*. After you another kingdom shall  
 “ arise, but as inferiour to yours as silver is to gold. After  
 “ that there shall arise a third kingdom, emblemed by *brass*,

A. M.  
 3417, &c.  
 Ant. Christ.  
 587, etc.  
 from Jer. xl.  
 7. to xlv. all  
 Daniel, and  
 from Ezra i.  
 to v.

† By these different emblems of metals and stone, God intended to signify to Nebuchadnezzar the several empires that were to be in the world. The Assyrian or Chaldean is represented by *gold*, because it was the first and the most magnificent, if not the most extensive, and Nebuchadnezzar being then upon the throne, is said to be head of it. That of *silver* is the Persian, founded by Cyrus, upon the ruins of the Chaldean, but inferiour to the Chaldean in its duration at least, if not in its extent. That of *brass* is the Grecian, founded by Alexander, upon the ruins of the Persian, and its character is, that it *should bear rule over all the earth*, Dan. ii. 39. which was verified in its great founder ; for, upon his return from India to Babylon, the ambassadors of almost all the known parts of the world resorted thither, to pay their homage and acknowledgment of his dominion. That of *iron* is the Roman empire, which is distinguished by its *breaking in pieces, and subduing all things*, ver. 40. For, whilst it was in its full strength and vigour, under its consuls and first emperours, it brought under its dominion all the kingdoms and states that were then subsisting in Europe, Africa, and a great part of Asia ; but from that time, it became a mixture of iron and clay. Its emperours proved most of them vicious and corrupt, either by their tyranny making themselves hateful to their subjects, or, by their follies and vices, contemptible. *Lastly*, that of the *stone out of the mountain*, is the fifth monarchy, or the kingdom of the Messias ; which, against all the power and policy of the Roman empire, prevailed, not by an external force, but by the powerful preaching of the gospel, to the suppression and defeat of wickedness and impiety, idolatry, and superstition, and *it shall stand for ever, and never be destroyed*, Dan. ii. 44. which can be said of no other kingdom but that of Jesus Christ, which, for these seventeen hundred years and upwards, has withstood the violence of persecutions, and all other contrivances formed against it, and has the sure promises of its Almighty Founder on its side, that *the gates of hell shall not prevail against it*, Matth. xvi. 18. ; *Calmet's Commentary*.

A. M. 3417, etc. Ant. Christ. 587, etc. from Jer. xl. 7. to xlv. all Daniel, and from Ezra i. to v.

“ which shall govern the earth ; but the fourth kingdom shall be as strong as *iron*, and vanquish all the rest. And whereas the feet were partly *iron*, and partly *clay*, this kingdom shall be divided ; part of it shall be strong, and part of it weak, as clay and iron cannot be solidly mixed together ; but in the times of these empires, the God of heaven shall set up another kingdom, (signified by the *stone*), which shall prevail above all, and itself never be destroyed,” &c.

Surprised at this wonderful discovery, the king fell prostrate before Daniel, † and was ready to pay him divine honours. He loaded him however with presents and rich gifts ; set him at the head of his learned men ; made him governour over the whole province of Babylon ; and, at his request, put his three friends into places of the highest trust under him. But all this happened (*a*) before the siege of Jerusalem.

His three friends refusing to worship the image which the king had set up, are miraculously rescued from the fiery furnace.

Nebuchadnezzar being now returned home, out of the spoils which he had brought from Syria and Palestine, ordered a golden statue \* to be made, thirty yards in height, and

† Nebuchadnezzar seems, in a sudden transport, to have looked upon Daniel as having something more than human in him, just as the barbarians thought of St. Paul, Acts xxviii. 6. ; and therefore it is said, that *he fell on his face and worshipped him* ; because the doing of reverence, by way of prostration, is not only an act of worship paid to God, but frequently given to kings and great men in the Old Testament, according to the custom of eastern countries, 2 Sam. ix. 6. ; and sometimes even to prophets, on account of the sanctity of their office, 1 Kings xviii. 7. ; nor was it usually refused by them, except such circumstances were added to it, as made it look like divine worship, and then it was always rejected, as in the case of St. Peter, Acts x. 26. ; *Lowth's Commentary* on Dan. ii. 43.

(*a*) *Viz.* in the seventh year of Jehoiakim, according to Pri-deaux.

\* Grotius is of opinion, that the image which Nebuchadnezzar set up was the figure of his father Nabopolassar, whom, by this means, he intended to deify ; but others think, that it was his own statue which he erected, to gain the adorations of his people in this form. We cannot, however, in what we find Nebuchadnezzar saying to Daniel's friends, perceive that he any where upbraids them with contempt, offered either to his person, or his statue, but only that they

*would*

and of proportionable bigness; and having set it up in the plains of Dura, near Babylon, he summoned all his subjects, of whatever order or degree, to be present at the dedication of it, and the moment they heard the music strike up, (which was to be the signal), to fall prostrate on their faces, and adore it, upon pain of being thrown into a burning † furnace.

A. M. 3417, &c.  
Ant. Christ. 587, &c.  
from Jer. xl. 7. to xlv. all Daniel, and from Ezra i. to v.

Among the captive Jews, the three friends of Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, were accused to the king as having violated his command; and when they were brought before him, persisted in their refusal to pay adoration to the image, with so much constancy, that the king, being incensed thereat, ordered those about him to have the furnace made seven times hotter than it was before; to bind these bold contemners of his will, and cast them immediately into it.

The furnace indeed was so intensely hot, that the persons who were ordered to throw them in, were scorched to death; but they themselves came to no manner of harm:

*would not serve his gods, nor worship the image which he had set up,* Dan. iii. 14. And therefore others have imagined, that this was neither his own nor his father's statue, but that of Jupiter, which was afterwards found in the temple of Belus, when Xerxes plundered it of its immense riches, among which were several images of massy gold, but one more especially fifty feet high, which might be the same that Nebuchadnezzar consecrated in the plains of Dura. For though that is said to have been sixty cubits, *i. e.* ninety feet high, yet we may suppose, that it stood upon a pedestal of forty feet high, and so the image, and the pedestal together, might make ninety, (*vid.* vol. i. p. 310, in the notes), otherwise there would be no proportion between its height and its breadth, according to the description we have of it in Dan. iii. 1.; *Prideaux's Connection, anno* 573.

† This kind of punishment was pretty common in these parts of the world, so that some will have it, that Abraham, before he departed from Chaldea, was made to undergo it, but escaped by a miraculous preservation, founding their opinion on Gen. xi. 31. Of this furnace, in particular, it is related, that the king's servants having received the command to heat it *seven times hotter, ceased not to make the oven hot with resin, pitch, tow, and small wood; so that the flame streamed forth above the furnace forty and nine cubits; and passed through and burnt the Chaldeans it found about the furnace; The song of the three holy children, ver. 23. &c.*

for

A. M. 3417, etc. Ant. Christ. 587, &c. from Jer. for an angel † from heaven came, and, suspending the agency of the fire, walked in the midst of the furnace with them, blessing † and praising God ; so that when the king

† Nebuchadnezzar's expression upon this occasion is, *Lo ! I see, four men walking loose in the midst of the fire, and the form of the fourth is like the son of God*, Dan. iii. 25. Whereupon some

have thought, that this prince, having little or no knowledge of the true religion, imagined that he saw some demigod, (an Apollo, an Hercules, a Mercury, for instance), the son of a superior god, walking with the three Hebrew youths in the fiery furnace. The notion, it must be owned, agrees very well with the ancient theology of the Grecians, to which that of the Chaldeans had no small resemblance : But as angels are sometimes in Scripture called the *sons of God*, Job. i. 6. and xxxviii. 7. and most nations had not only a belief of their existence, but high conceptions likewise of their power, the king explains himself what he means by *the son of God*, when, in joy for their deliverance, he cries out, *Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who hath sent his angel, and delivered his servants that trusted in him !* Dan. iii. 28. For (as it is in the Song of the three holy children) *the angel of the Lord came down into the oven, together with Azariah and his fellows, and smote the flame of the oven, and made the midst of the furnace as it had been a moist and whistling wind, so that the fire touched them not at all, neither hurt nor troubled them.*

† According to the vulgar Latin edition, in the third chapter of Daniel, between the 23d and 24th verse, is added the *Song of the three children* ; but being no where extant, either in the Hebrew or Chaldee language, and never received in the canon of holy writ by the Jewish church, or by the ancient Christians, our church has thought proper to place it among the apocryphal writings, where it stands next to the book of Baruch, though the church of Rome, by a decree of the council of Trent, (sess. 4.) has not only given it, but the history of Susanna likewise, and of Bel and the Dragon, (which most of the ancients looked upon as mere fables), a place among the canonical Scriptures. The Song itself consists of two parts ; a prayer, and a thanksgiving. The prayer is a devout confession of the sins of the people, and acknowledgment of God's righteousness, in bringing their captivity, and other calamities, upon them : And the thanksgiving is a solemn excitation of all creatures whatever, but more especially of the three Hebrew children, who were thus *saved from the hand of death, to bless the Lord, praise him, and exalt him above all for ever.*

(who

(who staid to see the execution) perceived it, he started up on a sudden, and, coming nearer to the mouth of the furnace, called upon them to come forth, which they instantly did, in the presence of him and all his attendants, without \* so much as an hair of their heads being singed, or the least smell of fire about them. Convinced by the greatness of this miracle, the king himself glorified the God of Israel, published an edict in favour of the Jewish religion, and gave these three glorious confessors still higher promotion in the province of Babylon.

A. M.  
3417, &c.  
Ant. Chris.  
587, &c.  
from Jer.  
xl. 7. to xlv.  
all Daniel,  
and from  
Ezra i. 10 v.

Not long after this, the judgments which the prophet Jeremiah (b) had denounced against his countrymen the Jews, when they rejected the counsel of God, and fled into Egypt for protection, (as they vainly thought), began to operate: for, when Nebuchadnezzar understood \*, that the subjects of Pharaoh Hophra had revolted from him, and declared Amasis (an officer of his court) their king, he took the advantage of the intestine troubles ensuing thereupon, and having, in a short time, overrun the country

Nebuchadnezzar conquers Egypt, and destroys the Jews who had retreated thither.

\* "As if the flame itself (according to the expression of Josephus) had been conscious of the injustice of their sentence, and suspended the very nature of its consuming quality in favour of the innocent;" *Jewish Antiquities, lib. x. c. 11.*  
(b) Jer. xlv. 27, 28.

\* The occasion of this revolt is, to this effect, related by Herodotus,—That Pharaoh Hophra, whom he calls *Apries*, having lost a great army in Lybia, and, as some imagined, on purpose, that, being rid of them, he might, with more ease and security, govern the rest, fell under the resentment of his subjects to such a degree, that several of them joined together in a body, and revolted from him; that, to appease and reduce them to their duty, he sent Amasis, one of the officers of his court, to them, but, instead of his persuading them, they prevailed with him to be their king; that hereupon Hophra sent Paltabamis, a person of the first rank, to arrest Amasis, and bring him with him; but, when he returned without being able to execute his commission, he commanded his ears and his nose to be immediately cut off, which indignity, to a man of his worth and character, so exasperated the rest of his subjects, that they almost all forsook him; so that he was forced to hire an army of foreigners, wherewith he attempted to give Amasis battle not far from Memphis; but had the misfortune to be vanquished, taken prisoner, and carried to the city Sais, where he was strangled in his own palace; *Herodotus, lib. i. and Diodorus Siculus, lib. i. part. ii.*

from



A. M.  
3417, etc.  
Ant. Christi.  
587, etc.  
from Jer.  
xl. 7. to xlv.  
all Daniel,  
and from  
Ezra i. to v.  
interprets an-  
other dream  
of his.

from Migdol to Syene †, *i. e.* from one end of Egypt to the other, he plundered and laid it waste; and of the Jews who, after the murder of Gedaliah, had fled thither, some he slew, and others he carried away captive to Babylon; so that scarce any escaped but such as fled out of Egypt, and afterwards settled themselves in their own land, at the end of the captivity.

Having thus reduced the king of Egypt, and constituted Amasis his viceroy, he returned to Babylon, where he had another dream, which gave him fresh inquiet. This dream he very well remembered; and therefore he sent for his own magicians first, in hopes that they could have interpreted it; but when he met with no satisfaction from them, he was forced to have recourse to Daniel again; and thus, upon his entrance, he accosted him:

“ I saw † a tree of a prodigious bigness, which seemed  
“ to reach from earth to heaven. It was fair, and full of  
“ fruit; yielded shelter to the beasts and fowls, and suste-  
“ nance to all flesh. I saw † likewise an angel coming down  
“ from

† This is a city in the southern frontiers of Egypt, between Thebes and the great cataracts of the Nile, of which the ancients speak frequently, as the farthest part in Egypt of any note towards Ethiopia; *Calmet's Dictionary*, under the word.

† It is very observable, that, in the writings of the prophets, princes are frequently compared to trees, (*Ezek. xvii. 5, 6 and xxxi. 3. Jer. xxii. 15. Psal. xxxvii. 35.*), and it is the notion of Grotius, that a tree seen in a dream, according to the principles of the Indians, Persians, and Egyptians, denotes some great and excellent personage; but nothing is more precarious than these principles, or more uncertain than these observations, because in the dreams which come from God, he may represent an eminent person under a thousand different types, as well as that of a stately tree; *Calmet's Commentary* on *Dan. iv. 7.*

† The words, in our translation are, I saw a *watcher*, which, as it came down from heaven, could be no other than an angel. The Chaldee word is *Nir*, from whence St. Jerom imagines, that the Pagans derived their *Iris*, the messenger of the gods; and by some expressions in *Dan. iv. 17.* it looks as if the Chaldeans had a notion, (for the king, we may suppose, speaks according to the common sentiments of the people), that these watchers, or holy ones in heaven, did constitute an assembly of judges, or were an order of blessed spirits, who took under their cognizance and decision the fate of men;

“ from heaven, who cried with a loud voice, Hew down  
 “ the tree, cut off the branches, shake off the leaves, scatter  
 “ the fruit, and let all creatures depart from it ; but let the  
 “ stump remain in the earth, and bind with a band of  
 “ iron and brass, in the tender grass of the field, and let it  
 “ be wet with the dew of heaven and let his portion be  
 “ with the beasts in the grass of the earth : let his heart be  
 “ changed from that of a man, and a beast’s heart be given  
 “ him †, and let seven times pass over him.

A. M.  
 3417, &c.  
 Ant. Christ.  
 587, &c.  
 from Jer.  
 xl. 7. to xlv.  
 all Daniel,  
 and from  
 Ezra i. to v.

As soon as Daniel heard the dream, he was so affected with the dreadful judgments which it portended to the king, that he stood silent for the space of an hour ; but being encouraged by the king to expound the thing to him, he it what it would, he addressed himself to him in these words :

—— “ The tree, O king, which thou sawest in thy  
 “ dream, is thyself ; for thy greatness reacheth unto the  
 “ heavens, and thy dominions to the end of the earth :  
 “ but the angel which came from heaven with orders

men ; for, by the decree of these watchers it was that the tree (in the vision) was ordered to be cut down ; *Calmet’s Commentary*.

† The ambiguity of this expression (which the prophet, in his exposition of the dream, still adheres to) has occasioned a great variety of opinions concerning it. Some maintain, that, as the Persians distinguished their years into two seasons, winter and summer, the seven years of Nebuchadnezzar must be reckoned in this manner, which will therefore reduce them to the space of three years and an half. Dorotheus (in his Synopsis of the lives of the prophets and apostles) tells us, that God did indeed condemn Nebuchadnezzar to seven years habitation with brutes, but that, at the prayers and intercessions of Daniel, the seven years were reduced to seven months. The word *time*, according to others, denotes no more than the space of a month ; so that the king’s disorder, of course, lasted no longer than seven months ; whereof (according to their computation) for the first forty days he continued in his frenzy, as a madman ; in the forty days following, he bewailed his offences ; and, in the last forty days, he recovered by degrees from his infirmity : But all these are idle conjectures. A year was a common measure of time among the Chaldeans, especially in the chronicles of their kings ; and therefore, in this particular, we need no other interpreter for Daniel than Daniel himself, who, in sundry places of this prophecy, particularly in chap. xii. 7. has set a time, and times, and the dividing, or half of a time, for the space of three years and an half ; *Calmet’s Dictionary*, under the word *Nebuchadnezzar*.

A. M. 3417, etc. Ant. Christ. 587, etc. from Jer. xl. 7. to xlv. all Daniel, and from Ezra i. to v. "to cut down the tree, denotes the decree of the Most High, which is determined against thee, viz. that thou shalt be driven from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the *beasts of the field*; that thou shalt eat grafs with the oxen, and be wet with the dew of heaven; that seven years shall pass over thee, before thou comest to consider, that *God ruleth over the kingdoms of men*; and that, after such a term, thou shalt be restored to thy kingdom again, which is the thing intimated by the stump of the tree, that was ordered to be left. And now, that thou hast heard the interpretation of this dream, permit me, O king, to advise thee to atone for thy sins by an holy life, and by acts of mercy to the poor, and to recommend thyself to the mercy of God, that he may prolong thy posterity." This was the advice of a faithful minister; but Nebuchadnezzar, it is to be feared, had † not the heart to pursue it.

buchadnezzar. His cessation from war (in which he had been long engaged) had by this time given him an opportunity of finishing his stately buildings at Babylon; and upon the survey of these, as well as other monuments of his greatness, he became so intoxicated with pride and arrogance, that God, in punishment of his haughty mind, deprived him of his senses, and for exalting himself above the state of men, reduced him to the condition of a beast.

For seven years he lived abroad in the fields, eating grafs like an ox, and taking up his lodging on the ground in the open air. But at the expiration of this time, when

† God delayed the execution of his threats against this prince, and gave him a whole year's reprieve, chap. iv. 29. to see if he would repent, and turn unto him: but perceiving that he still persisted in his crimes, as soon as the measure of his iniquity was full, he smote and reduced him to the condition of a beast. This is Theodoret's notion of the matter; but St. Jerom rather thinks, that this king being terrified with the threats, and touched with the exhortations of the prophet, began to set about his reformation, and by acts of charity and mercy, to reconcile himself to God, for which he obtained a delay of his punishment for a year's space; but that, instead of persevering in these good purposes, he suffered himself to fall into pride, upon the contemplation of the mighty works he had done, and so, by his vanity, lost what he had gained by his charity: *Bonum misericordie perdidit malo superbie*; Calmet's Commentary.

the

he became sensible of God's superior power and dominion, his senses returned to him again. His kingdom was restored, and he reinstated in his former Majesty; whereupon he made this solemn and grateful acknowledgment: (c) *And now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise, and extol, and honour the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and his ways judgment, and these that walk in pride, he is able to abase,* A. M. 3417, &c. Ant. Chris. 587, &c. from Jer. xl. 7. to xlv. all Daniel, and from Ezra i. to v. *when he pleases.*

Upon the death of Nebuchadnezzar \*, (for he lived not long after his restoration), his son Evil-merodach succeeded to the throne of Babylon, and to make some amends for his father's hard usage of Jehoiachin, the captive king of Judah, he released him (as we said before) from an imprisonment that had lasted near 37 years, and promoted him to great honour in his palace. His reign however was but short: For his lusts and wickednesses had, in the space of two years, made him so intolerable, that even his own relations conspired against him, and put him to death; whereupon Neriglissar, his sister's husband, (who was at the head of the conspiracy), reigned in his stead; and as Jehoiachin † did not long survive him, Salathiel, his son, succeeded as nominal prince † of the Jews. Upon his accession

(c) Dan. iv. 37.

\* This prince died in the year of the world 3442, and before Christ 562; after he had reigned from the death of his father, according to the Babylonish account, three and forty years. He was certainly one of the greatest princes that had appeared in the east for many ages before him, and according to Megasthenes, (as he is cited by Josephus, Antiq. l. x. c. 11.), both for his enterprises and performances, far excelled even Hercules himself. The same historian (as he is quoted by Eusebius, Præp. lib. ix. c. 41.) informs us, that a little before his death, he foretold his subjects of the coming of the Persians, and their subduing the kingdom of Babylon; but this he might gather from the prophet Daniel, and especially from the interpretation of his dreams; *Prideaux's Connection, anno 562.*

† It is not unlikely, that Jehoiachin, being a favourite, fell with him; for that best agrees with Jeremiah's prophecies concerning him, wherein it is denounced, chap. xxii. 30. that he *should not prosper in his days*; which could not be so well verified of him, had he died in the full possession of all that prosperity to which Evil-merodach had advanced him; *Prideaux's Connection, anno 559.*

† Long after the loss of all authority, the Jews kept up the title of a king among them, and had a person descended of the house of

A. M. 3417, &c.  
Ant. Chris. 587, &c.  
from Jer. xl. 7. to xlv.  
all Daniel,  
and from  
Ezra i. to v.

cession to the throne, Neriglissar made great preparations for war against the Medes, which obliged Cyaxares their king to call in the assistance of his nephew Cyrus † out of

David, who, by the name of *the head of the captivity*, was acknowledged and honoured as a prince, and, as far as was consistent with the government they lived under, was invested with some sort of jurisdiction over them. Nay, to this very day, the same pageantry is said to be kept up among the Jews, and chiefly with this view, that they may be furnished from hence with an answer against the Christians, urging the prophecy of Jacob against them, viz. that *the sceptre is departed from Judah*; for thereupon their usual reply is, That the sceptre is still preserved among them, in the head of the captivity; though some of them have modesty enough to give up this; *Prideaux's Connection, anno 559.*

† It is on all hands agreed, that Astyages king of the Medes had a son, whom profane history calls *Cyaxares*; and a daughter whose name was *Mandana*, married to *Cambyfes*, a Persian, by whom she had *Cyrus*; but whether this *Cambyfes* was king of the country, or only a private person, it is not so well agreed. The two chief historians who write of this matter, are *Herodotus* and *Xenophon*; but their relations in this regard are different; forasmuch as the latter makes his father king of Persia, the former a meaner man. The account of *Herodotus* indeed contains narratives that are much more strange and surprising, and consequently more diverting and acceptable to the reader; and, for this reason, more have chosen to follow him than *Xenophon*: But though *Xenophon* (as being a great commander, as well as a great politician) had certainly grafted many maxims of war and policy into his history. yet where nothing of this appears, he must be allowed to be an historian of much more credit in matters of fact than *Herodotus*. *Herodotus* having travelled through Egypt, Syria and several other countries, in order to the writing of his history, did (as travellers used to do) put pown all matters upon trust, and in many, no doubt, was imposed on: But *Xenophon* was a man of another character. He wrote all things with great judgment, and due consideration; and having lived in the court of *Cyrus the younger*, a descendent of the *Cyrus* whom we now speak of, had opportunities of being better informed of what he wrote concerning this great prince than *Herodotus* had; and confining himself to this argument only, do doubt he examined all matters relating to it more thoroughly, and gave a more accurate and just account of them, than could be expected from the other, who wrote of all thing, at large, as they came in his way; *Prideaux's Connection, anno 563.*

Persia,

Persia, who, coming with a body of thirty thousand Persians, was by his uncle made general of the Medes likewise, and thereupon, with his joint forces, gave Neriglissar battle, slew him, and put his army to the rout.

The death of this prince proved a great loss to the Babylonians, especially considering that his son Laborosoarchod (who succeeded him) was in every thing the very reverse of his father, a man given to all manner of wickedness \*, cruelty, and injustice, for which he became so odious to his own subjects, that they conspired against him, and slew him, after he had reigned only nine months.

Belshazzar † (in all probability the grandson of the great Nebuchadnezzar) succeeded him; in the first year of whose reign,

A. M.  
3417, etc.  
Ant. Christ.  
587, etc.  
from Jer.  
xl. 7. to xlv.  
all Daniel,  
and from  
Ezra i. to v.  
Laboroso-  
archod suc-  
ceeds him;  
and, being  
murdered  
by his sub-  
jects, is  
succeeded  
by Belshaz-  
zar.

\* Two acts of his tyrannical violence towards two of his principal nobility, Gobrias and Gadates, are particularly mentioned by Xenophon, viz. That the only son of the former he slew at an hunting, to which he had invited him, for no other reason but his throwing a dart with success at a wild beast, when he himself had missed it: And that the other he caused to be castrated, merely because one of his concubines had commended him for an handsome man; *Cyropædia, lib. v.*

† Great is the difference among historians, and others, who this Belshazzar (who is generally believed to be the same with the Nabonnedus in Berosus, and the Labynetus in Herodotus) was. Some will have him to be of the royal blood of Nebuchadnezzar, and others no way related to him. Some maintain that he was a Babylonian, and others affirm that he was a Mede; and of those who allow him to be of the royal family of Nebuchadnezzar, some will have it, that he was his son, and others, that he was his grandson; and therefore, to clear this matter, we must observe, 1<sup>st</sup>, That Belshazzar (be he who he will) was certainly of the seed of Nebuchadnezzar, because he is expressly called his son in several places of the 5th chapter of Daniel, and in 2 Chron. xxxvi. 20. it is said, that Nebuchadnezzar and his children, or offspring, reigned in Babylon until the kingdom of Persia commenced. 2<sup>dly</sup>, That, according to the prophecy of Jeremiah, (chap. xxvii. 7.) the nations of the East were to serve Nebuchadnezzar and his son, and his son's son; and therefore he must have had a son, and a son's son, successors to him in the throne of Babylon. 3<sup>dly</sup>, That as Evil-Merodach was Nebuchadnezzar's son, of all the kings that reigned after him at Babylon, none but Belshazzar could be his son's son: For Neriglissar was only his daughter's husband, and Laborosoarchod was Neriglissar's son; so that neither of them was either son or grandson to Nebuchadnezzar. 4<sup>thly</sup>, That, according to Herodotus,

A. M.  
3417, etc.  
ant. Ch. int.  
537, etc.  
from Jer.  
xi. 7. cxiv.  
all Daniel,  
and from  
Ezra i. to v.



To him Da-  
niel ex-  
plains the  
hand-writ-  
ting on the  
wall, which  
pur ended  
his destuc-  
tion.

reign, (d) Daniel had his dream of the four beasts, representing the four empires of the Chaldeans, Persians, Greeks, and Romans; and, in the third, the famous vision of the (e) ram and the he goat, by the latter of which was signified Alexander the Great, and by the former Darius Codomannus, the last of the Persian kings, who were the successors of Cyrus. Cyrus, indeed, who was to lay the foundation of the Persian monarchy, had several conflicts with Belshazzar's armies; but at length, having overthrown him in a pitched battle, he shut him up in the city of Babylon, and there besieged him.

During the siege, Belshazzar, having made a great feast for all his courtiers, ordered that the vessels of gold and silver, which his grandfather Nebuchadnezzar had taken out of the temple of Jerusalem, should be brought into the banqueting house, that he and his princes, together with his wives and concubines, might drink out of them; which accordingly was done; and (to add to their profaneness) in the midst of their cups, they sang songs in the praise of their several idols. But it was not long before God † put a damp to the king's mirth, by causing an hand

to

Herodotus, lib. i. the last king of Babylon (who, without doubt, was Belshazzar, because, immediately after his death, the kingdom was given to the Medes and Persians, Dan. v. 28, 30, 31.) was son to the great queen Nitocris; but now Nitocris, to have a child that was grandson to Nebuchadnezzar, could be wife to no other than Evil-Merodach; and therefore, putting all this together, it appears, that Belshazzar, the last king of Babylon, was the son of Evil-Merodach by Nitocris his queen, and consequently son's son to Nebuchadnezzar; nor must it seem strange, that we find him, in Dan. v. called *Nebuchadnezzar's son*, and *Nebuchadnezzar his father*, because it is the usual style of Scripture to call any ancestor upward, *father*, and any descendent downward, *son*; *Prideaux's Connection*, anno 555.

(d) Chap. vii.

(e) Chap. viii.

† Next to murder, no sin is so remarkably punished in this world as that of sacrilege. This appears from innumerable instances taken from all histories, both sacred and profane. But in the Heathen story, remarkable examples of this kind are, the miserable end of the Phocians, who robbed the temple of Delphos, and were the occasion of that war, which was called from thence *the holy war*: The destruction of the Gauls in their attempt upon the same temple; and of Crassus, who plundered the temple of Jerusalem. and that of the Syrian goddess; as

these

to appear upon the wall, which, in three words, wrote the sentence of his condemnation. The king saw the hand that wrote; and being exceedingly affrighted and troubled at it, he commanded all his wise men, magicians, and astrologers to be immediately called, that they might read the writing, and explain its meaning; but when none † of them could do either, notwithstanding the great honours † and presents

A. M. 3417, &c.  
Ann. Chil.  
587, &c.  
from Jer.  
xi. 7. to xlv.  
all Daniel,  
and from  
Ezra i. to v.

these two last stories are related by Prideaux, part 2.; *Lowe's Commentary* on Dan. v. 5.

† The writing might very probably be in a character unknown to the Chaldeans, as the old Hebrew, Phœnician, and Samaritan were; or if they were acquainted with the character, yet such is the genius of most of the oriental languages, where so little use is made of vowels, and where the pronunciation and sequel of the discourse generally determine the signification of the letters, that a man may be a perfect master of a language, and yet not able to read and comprehend a word, when it stands alone, and without any context, as it is in the case of *Mene. Tekel. Upharfin*. A man, for instance, that understands the Hebrew tongue never so well, were he to meet *dbt* standing alone, would have much ado to read them, because, according to the manner that we pronounce them, the letters will admit of many different significations; and it is much the same in the Chaldee language, wherein the words we are now speaking of were wrote; *Calmel's Commentary* on Dan. v. 7.

† The king's words are these, — *Whoever shall read this writing, and shew me the interpretation thereof, shall be clothed with scarlet, and have a chain of gold about his neck, and shall be the third ruler in the kingdom.* Dan. v. 7. From whence it appears, that the kings of Babylon wore the same ornaments, and, in rewarding their favourites, gave the same marks of honour that the kings of Persia and their successors did. For purple, we find, in several Greek authors, was the ordinary habit of the kings of Persia, and of the princes of their court that were in the highest posts of honour. The chain or collar of gold was one of the greatest marks of distinction that the Persian kings could bestow upon their subjects; and *to be the third ruler of the kingdom*, was the same sublime office that Darius the Mede put Daniel in, chap. vi. 1, 2. when he constituted him one of the presidents over the hundred and twenty princes that he had made governours over provinces; *Xenophon's Cyropædia*, lib. viii.; *Diodorus*, lib. xviii.; *Josephus's Antiquities*, lib. xi. c. 6.; *Briffon, De regno Persar.* lib. i.

which



A. M.  
3417, etc.  
Ant. Christ.  
587, etc.  
from Jer.  
xl. 7. to xlv.  
all Daniel,  
and from  
Ezra i. to v.

which he offered them, at the instance of the || queen-mother, Daniel was sent for."

As soon as he came into the king's presence, he || received him very courteously, and made him the same offer of honours and presents, that he had done to his own magicians, if he would but explain the writing. Daniel modestly refused the offers he made him; but having undertook to perform what he required of him, he first reprov'd him, with some freedom, for his ingratitude to God, who had advanced him to the rank of a sovereign, and for the profanation of the vessels which were consecrated to his service; and then proceeded to the interpretation of the words, which were these, MENE. TEKEL. UPHARSIN. "Mene, says he, which signifies *number*, intimates, that "the days, both of your life and of your reign, are "numbered, or that you have but a short time to live. "Tekel, which signifies *weight*, intimates, that you have "been weighed in the balance of God's justice, and found "too light; and *Upharsin* †, which signifies *a fragment*, "intimates, that your kingdom shall be divided, and given

|| In the 2d verse of the 5th chapter of Daniel, we read, *that the king, his princes, his wives, and his concubines* were all at the feast, which he made for them; and yet in the 10th verse it follows, that the queen, upon hearing of the news of the handwriting, *came into the banqueting-house*; but then it must be observed, that this queen was not one of his wives, but Nitocris his mother, and she seems there to be called the *queen* by way of eminency, because she had the regency of the kingdom under her son, for which her great wisdom duly qualified her. For this reason Herodotus speaks of her, as if she had been sovereign of the kingdom, (in the same manner as Semiramis is said to have been), and attributes to her all those works about Babylon which other authors ascribe to her son; *Prideaux's Connection, anno 547.*

|| And yet it is observable, that when he came into his presence, he asked him, *Art thou that Daniel?* which seems to imply, that though he was one of the chief ministers of state, Dan. v. 13. the king did not know him: But this only shews, that Belshazzar was a man who minded nothing but his pleasures, and left all things else to the management of others; a conduct too often followed by such princes, as think kingdoms made for nothing else but to serve their pleasures, and gratify their lusts! *Prideaux's Connection, anno 547.*

† Daniel, in repeating the words, instead of *Upharsin*, puts in *Peres*; but they both signify the same thing.

“ to the Medes and Persians;” which accordingly came to pass; for that very night, in the midst of their feasting and revelling, the city \* was taken by surprise, † Belshazzar slain, and the kingdom translated to Cyaxares, whom the Scripture calls *Darius the Mede*.

Darius, from his very first accession to the throne, had a great esteem for Daniel, as knowing him to be a person of extraordinary parts and learning, and long versed in affairs of state; and therefore having divided the whole empire into an hundred and twenty provinces, over which he set governours, and over these three presidents, as the king's chief

A. M. 3417, etc.  
Ant. Christ. 587, etc.  
from Jer. xl. 7. to xlv. all Daniel, and from Ezra i. to v.

Darius's great esteem for Daniel, which occasioned ill-will, and conspiracies against him.

\* Cyrus had lain before the town to little or no purpose for the space of two years, when, understanding that a great annual feast was approaching, wherein the Babylonians, in honour of their idol Sheshach, were wont to spend the whole night in revelling and drunkenness, he thought this no improper time to attempt to surprise them. To this purpose, having posted one part of his men at the place where the river ran into the city, and another where it came out, with orders to enter by way of the channel, as soon as they found the river fordable: About the close of the evening, he fell to work, broke down the dams, and turned aside the stream; so that, by the middle of the night, the river was so drained, that the parties, according to their orders, entered the channel, and finding the gates leading down to the river, open, by them they ascended into the city, and made directly to the palace, where they slew the king, and all those that were about them. By this stratagem, Cyrus became master of Babylon, but he took no care to repair the breach in the banks of the river; so that all the country, on that side, was overflowed, and the current which went to Babylon, grew afterwards so shallow, as to become unfit for the smallest navigation. So fully verified were all these prophecies concerning Babylon: *Behold I will stir up the Medes against her*, Isaiah xiii. 17. *I will dry up her sea, and make her springs dry*, Jer. li. 36. *Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees excellency, shall be like Sodom and Gomorrah*, Isaiah xiii. 19. *For I will make it a possession for the bittern, and pools of water*, Isaiah xiv. 23. *saith the king, whose name is the Lord of Hosts*; Prideaux's Connection, anno 547.

† Of the manner wherein this was done, we find Xenophon (Cypœdia, lib. vii.) thus relating the story, viz. “ That two deserters. Gadatus and Gobryas, having assisted some of the Persian army to kill the guards, and seize upon the palace, they entered into the room where the king was, whom they found standing up in a posture of defence, but that they soon dispatched him, and those that were with him, and thereby

A. M.  
3417, etc.  
Ant. Chriſt.  
587, etc.  
from Jer. xl.  
7. to xlv. all  
Daniel, and  
from Ezra i.  
to v.

chief miniſters, he made Daniel the firſt of theſe †; but it happened to him, as it uſually does to all favourites, to be maligned and envied by others.

His adminiſtration of public affairs, however, was ſo juſt, that, in that capacity, he gave them no room for any accuſation againſt him; and therefore they laid their plot another way. He, they knew, was a ſtrict obſerver of the religion of his country, and a conſtant reſorter to God in prayer; and therefore they applied themſelves to Darius, in the name of his whole council and officers of ſtate, that he would be pleaſed ſo far to indulge his people, as to paſs a decree, (only for thirty days), that whoever † ſhould aſk any petition either of God or man, except of the king only, for that ſpace of time, ſhould be thrown to the lions; which the king, taking it for a great teſtimony of their affection and loyalty to him, at his firſt acceſſion to the throne, without any manner of heſitation, paſſed into an act, and iſſued out his proclamation to that purpoſe.

Daniel was not ignorant that this wicked contrivance was deſigned to enſnare him; but nevertheleſs he continued his uſual courſe of paying his adorations to God, three times every day, and that not in any clandeſtine manner, but

“ fulfilled the prophecy of Jeremiah:” *I will make drunk her princes, and her wiſe men, her captains and her rulers, and her mighty men; and they ſhall ſleep a perpetual ſleep, and not awake, ſaith the king, whoſe name is the Lord of Hoſts; chap. li. 57; Lowth’s Commentary on Dan. v. 30.*

† For though the whole power of the army, and the chief conduct of other affairs were in the hands of Cyrus, (and therefore we find him, in Ptolemy’s canon, ſet down, as immediate ſucceſſor to Belſhazzar, who is there called *Nabonadius*), yet as long as his uncle lived, Cyrus allowed him a joint title with him in the empire, and out of deference to him, yielded him the firſt place of honour in it; though, in reality, he had no more than the name and ſhadow of ſovereignty, except in Media, which was his own proper dominion before any conqueſts were made; *Prideaux’s Connection, anno 538.*

† It may ſeem a little ſtrange, that Darius ſhould ſo readily accept of an honour which was due to God alone: But we ſee what a pitch of vanity and arrogance theſe eaſtern princes were arrived at, when we find Nebuchadnezzar, in Daniel, aſking the three Hebrew youths, *Who is that God, that ſhall deliver you out of my hands?* Dan. iii. 15.; when we find it ſaid of another of that name,

but with his chamber-window open towards Jerusalem †. His enemies, who had laid this snare for him, were not forgetful to watch him diligently; and therefore having taken him in the act of prayer, they immediately went to the king, accused Daniel of a contempt of his decree, and desired that the sentence might instantly be executed upon him. A. M. 3417, etc. Ant. Christ. 587, etc. from Jer. xl. 7. to xlv. all Daniel, and from Ezra. to v.

The king too late perceived, that his easy compliance with a fallacious offer had betrayed him into a mistake, that was likely to prove fatal to his servant Daniel, and therefore he laboured, what he could, to reverse the decree; but the grandees, on the other hand, represented to him, that the royal decrees, according to the law of the Medes and Persians †, were unalterable, and consequently, the penalty which Daniel had incurred, irreversible; so that what through the importunity of these wicked men, and a false notion of honour in adhering to his word, the king delivered up Daniel to their mercy, but not without some glimmering hopes, that the God whom he served continually, would, by some means or other, preserve him.

No

in the book of Judith, *Who is God, but Nabuchodonosor? He will send his power, and destroy them from the face of the earth*, chap. vi. 2, 3.; and more especially, when we find the Persians making it a matter of state-policy to have the persons of their kings in the same veneration as they had their gods; *Quint. Curt. lib. viii.*

† It was a constant custom among the Jews, for those that were in the country, or in any distant land, to turn themselves towards Jerusalem, and for those that were at Jerusalem, to turn towards the temple, when they prayed: And the probable reason of this might be, the words of Solomon, in his prayer to God, at the consecration of the temple: *If thy people, when led away captive, pray unto thee toward their land, which thou gavest unto their fathers, the city, which thou hast chosen, and the house which I have built for thy name; then hear thou their prayers, and their supplication, in heaven, thy dwelling-place, and maintain their cause*, 1 Kings viii. 48, 49.

† So Diodorus Siculus tells us (lib. iv.) of Darius, the last king of Persia, that he would have pardoned Charidemus after he was condemned to death, but could not reverse the law that had passed against him. What made these laws thus unalterable, we are at a loss to know, unless we suppose, that when they passed, either the king confirmed them by an oath, and then they became immutable; or that they were sealed not only by the king, but by all the princes then in council, as one

A. M.  
3417, etc.  
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7. to xlv. all  
Daniel, and  
from Ezra i.  
to v.

No sooner was Daniel delivered into their hands, but they hurried him away to the lions den; and having thrown him in, they not only rolled a large stone to the mouth of it, but had it sealed likewise † with their own, as well as the king's signet, that thereby they might prevent all possibility of his making an escape. The king, in the mean time, went pensive home; and having passed the night in much uneasiness and anxiety of mind, he rose early next morning, and repaired to the den, where, to his great and surprising joy, he found Daniel alive; and having caused him to be taken out, he ordered, that his accusers †, their wives, and their children, should be all cast into it, where the lions fell upon them, and instantly destroyed them: While the king, in grateful acknowledgment of a wonderful Providence in Daniel's preservation, made public proclamation, that in all the parts of his dominions, the God, whom Daniel worshipped, should be revered.

and makes  
intercession  
with God  
for the re-  
stitution of  
the Jews.

The term of seventy years, which the prophet Jeremiah † had prefixed for the continuance of Judah's captivity,

would be apt to guess from Dan. vi. 8. and xii. 9.; *Lowth's Commentary* on Dan. vi.; and *Patrick's Commentary* on Esther i.

† By this it seems, as if the Persian government, at this time, was a kind of mixed monarchy, consisting of a king and nobles; forasmuch as we find that the king could do nothing of importance without his counsellors, nor had he power to alter any thing that was determined in council; *Calmet's Commentary*.

† The *lex talionis* condemned all calumniators to the same sort of punishment which they intended to have brought upon others; and in this case, among the Persians, it was a frequent thing to include all the family in the penalty inflicted on the father; but *abominande leges* (says Ammianus Marcellinus) *per quas, ob noxam unius, omnis propinquitas perit*; *Calmet's Commentary*.

† The particular prophecies, to which Daniel alludes, might probably be these, — *Thus saith the Lord of hosts, because ye have not heard my words, behold, I will send and take all the families of the north, and Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, my servant, and will bring them against this land, and the inhabitants thereof. — And this whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment, and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years; and it shall come to pass, when seventy years are accomplished, I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith the Lord, for their*

vity, being now drawing toward a conclusion, Daniel (*f*) thought it his duty to humble himself before God, and to make his ardent supplications to him, that he would remember his people, and grant a restoration to Jerusalem, and make his face again to shine upon his holy city, and his sanctuary, which was desolate: Whereupon he had, in a vision, assurance given him by the angel Gabriel, not only of the deliverance of Judah from their temporal captivity under the Babylonians, but also of a much greater redemption which God would give his church, by delivering them from their spiritual captivity under sin and Satan, to be accomplished at the end of seventy weeks after the going forth of the commandment to rebuild Jerusalem, *i. e.* at the expiration of 490 years, as we shall have occasion to explain that remarkable passage (*g*) hereafter.

Upon the reduction of Babylon, (*b*) which put an end to the Chaldean empire, after it had continued from the reign of Nabonassar, (who founded it), 209 years, Cyrus went into Persia to make a visit to his father and mother, who were yet living; and on his return through Media, married the daughter and only child of his uncle Darius, and had, in dower with her, the reversion of the kingdom of Media, after her father's death: so that, in a short time, he succeeded, not only to the Babylonish empire, but to the two additional kingdoms of Persia and Media likewise, and from hence the whole extent of his dominions took the name of the Persian empire.

*their iniquity; But I will visit you, and perform my good word towards you, in causing you to return to this place. For I know my thoughts that I think towards you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end,* Jer. xxv. 8, &c. and xxxix. 10, 11. But prophecies, he knew very well, were but conditional, and, for their accomplishment, depended in a great measure upon the behaviour of those to whom they were made. One part of this prediction he had seen executed, in the punishment of the king of Babylon, and the translation of his kingdom to the Medes and Persians; but reason good he had to fear, lest the sins of his countrymen the Jews should retard the completion of the other part, *viz.* their return from captivity beyond the compass of seventy years: And this was both the cause of his grief and the motive of his prayer; *Calmet's Commentary.*

(*f*) Chap. ix. (*g*) Dan, ix. 24, &c. (*b*) Prideaux's Connection, anno 540.

As

A. M.  
3417, &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
537, &c.  
from Jer.  
xl. 7. to xlv.  
all Daniel,  
and from  
Ezra i. to v.

His kind-  
ness to the  
Jews, and  
decree for  
their resto-  
ration.

(i) As soon as Cyrus was come into the full possession of the empire, he published a decree †, wherein he gave free liberty to the Jews to return to their own country, and to rebuild the house of the Lord at Jerusalem. † Many of

(i) Ezra i. 1, &c.

† It is a good deal more than probable, that this decree in favour of the Jews was, in a great measure, owing to Daniel's good offices. Cyrus, at his first coming to Babylon, alter he had taken the city, found him there an old minister of state, famed for his great wisdom over all the East, and, in many things, for a knowledge superiour to the rest of mankind; and accordingly we find, that he not only employed him as such, but, upon the settling of the government of the whole empire, made him first superintendent or prime minister of state over all the provinces of it. In this station of life, Daniel must have been a person of great authority at court, and highly in the esteem of his prince; and therefore, as we find him earnest in his prayer to God for the restoration of his people, Dan. ix. we cannot but think, that he would be equally warm in his intercessions for it with the king. To which purpose, it is not improbable, that he might shew him those passages in Isaiah, which speak of him by name, (150 years before he was born), as a great prince and conqueror, the ruler of many nations, and the restorer of his people, by causing his temple to be built, and the city of Jerusalem re-inhabited. For, that Cyrus had seen those prophecies, the thing is plain, not only from the testimony of Josephus, Antiq. lib. xi. c. 1. but from the recital that is made of them in the decree itself, Ezra i. 2.; and if so, who should be so proper to shew them to him, and to recommend the accomplishment of them to his princely care, as Daniel, who had so great credit with him, and so passionate a concern for the restoration of Sion? *Prideaux's Connection*, anno 538.

† Some are of opinion, that, among the sacred things which Cyrus ordered to be restored, the ark of the covenant was one; but it no where appears, that this ark was carried from Jerusalem to Babylon. They tell us, indeed, that, in the second temple, sacrifices were offered, as in the first, and all solemn days observed, especially the great day of expiation, when the law ordained, that the blood should be sprinkled before the mercy-seat; and the mercy-seat, say they, was part of the ark: But besides that the ark, without the *Shechinah*, or *divine glory*, (which was then withdrawn), would have been of no great significance, the Jews universally acknowledged, that the ark was one of the five things that were wanting in the second temple.

the

the sacred vessels, (to the number of 5400 ||), which Nebuchadnezzar had taken out of the former house, brought to Babylon, and placed in the temple of his god Bel, he ordered his treasurer to restore; and wrote letters \* recom- mendatory to the governours of several provinces to assist the Jews in their undertaking.

A. M.  
3417, &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
587, &c.  
from Jer. xl.  
7. to xlv. all  
Daniel, and  
from Ezra  
i. to v.

The encouragement which was given them by virtue of this decree, made the Jews soon gather together out of the several parts of the kingdom of Babylon, to the number of 42,360, which, together with their servants, (who were 7337 more, amounted in all to 49,697 persons. For, not only those of Judah and Benjamin, but several also of the other tribes that had been carried away by Tiglath-Pileser and Esarhaddon, yet still retained the true worship of God in a strange land, took the benefit of this decree to return to their own country.

The

|| The sum total of the vessels, as they are named in Ezra i. 9, 10. do not amount to half this number; and therefore some have thought, that there must be a numerical error either in one place or the other; whilst others suppose, that as, in 2 Chron. xxxvi. 18. Nebuchadnezzar is said to have carried away all the vessels, both great and small, in this detail the larger vessels, and such as were of great value, are mentioned, but that the gross sum comprehends all, and amounts to the number specified; *Patrick's Commentary* on Ezra i. 11.

\* Josephus has recorded one, which is directed to the governours of Syria, in the following manner.

“Cyrus, the king, to Syfina and Sarabasan, sendeth greeting.  
“Be it known unto you, that I have given leave to all the  
“Jews that are in my dominions to return into their own coun-  
“try, and there to rebuild their capital city, with the holy  
“temple at Jerusalem, in the same place where it stood before.  
“I have likewise sent my treasurer Mithridates, and Zerub-  
“babel the governour of Judea, to superintend the building,  
“and to see it raised sixty cubits upward from the ground,  
“and as many over; the wall to be three rows of polished stone,  
“and one of the wood of the country, together with an altar,  
“for sacrifices, and all this to be done at my charge.—It is  
“my further pleasure, that they receive entire to themselves  
“all the profits and revenues that were formerly enjoyed by  
“their predecessors, and that they have an allowance paid  
“them of 205,500 drachmas, in consideration of beasts for sa-  
“crifices, wine, and oil, and 2500 measures of wheat, in lieu  
“of fine flour, and all this to be raised upon the tribute of Sa-  
“maria;



A. M. The chief leader of these returning captives were Zerubabel and Joshua. Zerubbabel † (whose Babylonish name was *Sheſhbazzar*) was the son of Salathiel, the son of Jehoiaxim king of Judah, who was kept so long captive in Babylon; and Joshua was the son of Joſadach, the son of Seraiah, who was high-priest when Jerusalem was destroyed, and put to death by Nebuchadnezzar at Riblah in Syria; so that the former of them was descended from the leaders, regal, and the latter from the pontifical family in a direct line. Zerubbabel was made governour of the land by a commission from Cyrus; Joshua, of course, succeeded to the chief priesthood; and with them were joined several others as assistants, for the settling all affairs both in church and state.

3417, etc.  
Ant. Christ.  
587, etc.  
from Jer. xl.  
7. to xlv. all  
Daniel, and  
from Ezra i.  
to v.  
Their chief  
leaders,  
their return,  
and laying  
the founda-  
tion of the  
new temple.

On the first month of the Jewish sacred year (which is called *Nisan*, and answers to part of March and part of April in our calendar) the people arrived in Judea; and, having dispersed themselves, according to their tribes and families, in their several cities, they set about the rebuilding of their houses, and the cultivation of their lands, after they had lain desolate, from the murder of Gedaliah, two and fifty years. On the seventh month, (which is called *Tizri*, and answers to part to our September and October), all the people, from their several cities, met together at Jerusalem, and, on the first day of that month, there celebrated the † feast of the trumpets. On the tenth

was

“ maria; that the priests may offer up sacrifices, according to  
“ the laws and ceremonies of Moses, and pray daily for the  
“ king and the royal family, and for the welfare and happi-  
“ nesses of the Persian empire; and let no man presume to do any  
“ thing contrary to the tenor of this my royal will and proclama-  
“ tion, upon pain of forfeiting life and estate;” *Jewish Antiq. lib.*  
xi. c. I.

† In the time of the captivity, it was a common thing for the great men of Judah to have two names; one of their own country, which was domestic, and another of the Chaldeans, which was used at court. Zerubbabel was born in Babylon; and his name, which signifies an *exile* or *stranger in Babylon*, imports the misery of the people of Israel at that time; but *Sheſhbazzar*, which is a compound of two words, signifying *fine linen and gold*, seems to be a name of a better omen, and to denote their future more flourishing condition; *Patrick's Commentary*.

† The first day of the month *Tizri* was the beginning of the Jewish civil year, and on it was the feast of trumpets, so called, because

was the great day of expiation †, when the high-priest made atonement for all the people; and on the fifteenth began

A. M.  
3417, etc.  
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from Jer.  
xl. 7. to xlv.  
all Daniel,  
and from  
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because it was proclaimed by sound of trumpet; but, upon what occasion it was at first instituted, the Scripture is silent. Theodoret (quest xxxii. in Levit.) is of opinion, that it was in memory of the thunder and lightning upon mount Sinai, when God gave his law from thence. The ancient Rabbins will have it, that it was in remembrance of the deliverance of Isaac, in whose stead Abraham sacrificed a ram; but some modern Jews maintain, that it was in memory of the world's creation, which they accordingly assert was in the beginning of Autumn; and, as they hold it by tradition, that on this day God particularly judges all the actions of the foregoing year, and disposes all the events of the year following, for this reason they generally apply themselves, for the whole eight days preceding this feast, to the works of penance and mortification. On the feast itself (which lasts for two days) all labour and business is suspended, and (while sacrifices were in use) the Jews offered, in the name of the whole nation, a solemn holocaust of a calf, two rams, and seven lambs, all of the same year, together with the flour and wine that usually went along with such sacrifices: But, instead of that, they now go to the synagogue, where they repeat several prayers and benedictions, and having taken the Pentateuch very solemnly out of the chest, and read to five persons the service that used to be performed on that day, they sound twenty times upon an horn, sometimes very low, some times very loud; and this, they say, makes them think of the judgments of God, to intimidate sinners, and put them upon repentance; *Calmet's Dictionary* under the word *Trumpet*.

† This was one of the principal solemnities of the Jews, and the ceremonies to be observed hereon were such as these. The high-priest, after he had washed not only his hands and feet, (as usual in common sacrifices) but his body likewise, dressed himself in a plain linen garment, like one of the priests, and had neither his purple robe, his ephod, nor his pectoral on, because he was going to expiate his own as well as the people's sins. He first of all offered a bullock and a ram for his own sins, and those of the other priests, putting his hand upon their heads, and confessing his own sins, and the sins of his house; then he received from the princes of the people two goats for a sin-offering, and a ram for a burnt-offering, to be offered in the name of all the people. By lots it was determined which of the two goats should be sacrificed, and which set at liberty; and therefore, after that he had perfumed the sanctuary with

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began the feast of tabernacles †, which lasted till the twenty-third. During all which solemnities, the people staid

some burning incense, he took of the blood of the bullock which he had sacrificed, and dipping his finger in it, sprinkled it seven times between the ark and the veil, which separated between the holy of holies, and the body of the tabernacle or temple. After this he came out again, and having sacrificed the goat upon which the lot was fallen, he returned with some of its blood into the sanctuary, and there sprinkled it, as he had done before: Then coming out again, he sprinkled both sides of the court with the blood of the goat, and so proceeding to the altar of burnt-offerings, he wet the four horns of it with the blood of the goat and the bullock, and sprinkled it seven times with the same. After all these ceremonies were finished, the goat that was to be set at liberty (which was commonly called *the scape-goat*) was brought to the high-priest, who put both his hands upon its head, and having confessed all his own sins, and the sins of the people, delivered it to persons appointed to that office, who carried it into the wilderness, and left it upon the brink of a precipice, at twelve miles distance from Jerusalem. After all which, the high-priest washed himself all over again in the tabernacle or temple, and putting on his pontifical dress, sacrificed two rams for a burnt-offering, one for himself, and the other for the people; and so concluded the day, with reading the law, and giving the blessing to the people; who all upon this occasion behaved with great devotion, fasted punctually, and returned home with a full persuasion and assurance that their sins were entirely done away, and expiated. The modern Jews, who have no sacrifices, content themselves with reading in Leviticus what relates to the solemn service of this day, and the ceremonies concerning the scape-goat. They, in like manner, fast very strictly, and pray very devoutly, until the conclusion of the day, when, having received the Rabbin's blessing, they go home fully satisfied that all their iniquities are pardoned: For their standing maxim is, that repentance, though accompanied with a resolution of living well, does but suspend sins; whereas the feast of expiation does absolutely abolish them. The reader that is desirous to know more of this, may consult Basnage's history of the Jews; and Calmet's Dictionary under the word *Expiation*.

† This was one of the great solemnities of the Jews, wherein all the males were obliged to present themselves before the Lord. In Hebrew it is called *Chag hassuchoth, the feast of tents*; because it was kept under green tents, and arbours, in memory of their dwelling

staid at Jerusalem, and to promote the restoration of God's worship in that place, the free-will offerings; which they made upon that occasion (besides an hundred vestments for the priests) amounted to sixty one thousand drachms of gold, and five thousand minas of silver. which in all comes to about † seventy five thousand five hundred

A. M. 3417, &c.  
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from Jer. xl. 7. to xlv. 11 Daniel, and from Ezra i. to v.

dwelling in tents in their passage through the wilderness, and immediately after the harvest, in grateful acknowledgment to God for the fruits of the earth, which they had lately gathered in. It was observed for seven days; and of the several sacrifices which were appointed for each day, we have a punctual account in the book of numbers, chap. xxix. 12, &c. The modern Jews, not having now an opportunity of going to the temple, and performing all the ceremonies prescribed by Moses, make (each for himself) in some open place, a bower, or arbour, of the branches of trees of such a determinate height, hung round about and adorned, as much as they can; where they eat and drink, and pass at least as much time as they do in their houses, for all the days of the festival; but such as are old, or sick, are excused; and when it rains very hard, they are permitted to retire to their houses. On the first day of the feast, they take one branch of palm, three of myrtle, and one of willow, bound together, which they carry in their right hand, and having a branch of citron, with its fruit, in their left, they thus make four turns about the reading desk, in their synagogues. On the seventh day, (which is accounted more holy than the rest), they rise with the sun, and going to the synagogue, sing abundance of prayers (which they repeat all the feast) with prodigious rapidity, as supposing, that, during their journey, they were obliged to make haste even in the service of God. On the eighth, (for they have added two days to what Moses at first prescribed), they get their friends together, and give them an entertainment; and on the ninth, which they call *the joy of the law*, they compleat the reading of the Pentateuch, according to the order of its sections; *Basnage's History of the Jews*; and *Calmet's Dictionary*, under the word *Tabernacles*.

† For every drachm of gold is worth ten shillings of our money, and every mina of silver nine pounds: for it contained sixty shekels, and every shekel of silver is worth three shillings of our money. — From whence it appears, that the Jews were not made such poor slaves in Babylon, as wrought for their lords and masters, but had some of them very considerable offices at court, and all liberty to trade, and get riches for themselves; and conse-

A. M.  
3417, etc.  
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Daniel, and  
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dred pounds of our money; and with this fund they began the work of rebuilding the temple.

To this purpose, having employed the first year in preparing materials and providing workmen, in the second month of the second year, (which answers in part to our April and May) they laid the foundation of it with great joy and solemnity; only the old men, who had seen the glory of the first temple, and had no expectation that this, which was now a-building by a few poor exiles, lately returned from their captivity, would ever equal that which had all the riches of David and Solomon (two of the wealthiest princes of the east, expended on it, wept at the remembrance of the old, whilst the others rejoiced at the laying the foundations of the new temple.

The Samaritans offer their assistance, but being refused, obstruct the work.

Whilst the Jews were going on with this work, the Samaritans, who were planted in several cities of Israel in the room of the Israelites, whom Salmanassar, king of Assyria, had long before carried away captive, hearing that they were about rebuilding their temple, came to the governor Zerubbabel, and desired to join with them in the work, alleging, that they worshipped the same God that the people of Judah did. The governor, however, and the chiefs of the families of Israel, would by no means allow them to have any share in the work, being apprehensive, that they, who were no better than idolaters † notwithstanding they pretended to worship the God of Israel, might have some evil design in the offer of their service; and therefore they absolutely refused them; which so exasperated the other, that, from that very moment, they made it their en-

quently that there may not be all the truth imaginable, in that common saying among them, *viz.* That they were only the bran, *i. e.* the dregs of the people, who returned to Jerusalem, after the end of the captivity, and that all the fine flour staid behind at Babylon; *Prideaux's Connection, anno 536.*

† For although, from the time that they had been infested with lions, in the days of Esarhaddon, they had worshipped the God of Israel, yet it was only in conjunction with their other gods whom they worshipped before; and therefore, notwithstanding their worship of the true God, since they worshipped false gods too at the same time, they were in this respect idolaters, which was reason enough for the true worshippers of God to have no communion with them; *Prideaux's Connection, anno 534.*

deavour,

deavour, as much as in them lay, to obstruct the work. And though they could not alter the decree which Cyrus had made in favour of it, yet, by bribes and underhand dealings with his ministers, they in a great measure defeated its effect. So that for several years the building went but slowly on ; and, upon the death of the prophet \* Daniel, who

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and from  
Ezra i. to v.

\* We do not find that Daniel took the advantage of the edict which Cyrus made in favour of the Jews ; and therefore we may suppose, that, as he did not return with them to Jerusalem, the king might require his continuance with him, and Daniel might the rather consent to it, as having thereby a better opportunity to befriend his countrymen upon any exigence. To this purpose, it is highly probable, that he attended the Persian court, which, after the taking and defacing of Babylon, resided in summer at Shushan or Susa, and in winter at Ecbatana. In the palace of Shushan, Daniel (as himself tells us, chap. viii. 1. &c.) had several visions. In this city (as Josephus himself informs us, Antiq. lib. x. c. 12. where, instead of Ecbatana, St. Jerom reads Susa) he built a famous edifice, finished it with such exquisite art, that it continued fresh and beautiful in his days ; and in this city the common tradition is, that he died in the third or fourth year of Cyrus, and about the 91st year of his age ; for, even to this day, (as we learn from Benjamin's Itinerarium), the inhabitants of the place (at present called *Tusler*) shew his monument. But the most valuable monument left behind him is in his writings, whereof the Jewish historian gives us this character :—" He had this peculiar blessing attending him, " that he lived in great reputation both with prince and people, and, " when he died, left an immortal memory behind him. His writings, which are still extant, and in common use, we keep as a " sure pledge that he had an intimacy and conversation with God : " —For, whereas other prophets were more employed in " foreboding calamities and ill news, which drew upon them disgrace from princes, and hatred from the people, Daniel, on the " contrary, foretold nothing but happy events, and what was agreeable ; so that the nature of his predictions was such, as gained him the good-will of all, and such the certainty of them, as gained him a ready credence with all : Which (as the historian " remarks) may serve not only to establish a veneration for the " memory of a man whom God so signally honoured, but to confound likewise the impious doctrines of the Epicureans, which " will not allow of any over-ruling providence interposing in the " government and preservation of the universe, but will have the " whole course of sublunary things to be nothing more than one grand

" tuddle

A. M.  
3417, &c  
Ant. Christ.  
587, &c.  
from Jer.  
xl. 7. to xlv.  
all Daniel,  
and from  
Ezra i. to v.

who was a powerful advocate for his countrymen at the Persian court, and the death of their great benefactor Cyrus \* which happened not long after, it was quite intermitted, until the second year of the reign of Darius the son of Hyftaspes, wherein it was reassumed.

### The O B J E C T I O N.

“ **B**UT what credit soever Daniel might have with Cyrus the Persian, and with the kings of Babylon his predecessors, as a state-minister and politician, it is certain, that he never was looked upon, even by his own countrymen, as a prophet; nor was the book which goes under his name, ever received into their canon of holy writ. The truth is, the method of his educa-

“ buddle of contingencies. For, when I consider the prophecies of Daniel, (says he), I cannot but blame the ignorance or irreverence of those who make it their profession to decry providence, as if God took no care of us, since it is impossible to conceive, how there should be such a correspondence between the things foretold at one time, and fulfilled so many ages after, if, according to their opinion, every thing were left to run at random, and fall out at hap hazard; *Jewish Antiq lib. x. c. 12.*

\* It is generally agreed by historians, that Cyrus was much about seventy years old when he died; but then they widely differ among themselves as to the manner of his death. Some say, that he was taken in an engagement, and hanged; others, that he died of a wound which he received in his thigh; and others, that he was killed in a battle with the people of Samos. Herodotus, Justin, and Valerius Maximus, relate, that, in his war against the Scythians, falling into an embush which Queen Tomyris had laid for him, he was taken prisoner, and, with insult enough, had his head cut off by her order; but Xenophon's account is, — that he died peaceably in his bed, amidst his friends, and in his own country; as, indeed, there is little reason to think, either that so wise a man as Cyrus, should, in his advanced years, engage in so desperate an undertaking as this Scythian expedition is represented on all hands, or that, had he died in Scythia, his mangled body could have ever been got out of the hands of these barbarians to be buried at Pasargada in Persia, as most authors agree it was, and where his monument was to be seen in the time of Alexander the Great: *Gallet's Dictionary*, under the word *Cyrus*; and *Prideaux's Connections*, anno 530.

“ tion

“ tion was abhorrent to the spirit of prophecy. He was in- A. M.  
 “ structed in the learning of the Chaldeans, and (k) bred 5417, &c.  
 “ among a set of magicians, forcerers, and astrologers, Ant. Christ.  
 “ whom, in their different faculties, he is said (l) to have 587, &c.  
 “ vastly surpassed, and was therefore (m) made their pre- xl. 7. to xlv.  
 “ sident: But though, with these qualifications, he might all Daniel,  
 “ have set up for a top conjurer, yet who would ever have and from  
 “ suspected his taking upon him the character of a pro- Ezra i. to v.  
 “ phet?

“ (n) The law of Moses threatened with immediate death,  
 “ not only the professors of magic, but every one who re-  
 “ sorted to them. The people whom God had expelled  
 “ from Canaan, were diviners, soothsayers, observers of  
 “ times, and interpreters of dreams, (o) whom he declares  
 “ to be his abomination; and therefore we may justly won-  
 “ der, that Daniel, who seemed to be so scrupulous in other  
 “ matters, (p) as not to dare to eat of the meat which the  
 “ king had appointed for him and his companions, for  
 “ fear of pollution, should not much more fear to be de-  
 “ filed, by living in community with such as taught these  
 “ black arts, and by becoming himself one of their dis-  
 “ ciples; and much more may we wonder, how he comes  
 “ to deserve so high a commendation for that very thing,  
 “ viz. (q) his understanding visions and dreams, for which  
 “ other pretenders to that kind of knowledge were ac-  
 “ counted an abomination.

“ (r) *In all matters of wisdom and understanding that the*  
 “ *king inquired of them, his companions, he found them ten*  
 “ *times better than all his magicians and astrologers, and*  
 “ yet Daniel is represented as a proficient far surpassing  
 “ the rest; which perhaps may help to unfold the secret  
 “ why, when the other three were cast into the fiery fur-  
 “ nace, it was thought proper to exempt him, namely, be-  
 “ cause the college of magicians might be loth to lose an  
 “ adept, so renowned for his age, and who was like to  
 “ prove so great an ornament to their body.

“ However this be, it is certain, that the author of the  
 “ book which goes under Daniel's name, was never a pro-  
 “ phet, but a certain historian, who lived some hundred  
 “ years after Daniel's time; and, relating events which a  
 “ long while before were past and gone, made use of alle-

(k) Dan. i. 4.

(l) Ibid. ver. 17.

(m) Chap. ii. 48.

(n) Levit. xx. 6.

(o) Deut. xviii. 12.

(p) Dan. i. 8.

(q) Ibid. ver. 17.

(r) Ibid. ver. 20.



A. M. 3417, &c. Ant. Chrif. 587, &c. xl. 7. to xlv. all Daniel, and from Ezra i. to v. “ gories, and a symbolical way of expreffing himfelf, merely to give his writings the air of prophecies. (s) For if the ancient Daniel, who was carried away in the Babylonifh captivity, was the author of this book, how comes it to pafs that he miftakes the very names of the princes whose courts he lived in, and uſes fo many words derivative from the Greek, which was a language

“ unknown to the Jews, till a long while after this captivity? How comes he not to be found (as well as other books of the Old Testament) in the verſion of the Seventy; not to be named among the prophets recited in Eccleſiaſticus (t); nor fo much as taken notice of by Joſephus, who is ſuppoſed to have made, ſome time before our Saviour’s coming, his paraphraſes upon the books of the prophets?

“ Had he been thought of canonical authority, it is ſcarce imaginable, how he ſhould have been paſſed by in this diſhonourable manner: But the truth is, the Jews, to do themſelves credit, were great compoſers of books under the names of their prophets, and particularly under the name of *Daniel*. We have ſeveral ſpurious pieces, ſuch as the Song of the three children, the ſtories of *Suffanna* and the two elders, and of *Bel* and the Dragon, extant at this day; and, in like manner, have reaſon to believe, that the author of the book of *Daniel* was a counterfeit, who lived about the time of *Antiochus Epiphanes*, and wrote of things paſt in a prophetic ſtyle; eſpecially conſidering, that the way of repreſenting large ſcenes of affairs by ſuch images and ſymbols as he makes uſe of, is entirely unlike the books of the other prophets, but vaſtly conformable to the mode of writing which at that time prevailed in the ſchools of the Greeks.

“ *Æſop*’s lion, indeed, may be a fit emblem of a lawleſs tyrant, or his fox of a crafty politician; but where is the ſenſe of (u) a lion with eagle’s wings, or a bear

(s) Collins’s Scheme of literal prophecy, (t) Chap. xlix.  
(u) Dan. vii. 4.

Humano capiti cervicem pictor equinam  
Jungere ſi velit, et varias inducere plumas,  
Undique collatis membris, ut turpiter atum  
Deſinat in piſcem, mulier formoſa ſuperæ,  
Spectatum admiſſi riſum teneatis, amici?

*Hor. de Art. Poët.*

“ with

“ with three ribs in his mouth ; of a leopard with four heads ; or another beast, different to all these, with eyes in his horns ? A ram with two horns (though the one may chance to be higher than the other) is not so incongruous a matter ; but an he-goat casting down the host of heaven, and trampling upon the very stars, is a mad hyperbole, and can have nothing resembling of it in nature. (x) The angel indeed may pretend to unfold the mysteries couched under these dark hieroglyphics, but what he says upon that head conveys no more knowledge to the reader than does his (y) famous explication of the Seventy Weeks, which has ever since been a rack to commentators, and enough to crack brains innumerable to comprehend it.

A. M.  
3447, etc.  
Ant. Chri.  
587, etc.  
from Jer.  
xli. 7. to xlv.  
all Daniel,  
and from  
Ezra i. to v.

“ The truth is, the very notion of a Revelation implies, that all things in it should be made plain. An obscure discovery of this kind seems to be a contradiction in terms : And therefore we can hardly blame those of the Jewish Sanhedrim, who were for suppressing the prophecies of Ezekiel, (as well as his brother Daniel’s), (z) because the vision of the mysterious chariot, in the first chapter, and the story of Gog and Magog towards the conclusion of the book, they could not but look upon as a strange rhapsody of unintelligible jargon.

“ But it is not a greater flaw in a revelation to be unintelligible, than it is to be absurd and contradictory ; and therefore, when, in comparing the gross sum and particulars together, of the people that returned from the captivity, we find the latter fall short to the number of above twelve thousand persons, we cannot but think, that some error has crept into the text itself. When we find (a) fourscore Israelites coming with *offerings and incense in their hands, to bring them to the house of the Lord*, when they could not but know that it was utterly destroyed above six months before, we cannot but conceive, that herein must be some small slip of memory in the sacred penman ; and, (b) to introduce the elders of Israel, as disturbing the public joy, at the laying of the foundation of the temple, with their cries and tears, when thankfulness (though but for small beginnings) would have much better become them, is far

(x) Dan. vii. 17. and viii. 19. (y) Dan. ix. 25.  
(z) Chap. xxxviii. and xxxix. (a) Jer. xli. 5. (b) Ezra iii. 12.

A. M. 3417, etc.  
Ant. Christ.  
587, etc.  
from Jer.  
xl. 7. to  
xlv. all Da-  
niel, and  
from Ezra  
i. to v.

Answered  
by shewing  
the genu-  
ineness of  
Daniel's  
book from  
ancient tes-  
timonies,

“ from placing these venerable rulers of the people in any  
“ advantageous light.”

That there was such a person as Daniel, of the Jewish captivity in Babylon, famous for his discovery of future events, and for his great piety and devotion towards God, can hardly be denied ; that the discourses and predictions of a person so highly in favour with God, should be put in writing, either by himself or some other, and, when committed to writing, should be carefully preserved, is reasonable to believe ; and that the book, which has descended to us, contains the revelation, and other accounts of things, which God was pleased to communicate to him, will sufficiently appear by the sequel.

The character which the prophet Ezekiel gives his contemporary Daniel, (c) is, his singular prevalence with God in prayer ; and whoever looks into the book that goes under his name, will find its author verifying (d) this character, and his success in this particular exemplified in several instances. (e) His deliverance out of the den of lions, and that of his companions out of the fiery furnace, (facts that are recorded in the present book), are expressly mentioned in the prayer of (f) old Eleazar in Egypt under the rage of Ptolemy Philopater against the Jews, and (g) of Mattathias (the father of the Maccabees) in Judea, under the persecution of Antiochus Epiphanes ; and their examples (among other Scripture-instances), are proposed as motives to confidence in God, and constancy in their religion : (h) so that the Jews, in those times, took this book to be written by Daniel himself, and accordingly made use of it. Nay, long before these times, (i) we find Nehemiah beginning his solemn prayer to God in Daniel's own words, almost with no variation. *O Lord, the great and dreadful God, keeping the covenant and mercy to them that love him and keep his commandments*, which is a plain proof, not only that he looked upon this book of Daniel as true and authentic, but that he esteemed his manner of praying likewise not unworthy his imitation.

particularly that of Josephus, Josephus, we know, was a priest well versed in the law, and in the Sacred Writings, whose authority he professes to

(c) Ezek. xiv. 14. (d) Dan. ii. 6, 9. (e) Chap. vi. and iii.  
(f) Joseph. Jewish Antiq. (g) 1 Maccab. ii. 60. (h) Bishop  
Chandler's Vindication of his Defence of Christianity. (i) Com-  
pare Nehem. i. 5. with Dan. ix. 4.

follow

follow through all his Antiquities; and yet he seems to pre-  
fer Daniel above other writers of that kind, and to give us  
a more particular account of his than of all the other pro-  
phesies of the Old Testament put together: for he informs  
us, (k) "That Daniel not only foretold future things,  
" (which was common to him with other prophets); but  
" that he set the time likewise for their coming to pass;  
" (l) that this book therefore was held among the sacred  
" writings, and (m) read in public assemblies (which is the  
" peculiar privilege of canonical books) in his days, because  
" the completion of the events he foretold gained him be-  
" lief with all mankind." Nay, if we will give credit to  
this same Josephus, this book of Daniel's was looked upon  
as genuine, and of divine authority, even in the days of  
Alexander the Great; otherwise the high-priest had put a  
banter upon him, when, (n) at his coming to Jerusalem,  
and going into the temple, he shewed him an passage in it,  
wherein it was foretold, under the emblem of a he-goat  
with one horn, overcoming a ram with two, that a certain  
king of Greece would conquer the Persians; which Alex-  
ander took to himself, and perhaps, upon that very account,  
might treat the Jewish nation with more clemency than he  
did their neighbours.

But however this be, it is certain, that in and before the  
time of our blessed Saviour, the Jews received the book of  
Daniel as authentic Scripture, without any suspicion to the  
contrary. For, whereas the name of the *Messias*, and of  
*the Son of man*, which they applied to the Deliverer whom  
they expected, the title of the *kingdom of God*, and of *heav-*  
*en*, used for the state of things under that Deliverer, his  
coming in the *clouds of heaven*, his *taking all judgment upon*  
*himself*, and *the resurrection of the dead*, pursuant upon that  
his coming, are expressions manifestly borrowed from Da-  
niel: these expressions were, at that time, the current lan-  
guage of the Jews, insomuch, that we find none of them  
surprised when they heard the Baptist telling them, that *the*  
*kingdom of heaven was at hand*, or our Saviour calling him-  
self so frequently *the Son of Man*, and citing Daniel the pro-  
phet by name; which they certainly would have been, and  
thereupon raised no small clamour, had they perceived that he  
was obtruding a spurious book upon them for canonical.

(k) Antiq. lib. xii. c. 11. (l) Ibid. lib. x. c. 11. (m) Ibid.  
c. 12. (n) Ibid. lib. ix. c. 8.

A. M.  
3417, etc.  
Ant. Chriſt.  
587, &c.  
from Jer.  
xl. 7. to  
xlv. all Da-  
niel, and  
from Ezra  
i. to v.

Upon the whole, therefore, we may conclude, that, ſince there confeſſedly was ſuch a perſon as Daniel, whoſe character in the prophet Ezekiel agrees with what we find in our preſent Daniel; ſince this book of his has the teſtimony of Joſephus, (no incompetent judge in a matter of this nature), was commonly cited in the times of our Saviour, was referred to before the times of the Maccabees; nay, was thought genuine in the times of Alexander, and has received no ſmall confirmation from the uſe and application which Nehemiah makes of it; either we muſt ſuppoſe, that all theſe perſons, in their different generations, were miſtaken, or elſe we muſt allow, that our preſent book of Daniel is no fictitious piece of later date, but the work of the prophet whoſe name it bears, and who lived in the age which the ſacred records have aſſigned him.

To which  
his educa-  
tion in the  
Chaldean  
learning,

It is no valid objection, either againſt his perſonal or prophetic character, that he was educated in the learning of the Chaldeans, and became a remarkable proficient therein. The learning of the Chaldeans conſiſted chiefly in what they call *aſtrology*, or the knowledge of the celeftial motions, the art of building, and the art of war. Some curious and ſuperſtitious arts that were abhorrent to the law of Moſes, they were famous for practiſing; but there is no neceſſity for us to infer from thence, that Daniel and his friends were ever initiated in theſe; on the contrary, we may be allowed to argue thus:—That, had there been any thing criminal in the method of their education, they who reſuſed to deſile themſelves with the king's meat, would never have complied with it. They reſuſed the king's proviſions, not only becauſe he might probably have ſuch things ſerved up at his table as were prohibited by their law, but becauſe it was cuſtomary likewiſe in moſt nations, before their meals, to make an oblation of ſome part of what they ate or drank, to their gods, as a thankful acknowledgment, that whatever they enjoyed proceeded from their bounty: ſo that every entertainment had in it the nature of a ſacrifice; and therefore Daniel and his friends looked upon the proviſions which came from the king's table as meats offered to idols, and upon that account eſteemed them unclean. But the ſame principle that moved them to this, would have reſtrained them from the ſtudy of the Chaldean learning, had any of their impious or unwarrantable ſciences been impoſed upon them.

The

The king indeed is said (o) to have found them ten times better, than all the magicians, and astrologers, that were in his realm: But these words, in ancient times, were not appropriated to the evil sense which they now bear, but signified, in the general, men of wisdom and learning, skilled in the knowledge of things natural and divine. (p) Those who in St. Matthew are called *μαργοι*, our translation has rendered *wise men*, because the Evangelist seems to have given them that name, not as a note of infamy, but as an honourable title. And in like manner, why may not the words be here understood of such persons as employed themselves in the lawful search of natural causes and effects, of the curious products of the earth, and the regular motions of heavenly bodies? For when Daniel made intercession to the captain of the guard, that (q) the *wise men of Babyon might not be slain*, we can hardly suppose, that all of these were such as studied unlawful arts and sciences, since he himself was afterwards made master and president over them.

Nay, even supposing that these wise men of Babylon made profession of some sciences, whose only foundation was superstition and deceit, yet why must their Hebrew disciples be obliged to pursue the same? Might they not follow such studies as best suited their genius, and the principles of their religion? The same indulgence which they obtained from the master of the eunuchs, with regard to their provisions, may well be supposed to have been granted them in relation to their studies, in case any difficulty of this kind had been imposed upon them. But there is no occasion for our imagining this. The masters of these occult sciences (as they call them) had many good reasons for not obtruding them upon their disciples; and Daniel, and his companions, who were designed to attend in the king's presence, were more properly to be educated in another way, *viz.* in the knowledge of the purity of the Chaldee tongue, of the arts of war and policy, of the state and revenues of the kingdom, and such other lighter and more polite accomplishments, as would make their persons and services more acceptable at court, than any proficiency in these abstruse matters could do. But put the case, that they were at any time called to lectures in any of the sciences that were not so strictly warrantable, we cannot see why

(o) Dan. i. 20.

(p) Whiby's Paraphrase on Matth. ii. 1.

(q) Dan. ii. 24.

A. M. they might not be permitted to attend to them with the  
 3417, &c. same spirit that (r) *Moses was learned in all the wisdom of*  
 Ant. Christ. *the Egyptians, viz. (s) not with a purpose to follow them,*  
 587, &c. or to square their lives or sentiments according to them,  
 from Jer. but purely to put themselves into a capacity, upon a proper  
 xl. 7. to occasion, to confute them, and with more advantage to  
 xlv. all Da- expose their falshens and absurdity.  
 niel, and  
 from Ezra  
 i. to v.

exemption  
 from the  
 fiery fur-  
 nace,

It was not for any more excellent proficiency therefore  
 in those black arts, which were prohibited by the law of  
 God, that Daniel obtained an exemption from the punish-  
 ment of the fiery furnace, but either because he was absent  
 upon some pretence or other, (as most of the Jews might  
 chuse to be absent upon this occasion), or because he was  
 not accused to the king, at this time, for refusing to wor-  
 ship the idol which he had set up, though he might be pre-  
 sent at the dedication.

Nebuchadnezzar, (t) we read, had summoned all his  
 princes, counsellors, governours, captains, and all other his  
 officers and ministers, to be present, and assisting, at the  
 solemnity of this dedication; and therefore it is not likely  
 that Daniel, who was one of the chief of them, should be  
 allowed to be absent; but his enemies thought it more ad-  
 viseable, not to begin with him, because of the great autho-  
 rity he had with the king, but rather to fall first upon  
 his three friends, (whose promotion in the province of  
 Babylon raised their envy), that thereby they might more  
 successfully pave the way to his ruin: But the miraculous  
 interposition of providence, in behalf of his friends, quash-  
 ed all farther accusations against him; and for this reason  
 it is, that no mention is made of him in this whole trans-  
 action.

his know-  
 ledge in  
 dreams,

It is said indeed of him, (u) *that he had understanding*  
*in all visions and dreams*, and dreams, we know, among  
 the eastern people, were held in great regard. They ob-  
 served them much, and applied to such persons as pretended  
 to explain them, for their interpretation: Nor can it be de-  
 nied, that in the earliest ages of the world, it was the re-  
 ceived opinion, that such dreams as were attended with  
 unusual circumstances, did portend and signify some future  
 event; that they were frequently sent from God, (x) *who*

(r) Acts vii. 22. (s) Calmet's Commentary on Dan. i. 17.  
 (t) Dan. iii. 2. (u) Ibid. i. 17. (x) Job. xxxiii. 14, 15.

in a dream, in a vision of the night, speaks once, yea twice, A. M. 3417, etc. Ant. Chris. 587, etc. to men, as Elihu affirms in Job. Now, if dreams be significative, and often sent from God, it can hardly be thought, that in all cases, the interpretation of them should be unlawful; and therefore we may observe, that in that very place, where Moses forbids the Hebrews to consult magicians and interpreters of dreams, he nevertheless tells them, *(y)* that the Lord their God would raise up to them from among their brethren, a prophet like unto him, whom they should consult and hearken to. So that, though the Israelites were forbidden to make use of soothsayers, or diviners, as the custom of the nations was, to whose possessions they succeeded; yet they were permitted to address themselves to God, and his prophets; in order to learn the explanation of their dreams, and the prediction of future events; consequently there could be no crime in Daniel's applying himself to this kind of knowledge, since whatever excellency he had this way, the Scripture takes care to ascribe it to the peculiar gift of God.

Daniel, indeed, lived in great prosperity, and in the capacity of a prime minister under some of the Babylonian and Persian monarchs; and therefore, if through ignorance he has mistaken their names, or recorded any thing of them that is not true, this we allow will have a suspicious aspect upon the authority of his writings: But when it is considered, how common a thing it was for the princes of the east, upon one occasion or other, to multiply their names, and not only by foreigners, but even by their own people, to be called sometimes by one name, and sometimes by another; how usual it was for them to continue the titles of honour which were conferred in consideration of those great exploits, whereby the dignity of their family was originally raised, and to adopt them into the number of their own; how customary it was, upon their accession to the kingdom, for them to change their names, and yet the first and private name be still retained by most other people, while the imperial name appeared in public acts, and was used at home only: Whoever considers this, I say, will cease his wonder, when, amidst such a variety of appellations for one and the same person, he finds this historian making use of one, and that of another, according as his fancy, his pronunciation, or the custom of the country where he lived, led him. Daniel, in all probabi-

*(y)* Deut. xviii. 15.

ity,



A. M.  
3417, &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
587, &c.  
from Jer. xl.  
7. to xlv. all  
Daniel, and  
from Ezra i.  
to v.

lity, calls the same person *Darius Medus*, whom the Greek historians call *Cyaxares the Second*: But when it is observed, that these historians agree with Daniel as to the main points of his narration, viz (z) that Babylon was taken by an army of Medes and Persians, whereof the Medes being the superiour, were, at that time, named first; that Cyaxares, king of Media, assisted at the siege, and was treated by Cyrus as his chief; that, after a day of riot and revelling, the city was taken in the night-time, by diverting the course of the river Euphrates, and the king of Babylon slain in his palace; that Cyaxares being old, and naturally unactive, chose rather to live at Ecbatana, the capital of Media, while Cyrus attended the affairs of the government of Babylon; and that Cyrus, upon his death, succeeded to the whole empire; If we observe, I say, the exact agreement between these historians, as to the chief matters of fact, we may easily dispense with some small difference in point of names; especially considering, that the authors lived at no less a distance than Babylon is from Greece, and that the Greeks consequently might make use of the name which he went by in Media, as best known to them, which the Babylonians, after he had taken their city, changed into *Darius Medus*, or *the victorious Mede*, and which Daniel, being a captive in the place, might, in conformity, call him.

and techni-  
cal terms,

It (a) may happen, indeed, that there is now and then a word or two, in the book of Daniel, which may seem to have some analogy to the Greek-tongue, and with some little variation, may be derived from it; but then it is to be observed, that the words of this kind are, for the most part, technical terms, such as might slip into any language, without being perceived, and such as a writer might properly enough use, without understanding any more of the tongue from whence they are borrowed. Architects and mechanics, we know, use to this day several Greek and Arabic terms of art in their respective professions; and yet they do not pretend to understand the language from whence they came: And why might not Daniel, speaking in terms of art, (as he certainly does, when he † names the

(z) Xenophon, lib. v. 8.; and Herodotus, lib. i. (a) Bishop Chandler's Vindication of the defence of Christianity.

† Our learned Bishop Chandler is fully of opinion, that the names of the instruments mentioned in Dan. iii. v. are not Greek,

the musical instruments, very probably of the Grecian make, which were used at the consecration of Nebuchadnezzar's golden image); why might not he, I say, make use of words of a foreign extract, and at the same time, be supposed a stranger to the other parts of the language? This I think is the common privilege of most writers: Nor is the mixture of some Greek terms in the Chaldee language so difficult a matter to account for, if we will but allow, what Grotius, upon the place, observes, *viz.* "That before Daniel's age, many colonies both of the Ionians, and Æolians, having settled themselves in Asia Minor, (which lies contiguous to some provinces of the eastern kingdoms), might, that way, communicate the names of what they invented, or improved, even as far as Babylon itself."

A. M.  
3417, etc.  
Ant. Christ.  
587, etc.  
from Jer. xl.  
7. to xlv. all  
Daniel, and  
from Ezra i.  
to v.

The translation of the Septuagint has been held in such esteem, that to have any part of Scripture omitted in it, would give a just suspicion, as if it had not been extant, or not known at the time when those learned men undertook the work: But this is so far from being true in the case of Daniel, that we find the Septuagint version of him read publicly in our Saviour's time; that we find Justin Martyr (*b*), and Clemens Romanus (*c*), who both wrote before Theodotian's version was made), citing passages out of

His being  
omitted in  
the version  
of the Sep-  
tuagint.

Greek, but eastern derivations, and that from thence they did pass to the Greeks, who, with a little alteration, adapted them to their pronunciation, or termination of words. For (as he argues) "That their names were at first given them in the country where the instruments themselves were invented, can hardly be doubted; if therefore such instruments as are here specified were used in the east; if their names be proved to be barbarous; and if an eastern root can be assigned for their derivation, which no Greek theme will suit so well," (all which he endeavours to prove in several instances), then may we be allowed to infer, that the names of these instruments, (whatever affinity they may seem to have to the Greek language), were originally oriental; which opinion is confirmed by the testimony of Strabo, lib. x. who assures us, that the names of musical instruments, such as *nablia*, *sambuca*, and *barbitos*, were derived from barbarous languages, by which the Greeks denote the eastern tongues. *Vid.* Vindication of the Defence of Christianity; and Lowth's Commentary on Dan. iii.

(*b*) Dial. cum. Tryph. p. 87. (*c*) Ad Corinth. ep. i.

A. M.  
3417, etc.  
Ant. Christ.  
587, etc.  
from Jer. xl.  
7. to xlv. all  
Daniel, and  
from Ezra  
i. to v.

it; that we find St. Jerom (*d*) giving us several various readings different from those in Theodorian, and sometimes from those of Aquila and Symmachus, out of it; and, at the same time, telling us, why this translation of Daniel was repudiated, and that of Theodotian substituted in its room by the doctors of the church.

It was Origen, indeed, who first brought it into discredit, by comparing it with that of Theodotian from the original, in his Hexapla, which shewed its imperfections a little too plainly; but then its degradation proves, that before this happened to it, it was all along used in the Christian church.

in the catalogue of prophets in Ecclesiasticus.

The omission of Daniel's name in the enumeration of the prophets which we meet with in Ecclesiasticus (*e*), is of no great moment, because we find no mention made of Job or Ezra, and yet they had both books that went under their names as well as he. The truth is, the history of the book itself may give us some grounds to think, that Daniel's character might possibly have been in it at first, though, upon some occasion or other, it afterwards came to be dropped. Jesus the grandfather (as we read in the prologue) wrote it in several volumes, and left it behind him unfinished: the original fell into such hands as carried it into Egypt, where Jesus the grandson met with it, and having compiled it all orderly into one volume, upon account of the pains which he had taken with it, he joined his own name with that of his grandfather, in the title-page: (*f*) But it fared with this as it does with other books, to lose in the translation, and to suffer by copyists; insomuch, that whoever will be at the trouble to compare the Greek editions with one another, and with the various translations, will discover words, parts of sentences, and whole periods, to be so frequently omitted, altered, contracted, explained, or enlarged, as to abate his wonder, that the mention of any person (though never so considerable) should be omitted in a book that is delivered to us so variously and imperfectly. But there may be another reason assigned for this omission: most part of the Old Testament was written in Hebrew, which was the common language of Judea, and in it did Jesus the son of Sirach write this book of Ecclesiasticus. Now, as a great part of the books of Ezra and Daniel was written in Chaldee, which was a tongue not so well known in Judea, it may

(*d*) In Dan. iv. 8.  
Jer's Vindication, &c.

(*e*) Chap. xlix. (*f*) Bishop Chandler's Vindication, &c.

reasonably

reasonably be supposed, that the author's ignorance of that tongue might be the true reason why he omitted these two great men, and all account of their writings, in his catalogue of the prophets.

A. M.  
3417, etc.  
Ant. Chris.  
587, etc.  
from Jer. xl.  
7. to xlv. all  
Daniel, and  
from Ezra i.  
to v.  
in the Chal-  
dee para-  
phrase.

There are sundry reasons likewise to be given, why we have no Chaldee paraphrase upon Daniel, as well as the rest of the prophets: for, besides that a good part of Daniel is in the Chaldee tongue, and, upon that account, might less need one; it is a general complaint among the Jews themselves, that a great many of their ancient Targums have been lost, and an acknowledged case, that some of their sacred writers (such as Ezra and Nehemiah for instance, men famous in the Jewish story, and the latter of them highly celebrated by the son of Sirach) never had any. The truth is, the frequent calamities which befel the Jewish nation, and dispersed them into other countries, made them negligent of their books; left them no leisure to transcribe long paraphrases; and when, by mixing among other people, they had lost the knowledge of the language, left them no ability to do it; so that, amidst this ignorance and confusion, it is no wonder if many valuable copies were lost, some of which † have since come to light; but there is reason to apprehend, that the Targum upon Daniel never will. For so much does this prophet speak of the Messiah, describe the signs, and define the time of his coming, so precisely, that the Jews, perceiving the advantage which their adversaries the Christians might make of it, were under strong temptations, either to omit or suppress the paraphrase of a prophet so diametrically opposite to them. And accordingly, we have a story from (g) one of their rabbins, that savours not a little of some such practice, viz. "That when Jonathan had finished his Targum on Job, Proverbs, and the Psalms, and was going on to Daniel, he was restrained by a voice, which bad him give over there, lest the sons of men should learn from Daniel the time of the Messias."

However this be, (h) since Daniel is so far from being passed by in any dishonourable manner, that even Jonathan himself, in his Targum on the other prophets, expresses a great regard to him, by applying predictions found only in

† It is but the other day that the Targums of the two books of Chronicles were discovered; *Bishop Chandler's Vindication, &c.*

(g) R. Abruhadam in Zaccath's Juchaism, p. 54. (h) *Bishop Chandler's Vindication, &c.*

A. M. his book, to texts in other prophets that he was then interpreting ; since, in doing of this, he follows Daniel in his ideas, phrases, and words, and explains passages in other prophets by such as were plainer and fuller, in his opinion, in him ; it certainly follows, that (however his paraphrase be lost) Daniel was, in his esteem a prophet, of equal, if not superiour credit to the prophets he was then commenting upon.

Books forged under his name.

Whether the Jews were more than other nations addicted to the publishing of spurious tracts, under the names of their great authors, and particularly under Daniel's name; it concerns us not to inquire ; since the very supposition implies thus much, that with the Jewish church, at that time, the writings of Daniel were held in high esteem; (for, in such a case, who would chuse an inglorious father ?), when these base pieces came out in his name. The having impostures fathered on him therefore is so far from being any prejudice to Daniel's genuine writings, that it rather redounds to the confirmation of their authority ; since what was spurious did no sooner appear in the light, but it was despised, rejected, and condemned. The prayer of the Three Children was not read in all the copies of the Septuagint ; the story of Susanna, in some manuscripts, stood apart from the book of Daniel, in others after it ; and as for the fable of Bel and the Dragon, it was not intended by its first inventor to pass under the name of Daniel ; but of one Habakkuk, the son of Jesus, of the tribe of Levi, till Theodorian, in his Greek edition of the Bible, thought proper to change its title.

The truth is, the Jewish church always looked upon these pieces as spurious, and therefore allowed them much the same place in their Scriptures that the apocryphal books have in our English Bibles ; but the genuine book of Daniel they held always in the greatest veneration, esteeming the author of it as one of the chief of their prophets, until Maimonides, a learned Jew of the twelfth century, in order to bar all proofs that might be drawn from him in favour of Christianity, thought fit to degrade him from his prophetic character, and place him in the number of † hagiographical writers only.

Hard

† It is much to be questioned, whether such a distinction, as hagiographical books was known in our Saviour's time. All the partition that we read of, is, the law, and the prophets, and the rest of the books [Proleg. to Eccclus.] which in

Luke

Hard is the fate of a prophet, when the very clearness as well as obscurity of his writings must be imputed as an objection against his authority ; but certainly we must allow, that it is as easy for an all-knowing God to foretell all circumstances of an event, or to reveal the whole series of events, in their proper connection and succession, as to declare one single occurrence. Such knowledge and such wisdom are essential attributes of God : Nor can there be any absurdity in his imparting his knowledge of future events, with more or less reserve, to one man than another ; only one would think, that the freer such communications were, and the more conspicuous the revelation, the more excellent should the prophet whom God pleased to honour in this manner be accounted. So unreasonable are the prejudices of those who make the clearness of prophecies an argument against them, and endeavour to exclude Daniel from the number of prophets, for a reason that best intitled him to that character !

“ But what shall we say (*i*), to his dark and abstruse way of writing in other places, his figurative and parabolical, his enigmatical and emblematical style, his uncouth images and symbols, entirely unlike the writings of the other prophets, but vastly agreeable to that turn which the Jews took up, when they came to be formed in the schools of the Greeks ?” All the Greek authors that we are acquainted with, are strangers to this manner of writing : they abound, indeed, in figures and allegories ; but the symbolical and emblematical form was purely oriental, and what other prophets as well as Daniel, as occasion requires, pursue.

For, doth not Isaiah foretel the destruction of the Egyptians under the image of God’s (*k*) striking with a great

Luke (xxiv. 44.) are called *the Psalms* ; and according to Philo (De vit. Const.) “ are hymns and other books, conducing to the promotion of piety and knowledge.” This threefold distribution of the books of Scripture is taken from the nature and subjects of the books themselves, and not from any supposed degrees of sacredness between them : And, if the word *Cethubim*, or *Hagiographa*, was then, or rather in the next century, made use of, it was applied only as a general name for the poetical and moral books of Scripture, to which class neither Daniel nor any historical book, was reducible ; *Bishop Chandler’s Vindication*, &c.

(*i*) Vid. Collins’s Scheme of literal prophecy.

(*k*) Isaiah, xxvii. 1.

and

A. M.  
3417, etc.  
Ant. Christ.  
587, etc.  
from Jer.  
xl. 7, to xlv.  
all Daniel,  
and from  
Ezra i. to v.

and strong sword the leviathan, (or crocodile), and slaying the great dragon that is in the sea? Does not Jeremiah (*l*) speak of the Assyrians under the name of a Dove, because (*m*) Semiramis had made that bird the symbol of her nation? Does not Ezekiel prophesy of Pharaoh under the figure of (*n*) a great dragon, that lives in the midst of the rivers; of the king of Babylon, under the emblem of a (*o*) large eagle with great wings; and of the Assyrian, under the similitude of (*p*) a tall cedar in Lebanon, exalted above all trees, and reaching the clouds with its top, &c. the very same figure (*q*) whereby the kingdom of Nebuchadnezzar was represented? It is the genius of the Eastern people to be delighted with fiction and imagery, and (as Sir John Chardin, in his description of Persopolis, tells us) nothing is more common among their authors, than to call countries by the names of their emblems, which are, as it were, the arms of that nation; and, in forming these emblems, to make use not only of natural animals, but of such as are chimerical and fabulous likewise, beasts with wings, and birds with four feet and long ears.

their sym-  
bolical  
turns are  
not valid  
objections.

“ (*s*) Among the figures upon the walls and pillars of an ancient temple in this \* once famous metropolis of Persia,” says he, “ there are some very monstrous for  
“ figure

(*l*) Jer. xlviii. 28.

(*m*) Diodor. Sicul. lib. iii.

(*n*) Ezek. xxix. 3.

(*o*) Chap. xvii. 3. 12.

(*p*) Chap.

xxxi. 3. &c.

(*q*) Dan. iv. 10. &c.

(*s*) Bishop Chandler's Vindication, &c. p. 152.

\* While Alexander lay at this place, he gave himself much to feasting and drinking, for joy of his great successes. In one of these feasts, which he made for his chief commanders, he invited their mistresses likewise to accompany them; among whom was one Thais, a famous Athenian courtesan, who was then mistress to Ptolemy, afterwards king of Egypt. This woman, in the heat of her carousals, proposed to Alexander the burning down of the city and palace of Persopolis, in revenge to the Persians; especially for their burning of Athens under Xerxes: and, as the whole company was drunk, the proposal was received with a general applause, so that every man took a torch, and (with Alexander at the head of them) setting fire to the city and palace, in a short time, burnt them both to the ground. Thus, at the motion of a drunken strumpet, was destroyed, by this drunken king, one of the finest palaces in the world; for that this at Persopolis was such, the ruins of it sufficiently shew, which are still remaining at a place near Shiras, named

" figure and size. A winged lion with a crown on his head; <sup>A. M. 3417, etc.</sup>  
 " a winged lion flying on the back of a bull; the body of <sup>Ant. Christ. 587, etc.</sup>  
 " a horse with wings on his back; and a man's head co- <sup>from Jer. xl. 7. to xlv.</sup>  
 " vered with an high bonnet crowned, &c. In images <sup>all Daniel, and from Ezra i. to v.</sup>  
 " and hieroglyphics," continues he, " here one may see  
 " the wars of princes, and countries, and their successes  
 " expressed. The beasts represent the people or land in  
 " war; their running at each other, their engagement;  
 " and the crown on the head of one of them, or his ta-  
 " king the other by the hair of the head, and stabbing  
 " him, points out his victory."

Now, since this method of describing things by images was so customary in the age and place where Daniel was captive, it is reasonable to suppose, that he conformed himself to it, and that the fictitious animals which he makes mention of, were no improper emblems of the several empires whereof he writes. The ram, for instance, was the royal ensign of the Persians, (t) as Ammianus Marcellinus observes; their goat, since their King Carinus, was the arms of Macedon; and therefore, how aptly does Daniel see a goat with a notable horn, (for an horn (u) is always an emblem of power and dominion), to which he gives wings, because of the quickness of his success, to (x) *run against a ram with unequal horns, and cast him to the ground*, when he foretels, what the Mede and Persian empire should do, and suffer from the Macedonian Greeks? Upon *the breaking of the great horn*, on Alexander's dying in the height of his triumphs and prosperity, how properly do (y) *four others come up towards the four winds of heaven*, to denote the division † of his empire among four kings, whereof

med *Chebelminar*, which, in the Persian language, signifies *forty pillars*: and is so called, because such a number of pillars, as well as other stately ruins of this palace, are there still remaining even to this day; *Prideaux's Connection* anno, 330.

(t) Lib. 19. And rams heads with horns, the one higher, and the other lower, are still to be seen among the ruins of Persepolis, as Sir John Chardin takes notice in his travels.

(u) Deut. xxxiii. 17. Psal. lxxxix. 17. (x) Dan. viii. 7. (y) Ibid. ver. 8.

† Dr Prideaux is of opinion, that this partition of Alexander's empire, to which the prophecy has relation. did not happen till after the battle at Iplius, where Antigonus was slain, and whereupon the four surviving princes divided the conqueror's dominions into four distinct



A. M.  
3417, etc.  
Ant. Christ.  
587, &c.  
from Jer.  
xl. 7. to xlv.  
all Daniel,  
and from  
Ezra i. to v.

whereof Ptolemy had Egypt, and the adjoining countries to the south; Antigonus had Asia to the north; Seleucus had Syria to the east; and Antipater Greece and Macedonia to the west.

(z) A little horn coming out of one of these, and waxing exceeding great towards the south, and east, and pleasant land, nay, waxing so great as to cast down some of the host of heaven, and of the stars to the ground, and so trample upon them, may seem a wild extravagant rant; but when it is considered, that all this is meant of Antiochus, who was afterwards called by his flatterers *Epiphanes*, though himself a vile person, and usurper of the kingdom; that it is to represent him, as soon as he got possession of the Syrian kingdom, taking advantage of the youth of Ptolemy Philometor, and invading Egypt to the south, Armenia and Persia to the east; and Judea, which is here styled *the pleasant land*, and frequently described as a land flowing with milk and honey, that it is to represent him persecuting the Jewish church and nation, here styled *the host of heaven*; murdering the principal men of both, here called *the stars*; deposing their high-priest, whose title is *the prince of the host*; profaning their temple, polluting their altar, abolishing their law, and establishing idolatry by a solemn edict, (a) as whoever has read of the mad and impious actions of Antiochus \* must know: When this is considered,

distinct kingdoms, whereof Ptolemy had Egypt, Lybia, Arabia, Cælo-Syria, and Palestine; Cassander, Macedonia and Greece; Lyfimachus, Thrace, Bithynia, and some other provinces beyond the Hellespont and the Bosphorus; and Seleucus all the rest; *Prideaux's Connection*, anno 301. But others have made the division of his empire ensuant immediately upon his death; *Calmet's Commentary* on Dan. viii.

(z) Daniel. viii. 9. &c.

(a) 2 Maccab. v. 24, &c.

\* Many of the Heathen writers give us this account of him, viz. that he would frequently get out of the palace, and ramble about the streets of Antioch, with two or three persons only accompanying him; that, in his rambles, he would drink with strangers and foreigners, and even with the meanest and vilest of them; that, when he heard of any young company met together to make merry, he would intrude himself among them, and revel away the time with them in cups, and songs, and other frolics, without any regard to common decency, or his own royal character; that, in these frolics,

sidered, I say, a small allowance for the oriental manner of pompous writing will reduce these images to a tolerable size.

The plain truth is, princes and states were in old times painted by their symbols, which are therefore called their *συνεγγραμματα*, and, in after ages, came to be distinguished by writers under the name of such symbols, as well as by their proper appellations: And therefore the *lion with eagle's wings*, signifying the strength of the Assyrian empire, and the celerity of its conquests; the *beast with three ribs in his mouth*, intimating the reduction which Cyrus made of Babylon, Lydia, and Egypt, to the Persian monarchy; the *leopard with four wings and heads*, denoting Alexander and his four successors; and the *other beast with iron feet and ten horns*, representing the Roman empire, and the ten kingdoms \*, or principalities, into which

A. M.  
3417, &c.  
Ant. Chris.  
587, &c.  
from Jer.  
xl. 7. to xlv.  
all Daniel,  
and from  
Ezra i. to v.

lies, he would often go out in the streets, and there scatter his money by handfuls for the rabble to scramble for; that, at other times, he would go about with a crown of roses upon his head, and, in a Roman gown, would walk the streets alone, carrying a parcel of stones in his lap, to throw at those that should follow after; that he was much addicted to drunkenness and lasciviousness; was frequently found in the company of Pathics, and common prostitutes, on whom he would gratify his lust publicly, and in the sight of the people; and that having for his catamites two vile persons, called *Timarchus* and *Heraclides*, who were brothers, he made the former of them governour of Babylon, and the other his treasurer in that province. The short is, his freaks, follies, and vices were so many, that men were in a doubt whether he was a madman or a fool, though the former of these was generally thought his truest character; and therefore instead of *Epiphanes, the illustrious*, they commonly called him *Epimanes, the madman*; *Prideaux's Connection, anno 175.*

\* Bishop Lloyd hath given us the following list of the ten kingdoms which arose out of the dissolution of the Roman empire, and the time of their rise. 1. Hunns erected their kingdom in that part of Pannonia and Dacia, which from them was called *Hungary*, about A. D. 356. 2. Ostrogoths settled themselves in the countries that reach from Rhetia to Mæsia, even as far as Thrace, about 377, and afterwards came into Italy under Alaricus in 410. 3. Visigoths settled in the south parts of France, and in Catalonia, about 378. 4. Franks seized upon part of Germany and Gaul, A. D. 420. 5. Vandals settled in Spain, and afterwards set up their kingdom in Africa,

A. M. it was divided, was a language as well known to skillful  
 5417, &c. readers at that time, as are the arms, the colours, and the  
 Ant. Christ. field of escutcheons, in these latter days, to heralds.  
 587, &c. \* Porphyry, no doubt, was well acquainted with this  
 from Jer. hieroglyphic way of writing, because all the objection  
 xl. 7. to xlv. which he makes to these prophecies of Daniel, concern-  
 all Daniel, ing the four empires, is, that they were too plain and  
 an m. perspicuous, and more like historical narratives of facts al-  
 Ezra i. to v. ready done, than prophetic predictions, of things to come.  
 His seventy weeks ex- But however this enemy of Christianity might urge the  
 plained. plainness of the prophet's predictions, in order to invalidate

A. D. 407. 6. Suevians and Alans, seized the western parts of Spain, A. D. 407, and invaded Italy 457. 7. Burgundians came out of Germany into that part of Gaul, called from them *Burgundy*, 407. 8. Rugians, and Thuringians settled in Italy under Odoacer, about 476. 9. Saxons made themselves masters of Great Britain, about the same time 476. And 10. Longobards settled first in Germany, A. D. 383, and afterwards succeeded the Heruli and Thuringi in Hungary; *Logoth's Commentary* on Dan. vii. 24.

\* This Porphyry was a learned Heathen, born at Tyre, in the year of Christ about 220, and there called *Malchus*; but upon his going among the Greeks he changed it to Porphyry, which is much of the same signification; for *Malchus* in the Phœnician language (which was then spoken at Tyre) signifies a king, as *μεγαλειος*, in the Greek denotes one that wore purple, which none but kings, and royal persons were then permitted to do. He was a bitter enemy to the Christian religion; and therefore wrote a large volume against it, containing fifteen books, whereof the twelfth was wholly levelled against the prophecies of Daniel: But because the predictions of this prophet, concerning the several empires, were acknowledged, on all hands, to have been fulfilled, he did not go about to disprove it; on the contrary he endeavoured to maintain, by the testimony of the best Greek historians then extant, that they were fulfilled so exactly, and so minutely, that it was impossible for them to be the predictions of the Daniel who belonged to the Babylonish captivity, and must therefore be the spurious composition of some later author. But this argument St. Jerom, in his comment upon Daniel, fully turns upon him. It is much to be lamented, however, that not only this whole work of Porphyry is lost, but that also the books of Eusebius Appollinarius, and Methodius, which were wrote in answer to this Heathen adversary, (to the great damage both of divine and human knowledge) have all undergone the same fate; *Prideaux's Connection*, anno 164.

the authority of his book, it must not be denied, but that God in his great wisdom, has so ordered the matter, (for the exercise of our faith and industry), and so framed the prophetic style, that there should be still some shade and remains of obscurity abiding upon the face of almost every prophecy, even after the time of its completion: And therefore, instead of being surprised at the great variety of computations, which chronologers, and other learned men have put upon the (b) *seventy weeks* mentioned in Daniel, we may much rather wonder, how, at this distance of time, they have been able to come to any tolerable exactness.

A. M.  
3417, etc.  
Ant. Christ.  
587, etc.  
from Jer.  
xl. 7. to xlv.  
all Daniel;  
and from  
Ezra i. to vi.

The words of the prophecy are these; — *Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people, and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to anoint the Most Holy. Know therefore and understand that from the going forth of the commandment to restore, and to build Jerusalem, unto the Messiah the prince ‡, shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: and the street shall be built again, and the wall even in troublous times; and after threescore and two weeks, shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: And the people of the prince that shall come, shall destroy the city, and the sanctuary, and the end thereof shall be with a flood; and at the end of the war, desolations are determined; and he shall confirm the covenant with many, for a week; and, in the midst of the week, he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease; and for the overspreading of abominations, he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.*

Now to set these words in a right light, we must consider, 1st, That the main design and intendment of them is, to foretel the coming of the Messiah, his abolishing the Jewish, and setting up a new and more perfect religion; which is so manifest to every common reader, that later Jews (to avoid the force of this one prophecy) have even ventured to exclude the whole book of Daniel from the num-

(b) Dan. ix. 24.

‡ The colon, which, in our English Bibles, is placed after *seven weeks*, in the middle of this sentence, should be placed after *two weeks*, at the end of it, which wrong punctuation may possibly lead some people into an error in their computation.

A. M.  
3417, etc.  
Ant. Chris.  
587, etc.  
from Jer.  
xl 7. to xlv.  
all Daniel,  
and from  
Ezra i. to v.

ber of inspired writers, and to pronounce a curse upon any that shall pretend to compute the time of the Messiah's coming. 2dly, It is agreed by most interpreters, that the seventy weeks here spoken of (according to the prophetic style) are to be taken for weeks of years, every one of which contained seven years, and so the seventy weeks will amount to 490 years, at the expiration of which term, the matters contained in this prophecy were to have their accomplishment: But then the question is, at what point of time these seventy weeks, or what is all one, the 490 years, either began or expired? For, if we can but find out one of these periods, there will be less difficulty in stating the other. Now, 3dly, It seems pretty plain, that the several events specified in the beginning of this prophecy, *viz.* *To finish* or *restrain transgressions*; 2. *To make an end of sin*; 3. *To make expiation, or reconciliation for iniquity*; 4. *To bring in everlasting righteousness*; 5. *To seal up, or complete, and fulfil vision and prophecy*; and 6. *To anoint, or consecrate the Most Holy*, were all accomplished in the great work of our salvation, by the death and passion, and by the doctrine and resurrection, of our Saviour Christ. For being born without original, and having lived without actual sin, he truly was the most holy of all that ever bore our nature, and being thereby fully fitted for this great work, *he was anointed with the Holy Ghost, and with power to be our priest, our prophet, and our king.*

As our priest, he offered himself a sacrifice upon the cross, and thereby made atonement for our sins, which is *making an end of them*, by taking away their guilt; and in so doing, working reconciliation for us with God. As our prophet, he gave us his gospel, a law of *everlasting righteousness*, and the only revelation we are to expect: And as our king, he sent his Holy Spirit into our hearts, to guide and influence us according to this law; whereby he has taken an effectual method to restrain, and extinguish in us, all manner of transgression; and in doing all this, he has sealed up, *i. e.* fulfilled and thoroughly finished all that, by visions and prophecies, had been before revealed concerning him.

Since (c) therefore all these events were brought to pass, and accomplished at the time of Christ's death, this must determine us, where to fix the end of the weeks wherein these events were to be accomplished: And if the

(c) Prideaux's Connection, anno, 409.

end of these weeks is to be fixed at the death of Christ; then, 4thly, This will determine us where to place the beginning of them, viz. 490 years before, † which is the very year and month † wherein Ezra had his commission

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† Most learned men agree, that the death of Christ happened in the year of the Julian period 4746, and in the Jewish month Nisan; and therefore, if we reckon 490 years backward, this will lead us to the month Nisan, and in the year of the Julian Period 4256; which, according to Ptolemy's canon, was the seventh year of Artaxerxes's reign, in which the Scripture tells us (Ezra vii. 7.) that this commission was granted; *Prideaux's Connection*, anno 578.

† Others are of opinion, that the commission here intended was not that which was given to Ezra, but that which Nehemiah had from Artaxerxes, in the twentieth year of his reign, at which period they place the commencement of these seventy weeks, which, being reduced to 490 lunar years, bring us down to the time when our Saviour Christ was put to death. There are some variations, indeed, concerning the calculation of these years. Chronologers differ among themselves a little; but the greatest difference does not exceed nine or ten years; and yet even this, Petavius, who has treated of the subject, in his twelfth book *De doctrina temporum*, has endeavoured to accommodate, by shewing, that the words of the prophecy of Daniel, concerning the going forth of the command to restore and rebuild Jerusalem, ought to be understood of the complete execution of that order, which was performed by Nehemiah only; and that the twentieth year of Artaxerxes, mentioned in Nehemiah i. 1. ought to be explained, not of the twentieth year of Artaxerxes alone, but of the twentieth from the time that his father made him his associate in the throne, which was ten years before his death: which ten years being deducted from the number of years that elapsed from the decree of Artaxerxes in favour of Nehemiah, to the death of Jesus Christ, deliver the chronologers out of all their perplexities, and dispel all the difficulties that the few supernumerary years occasioned; *Calmet's Dissert. sur les septante semaines*, &c. What the learned Bishop Lloyd's manner of computing these weeks is, the reader will find fully explained and illustrated by Mr. Bedford, in his *Scripture-chronology* lib. vii. c. 1.; and if he would have still farther satisfaction herein, he may consult Pererius upon Daniel; M. Basnage's *Dissert.* upon the seventy weeks; F. Hardouin's *Dissert.* on the same subject; and that of J. Frischmuth, in his *Theaurus Dissertationum* at the end of the great critics.

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from Artaxerxes Longimanus king of Persia, for his returning to Jerusalem, and there to restore the church and state of the Jews.

The only objection against this computation is, — That the words of the prophecy seem to denote a real building of the city, since it makes mention of its streets and walls; whereas that work was executed upon the decree by Cyrus, several years before Ezra was in commission. But this objection will appear of little force, if once it be considered, that figurative expressions are, in a manner, necessary in prophecies, and that nothing is more common in Scripture, than by Jerusalem, in particular, to mean the whole political and ecclesiastical state of the Jews.

There is another difficulty observable in this prophecy, which deserves our attention. and that is, the division of the seventy weeks into three distinct periods, *i. e.* into seven weeks, sixty-two weeks and one week, to each of which a different event is assigned. In the seven weeks, or 49 years, from the going forth of the commandment, the streets and walls of Jerusalem, *i. e.* the restoration and establishment of the church and state of the Jews, is to be accomplished. In the sixty-two weeks, or 434 years more, the Messia is to come, and make his appearance in the world; and in one week, or seven years after this, he is to *confirm a covenant with many, and cause the sacrifice and oblation to cease.*: all which were literally fulfilled. For, in the space of 49 years which answers to seven weeks, the reformation and establishment of the Jewish church and state was carried on, and completed, first by Ezra, in virtue of a decree granted in the seventh year of Artaxerxes, and afterwards by Nehemiah, in virtue of another granted him by the same prince, in the twentieth year of his reign. From that time, in the space of 434 years, which answers to sixty-two weeks, our blessed Saviour appeared in the world as the Messiah; and for seven years after that, (which answers to the one week in the prophecy), first, by his forerunner John the Baptist, for the space of three years and an half more, he confirmed the covenant of the gospel with as many of the Jews as were converted, and embraced these laws of everlasting righteousness which he published; and at length, by the sacrifice of his most precious blood, made all other victims and oblations (which were but types and emblems of his) for ever cease and be abolished. As to the other part of the prophecy, it relates so evidently to the destruction

struction of Jerusalem, that it needs no explanation. Whoever has read Josephus cannot but observe, that, by the destruction of the city and sanctuary, by the people of the prince that was to come, who, with their armies and desolating abominations, should invade Judea as with a flood, and, by a terrible and consuming war, bring utter ruin and destruction upon it, and upon all the people of the Jews that should dwell therein, can be meant nothing but Titus at the head of the Roman army, executing the wrath of God for the murder of his Son, our Saviour, upon that devoted city and people, in such a terrible and tragical manner as their historian has related.

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3417, &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
587, &c.  
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Ezekiel indeed, according to the sentiment of some rabbins, was a prophet of more obscurity than Daniel, and, especially in the description of the chariot, (as they call the first chapter), so very intricate and abstruse, that they would not permit it to be read by any until they were arrived at the age of thirty. The design of the prophet in that chapter is, to represent the great and glorious appearance of God coming to give him instructions in the management of his prophetic office; and, to this purpose, he makes use of images, foreign indeed to our manner of writing, but what are all significant and full of majesty. He seats himself on a radiant throne, supported by cherubims, moved by wheels of an uncommon make, covered with the canopy of heaven, and encircled with the rainbow: And though, in the description of the cherubims and wheels, there may be something not so agreeable to our way of thinking, yet we are not to suppose, but that, in the whole, it was adapted to the age wherein the prophet wrote, and in each part perhaps did include an excellent moral. Angels, of what rank or denomination soever, are all ministering spirits, and the instruments of God's providence in the government of the world; and therefore are represented here as supporting his throne, and in allusion, (*d*) very likely, to the triumphal chariots of eastern princes, which are drawn by several sorts of beasts, they are said (*e*) every one to have four faces. Their wings denote their readiness and alacrity; their eyes, their sagacity and vigilance; their hands, their prudence and dexterity; their feet, their steadiness and re-

Ezekiel's  
chariot;

(*d*) Lowth's Comment. on Ezek. i. (*e*) Ezek. i. 6.



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3417, etc.  
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resolution in performing the divine commands; and (*f*) the noise of their wings, when they went, expressed the terribleness of the judgments which they were to execute upon Jerusalem and all the Jewish nation.

And, in like manner, (*g*) the make and fashion of the wheels which these cherubims actuate, shews, that all the ways of providence are uniform, and subservient to each other; as (*h*) their going perpetually forward intimates, that Providence does nothing in vain, but always accomplishes its designs. (*i*) The largeness of the rings or circumference of the wheels, denotes the vast compass of providence, (*k*) which reacheth from one end to another mightily (*l*). Their being full of eyes implies, that the motions of Providence are directed by unerring wisdom; and (*m*) their moving, when the cherubs moved, seems to demonstrate, with what readiness and alacrity all the instruments of providence do concur in carrying on his great designs. Thus, full of instruction, is every little symbol in this description! And therefore it is doing injustice to the character of the prophet, to find fault with his images, because they agree not with the present mode, or to censure his writings before we understand them.

and his Gog  
and Magog  
explained.

His prophecy (*n*) concerning Gog and Magog is perhaps deservedly thought one of the most difficult passages that occur in the Old Testament; and accordingly, the conjectures about it have been various. It is generally agreed, however, that the words *Gog* and *Magog* are not real but fictitious

(*f*) Ibid. ver. 24. (*g*) Ibid. ver. 16. (*h*) Ibid. ver. 17.  
(*i*) Ibid. ver. 18. (*k*) Wisd. viii. 1. (*l*) Ibid. ver. 18.  
(*m*) Ibid. ver. 19. (*n*) Ezek. xxxviii. and xxxix.

|| *Magog* was the son of *Japhet*, Gen. x. 2. from whom the *Scythians* were generally supposed to be derived; a people well known in the East for their frequent irruptions and devastations therein made, and who, for their rapin and violence, cruelties and barbarities of all kinds, for some time passed into a proverb; and therefore, whether we suppose *Cambyfes* or *Antiochus* (as we shall see hereafter) to be the *Gog* in *Ezekiel*, the prophet's calling him by the name of a *wild Scythian* can be no objection, because scarce ever were any two men more cruel, more savage, and brutal in their passions, than they; inasmuch, that we truly say, that, as the *Scythians* were the ter-

fictitious names; and therefore their wars with the people of God some have applied to the cruelties of Antiochus Epiphanes against the Jews; others, to the persecutions of the Gentiles against the Christians; some, to the irruption of the Goths, and other barbarous nations, into the Roman empire; others, to the ravages which the Turks made in Asia, and some parts of Europe; and others again, to those (as is prophesied elsewhere) oppressions which, in the latter days, Antichrist shall bring upon the true professors of our most holy religion.

(o) The main current of interpreters will have the Gog in Ezekiel to be Antiochus; but then there are some exceptions to this opinion, that may be gathered from Ezekiel himself. For whereas the Gog in Ezekiel (p) *was to fall upon the mountains of Israel*; (q) *was to be buried in the east of the Mediterranean sea*; was to have an army destroyed, (r) *by their turning their swords upon one another*; and (s) the Israelites were to gather the spoils, and burn their arms for several years: Whoever looks into the history of Antiochus, will see, that he died at a little town, called *Taba*, in the confines of Persia and Babylonia; that, upon his death, his army suffered no defeat, neither did the Jews reap any advantage by it, because his son Antiochus Eupater continued to oppress and harass them with wars as much as ever.

But if Antiochus was not the Gog in Ezekiel, the question is, who was? And to resolve this question, we may observe, that (be the person who he will) the prophet speaks of him as a powerful prince, who should come from the North, (t) with a numerous army. (u) made up of different nations, exasperated against the Jews, and with full intent (x) to plunder and ravage their country; but that he should be disappointed in his design, and (y) his army miraculously destroyed.

We may observe farther, that this event was to happen after the return from the captivity; because the prophet mentions it as a thing future: (z) *Thou shalt come into a*

pour of all the East, so Cambyfes and Antiochus were the horror and abomination of mankind; *Calmet's Comment. sur Gog et Magog.*

(o) Calmet's Dissert. sur Gog et Magog. (p) Ezek. xxxix. 4. (q) Ibid. ver. 11. (r) Chap. xxxviii. 21. (s) Chap. xxxix. 9, 10. (t) Chap. xxxviii. 15. (u) Ibid. ver. 2. (x) Ibid. ver. 9, &c. (y) Ibid. ver. 22. &c. (z) Ibid. ver. 8.

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*land (speaking of Gog) that is brought back from the sword, and against a people who have lately returned from amidst the nations, where they had been dispersed; which can be meant of none but the Jews; but (a) that it could not happen after the time of the Maccabees, because the Jewish history is, from thence, so very well known, that a transaction of this nature could not well escape us; and therefore we may conclude, that it was between the return from the captivity, and the first appearing of the Maccabees, (a very obscure interval as to the Jewish affairs), that what the prophet relates of Gog, and his adventures, came to pass; and if so, we can see no prince or potentate to whom the characters which the inspired writers give of him, can so properly belong, as to Cambyfes the son of Cyrus.*

According to the accounts of all history, he was cruel and barbarous, excessively impious, and insatiably covetous. His indignation against the Jews he expressed (b) by a revocation of a grant which his father gave for the rebuilding of their city and temple. He led a large army into Egypt, composed of all the different nations (c) that Ezekiel mentions, who were overwhelmed (a great many of them at least) by the driven sands of the deserts. In his return from Egypt, (d) he died at Ecbatana in Palestine, at the foot of Mount Carmel, which faces the Mediterranean sea, of a wound which he received by his sword's falling accidentally out of the scabbard; so that a great many lines of the picture which the prophet draws of Gog meet in Cambyfes, though it must be acknowledged that all do not.

(e) What bids fair for this opinion, however, is the order and series of events which Ezekiel seems to have observed in his prophecies: For having first foretold the taking of Jerusalem, the captivity of Babylon, and the desolation of Tyre, Egypt, and some other countries neighbouring upon Judea, he proceeds, in the next place, to the dissolution of the Chaldean monarchy, and the return of the Jews from their captivity: But before they are well settled in their native country, Gog and his numerous army are introduced to trouble their repose, and threaten their ruin; but that God interposes to rid them of this

(a) Calmet's Dissert. *ibid.* (b) Ezra iv. 19, &c.  
(c) Ezek. xxxviii. 2. &c. (d) Herod. lib. iii. (e) Calmet's Dissert. *ibid.*

sierce enemy, who is said to have fallen in the mountains of Israel, he, and all his army. It must be owned, indeed, that the writers of the life of Cambyfes make mention of no intention in this prince to fall foul upon the Jews, nor do they say any thing of the destruction of his army, en-  
A. M. 3417, etc. Ant. Chri. f. 587, etc. from Jer. xl. 7. to xlv. all Da- niel, and from Ezra i. to v.  
 suant upon his death; but upon the supposition, that the prophecy relates to him, God, who knew the evil disposition of that prince's heart towards the Jews, (which no profane author could penetrate), has given us this part of his history: (f) *Thus saith the Lord, it shall also come to pass, that at the same time, thou shalt think an evil thought, and shalt say, I will go up to the land of unwalled villages; I will go to them that are at rest, that dwell safely, all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates, to take a spoil and to take a prey, to turn my hand upon the desolate places, that are now inhabited, and upon the people, that are now gathered out of the nations.* What became of his army, after he was dead, we cannot tell. Herodotus, who gives us the largest accounts of him, immediately after his decease, passes to the history of the Magian who usurped his throne: And therefore we may suppose, (g) that as they consisted of so many different nations, and followed him only by compulsion, when once their head was gone, they crumbled into parties, quarrelled, and (as (h) the prophet had foretold) turned their arms upon one another; which was no more than what (i) the Philistines did in the time of Saul, and (k) the Midianites, when Gideon judged Israel.

We have been so large in our answers to some of the last objections, that we have less room left for the reconciliation of some seeming inconsistencies that are alledged in this period of history: But a little will suffice for this.

For, 1. Whereas the number of the people, returning from the captivity, is much larger in the general sum than it is in the particulars, it is to be remembered, that not only those of Judah and Benjamin, but several also of the other tribes, took the benefit of the decree which Cyrus granted in favour of the Jews, to return again into their own land. That they did so, is plain from the tenour of the decree itself, which extends (l) to all the people of the God

(f) Ezek. xxxviii. 10. &c. (g) Calmet's Dissert.  
 (h) Ezek. xxxviii. 21. (i) 1 Sam. xiv. 20. (k) Judges vii. 22. (l) Ezra i. 3.

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3417, etc.  
Ant. Chriſt.  
587, etc.  
from Jer.  
xl. 7. to  
xlv. all Da-  
nuel, and  
from Ezra  
i. to v.

of *Iſrael*, whereof (as Joſephus informs us) Zerubbabel ſent a copy into Media, to the reſt of the ten tribes, who (*together with the reſt of the fathers of Judah and Benjamin*) are ſuppoſed to be thoſe, (*m*) *whoſe ſpirit God had raiſed up to go*: And therefore the difference between the groſs and the particular ſums ariſes from hence,—(*n*) That in the latter, the tribes of Judah, Benjamin, and Levi, only are reckoned by their families; whereas in the former, all thoſe of the other tribes that accompanied them in their return to Jeruſalem are added.

This accounts for the difference between the general and particular ſums in Ezra: And then why the particulars in Ezra differ from the particulars in Nehemiah, the matter (according to a very competent (*o*) judge) is to be conceived and apprehended thus,—“ That Nehemiah found the liſt “ and catalogue of thoſe that came up in the firſt of Cyrus; “ as it was then taken, and that he called over the names “ of the families, as they lay in order there; that he ob- “ ſerved the order of the old liſt, in calling them over, “ and liſting them, but took the real number of them, as “ they were at the time, when he numbered them; that “ ſome families were now more in number than they were “ when the firſt liſt was made, and ſome fewer; and ſome “ that were in that liſt were not to be found now; for “ ſome had more of the ſame ſtock come up from Baby- “ lon, ſince the firſt numbering, and others, who had “ come up at firſt, and were then numbered, were now “ gone back again.”

2. Whereas it is ſaid of the fourſcore Iſraelites, that they were (*p*) *carrying their offerings to the houſe of the Lord*, when the houſe of the Lord at Jeruſalem had, for ſome time before, been deſtroyed by the Babylonians; (*q*) why may we not ſuppoſe, that the place where the temple ſtood, (even after its deſtruction), was held in ſuch veneration, that the people who were left in the country, after the general captivity, choſe to offer their ſacrifices and oblations there, as long as they remained in the land; and that having no prieſts at Jeruſalem, they might go to Mizpah (where theſe ſervants of the Lord had, very probably,

(*m*) Ibid. ver. 5. (*n*) Patrick's Commentary on Ezra ii. 6.; and Prideaux's Connection. (*o*) Lightfoot's Chronology, p. 146. (*p*) Jer. xli. 5. (*q*) Prideaux's Connection, in the notes, anno 588.

put themselves under the governour's protection) to fetch one from thence, in order to assist them in their religious offices ?

A. M.  
3417, &c  
Ant. Chris.  
587, &c.  
from Jer.  
xl. 7. to xlv.  
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(r) Samaria indeed, and the other parts from whence these devout persons came, lay to the north, and Mizpah to the south of Jerusalem, a little too far distant for them to go for a priest; and therefore others have imagined, that after the destruction of the temple, Gedaliah, by the advice of the prophet Jeremiah, and the priests that were with him, had established a tabernacle, and built an altar at Mizpah, where the people, for the present, might resort to pay their devotions, and present their oblations, until, by some happy turn of affairs, their temple might come to be built again; and that this tabernacle and altar might, with propriety enough, be called *the house of the Lord*.

We can hardly believe indeed, that after the temple was gone, the people were to live without any place of religious worship; and therefore, considering that Mizpah was all along esteemed a place of more than ordinary sanctity; that after the return of the ark, there (s) *Samuel gathered together all Israel before the Lord*; that there he built an altar, and (t) *offered a sacrifice*; and that in the time of the Maccabees, when the Jews were in the same case as now, without a temple, and without an altar, they here (u) *assembled themselves together*; for Mizpah (as the author of that history tells us) *was the place where they prayed aforesaid in Israel*; we cannot but think, that there is something of reality in the supposition, and that these eighty pious mourners were going to Mizpah, and not to Jerusalem, (x) when the bloody and perfidious Ishmael circumvented them.

3. Once more: Whereas it is said, (y) *that the priests and Levites, and elders of the fathers*, who had seen the first temple, wept when the foundation of the second was laid, though it is manifest, that the latter temple was (z) 40 cubits larger than the former; it must be remembered, that the reason of their weeping was, not so much because it was like to prove far inferiour to that of Solomon, as to its outward structure, but because it was to want those extra-

(r) Calmet's Commentary on Jer. xli. 5. (s) 1 Sam. vii. 5, 6. (t) Ibid. ver. 9. (u) 1 Maccab. iii. 46. (x) Jer. xli. 6. (y) Ezra iii. 12. (z) Compare Ezra vi. 3. with 1 Kings v. 20. and 2 Chron. iii. 3.

ordinary

A. M.  
3417, etc.  
Ant. Christ.  
587, etc.  
from Jer.  
xl. 7. to xlv.  
all Daniel,  
and from  
Ezra i. to v.

ordinary marks of the divine favour, wherewith the other temple was honoured. The second temple was built upon the same foundations with the first; and therefore the different measures that we find of them in the books of Kings and Ezra, are to be understood in respect of the different distances between which the said measures were taken. The twenty cubits breadth, which is said of Solomon's temple, was from the inside of the wall on the one side, to the inside of the wall on the other; but the sixty cubits breadth of that to be built by Zerubbabel, was the breadth of the whole building, from the inside of the outer wall of it on the one side, to the inside of the outer wall on the other. So that the difference of the said twenty cubits breadth, and of the said sixty cubits breadth, is no more than this, — That the one is meant of the temple strictly so called, the other of the temple and its appertaining buildings. Both the temples then, without all doubt, were of the same dimensions; but then here was the difference, the sad difference, which drew tears from the eyes of the elders, viz. that, in all appearance, there were little or no hopes, that the poor beginnings of the latter temple would ever be raised to the grandeur and magnificence of the former, since the one had been built by the wisest and richest king, and constantly adorned by some one or other of his posterity; the other now begun by a small company of exiles, just returned from their captivity; the one in a time of profound peace, and the greatest opulence, the other in a time of common calamity and distress; the one finished with the most costly stones and timber, wrought with exquisite art, and overlaid with vast quantities of gold, the other to be raised out of no better materials than what could be dug from the ruinous foundation of the old one. But the occasion of their grief was not only this, that the materials and ornaments of the second temple (*a*) were even as nothing, *in comparison of the first*; but that the ark of the covenant †, and

(*a*) Hagg. ii. 3.

† This was a small chest, or coffer, three feet nine inches in length, two feet three inches in breadth, and two feet three inches in height, Exod. xxv. 10, 22. In it were put the two tables of the law, the broken ones as well as the whole ones, (say the Rabbins), and nothing else was put therein when it was brought into Solomon's temple, 1 Kings viii. 9. but in process

and the mercy-seat †, which was upon it, the holy fire † up-

A. M.  
3417, etc.  
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xl. 7. to xlv.  
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process of time; Aaron's rod, the pot of manna, and the original volume of the law, written by Moses's own hand, came to be likewise put in it, Heb. ix. 4. The Jews have a tradition, which Epiphanius (in Vita Jerem. prophetæ) takes notice of, that Jeremiah, foreseeing the approaching ruin of the temple, carried the ark of the covenant into a cave, and by his prayers prevailed that it might be sunk, and swallowed up in the rock, so that it might never more be seen; and this, though a fiction, is designed to inform us, that, in the destruction of Jerusalem, this sacred piece of furniture was lost. The Jews, indeed, upon the building of the second temple, made an ark, of the same shape and dimensions with the first, and put it in the same place: but it had none of its honours and prerogatives; no tables of the law, no Aaron's rod, no pot of manna in it, no appearance of the divine glory over it, no oracles given from it; the only use that was made of it was, to be a representative of the former on the great day of expiation, and to be a repository of the Holy Scriptures, *i. e.* of the original copy of that collection which was made of them after the captivity, by Ezra, and the men of the great synagogue; *Prideaux's Connection, anno 535.*

† This was the cover of the ark of the covenant. It was made of solid gold, and at the two ends of it were fixed two cherubims of the same metal, which, by their wings extended forwards, seeming to form a throne for the Majesty of God, who, in Scripture, is represented to us as sitting between the cherubims, and the ark itself was, as it were, his footstool. The Hebrew word *Caphoreth*, by being translated *propitiatory*, seems to imply, that from thence the Lord heard the vows and prayers of his people, and pardoned them their sins; and by its being, at other times, translated *oracle*, seems farther to imply, that from thence he manifested his will and pleasure, and gave responses to Moses; *Caimet's Dictionary* under the word.

† This fire came down from heaven, first upon the altar in the tabernacle, at the consecration of Aaron and his sons to the priesthood, Lev. ix. 24. and, afterwards, it descended anew upon the altar in the temple of Solomon, at its consecration, 2 Chron. vii. 1. and there it was constantly fed and maintained by the priests, day and night, in the same manner as it had been in the tabernacle. The Jews have a tradition, that Jeremiah, foreseeing the destruction of the temple, took this fire, and hid it in a pit, but that, at the rebuilding of the temple, being brought again from thence, it revived upon the altar; but this is all a fiction. For the generality of them allow, that, at the destruction of the temple, it was extinguished; and,



A. M.  
3417, &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
587, &c.  
from Jer.  
xl. 7. to xlv.  
all Daniel,  
and from  
Ezra i. tov.

on the altar, the Urim and Thummim †, the spirit of prophecy † the Shechinah †, or divine presence, the five great things for which the former temple was so renowned, were lost and gone, and never to be recovered to this other.

and, in the time of the second temple, nothing was made use of for all their burnt-offerings but common fire only; *Prideaux's Connection.*

† Whether the Urim and Thummim lay in the high-priest's breast-plate itself, or only in the clearness and perfection of those oracular answers which he received from God, when he went to consult him upon any important matter, so it was, that, having put on all his pontifical robes, and presented himself in the sanctuary before the Holy of Holies, he knew, by one means or other, most probably by an audible voice from the mercy-seat, (which was within behind the veil), what the divine pleasure was concerning the affair wherein he came to consult him. This was a singular privilege vouchsafed to the Jews; but it does not appear from the sacred history, that there are any footsteps of consulting the Lord in this manner after the building of Solomon's temple to the time of its destruction, and, after its destruction, all are agreed, that this was never restored; so that there seems to be some reason for that maxim among the Jews, viz. that the Holy Spirit spake to the children of Israel, during the tabernacle, by Urim and Thummim; under the first temple, by the prophets; and under the second by *Bathcol*, or a voice sent from heaven, such as was heard at the baptism of Jesus Christ, and at his transfiguration; *Patrick's Commentary*, and *Calmet's Dictionary*.

† This, it must be owned, was not wholly withdrawn from the Jewish church, in the time of the second temple. The prophets Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi lived in this time, and prophesied; but, after their death, (which the Rabbins say happened in one year), the prophetic spirit wholly ceased from among the Jews; *Prideaux's Connection.*

† The Shechinah was a sensible token of God's presence among the Jews, which consisted of a visible cloud, resting over the mercy-seat, or cover of the ark of the covenant, just above the two cherubims, that over-shadowed it, Lev. xvi. 2. It there first appeared when Moses consecrated the tabernacle, and afterwards, at the consecration of the temple by Solomon, was translated thither; (Vide vol. ii. p. 437.) and there continued, in the same visible manner, while the ark was in its proper place, either in the tabernacle or temple, (but not while it was in movement, as it often was during the time of the tabernacle), till the Babylonians destroyed the temple, after which it never appeared more; *Prideaux's Connection.*

This

This was a just matter of lamentation to those that had seen these singular tokens of the divine favour in the former temple, and a discouragement of their proceeding with the building of the present; and therefore the prophet Haggai was sent to inform them, that all these wants and defects should be abundantly repaired by the coming of the Messiah, the true Shechinah of the Divine Majesty, in the time of the second temple: *(b) I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come, and I will fill this house with glory: the glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the Lord of Hosts.*

A. M. 3417, etc.  
n. Christ.  
587, etc.  
from Jer.  
xl. 7. to xlv.  
all Daniel,  
and from  
Ezra i. to v.

## DISSERTATION I.

*Of the Pride and Punishment of NEBUCHADNEZZAR.*

Whoever looks back upon the actions of Nebuchadnezzar, will easily perceive, that he was a great and successful warrior; that, during *(c)* his father's lifetime, and, while he commanded the army as general under him, he drove the Egyptians (the only nation that pretended, at this time, to rival the Babylonish monarchy) out of Syria and Palestine, took Jerusalem, and carried away the people captive; and that, upon his own accession to the throne, he overcame the Phœnicians and Tyrians, overran all Egypt, and made it tributary, and returned home in triumph loaded with rich spoils. The Scripture, however, does not impute the occasion of his pride to the number of his conquests, or the extent of his dominions, but to the state and magnificence of his royal city, in which (as it were at one view) he saw all the fruits of his martial toil, all the spoils of his many victories, and all the revenues of his vast empire comprised, and displayed in their utmost splendour. For while he was walking upon his palace at Babylon, very probably in his hanging-gardens, and in the uppermost terraces of them, from whence he might have a full prospect of the whole city, *(d) Is not this Great Babylon, (said he to himself) which I have built for the house of the kingdom, by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty?*

The occasion of his pride.

*(b)* Hagg. ii. 7, 9. *(c)* Vid. Prideaux's Connection, vol. i. p. 62, 65, 66, and 92. *(d)* Dan. iv. 30.

A. M.  
3417, etc.  
Ant. Christ.  
587, etc.  
from Jer.  
xl. 7. to  
xlv. all Da-  
niel, and  
from Ezra  
i. to v.

Babylon was one of the most ancient cities of the world. It was founded by Nimrod, not long after the building of the famous tower of Babel, and was enlarged and beautified by Semiramis; but Nebuchadnezzar was the person who put the finishing hand to it, to make it one of the great wonders of the world: And therefore it may not be amiss, to take a short survey of the works that are generally ascribed to him, in order to see what grounds he might have for this arrogant vaunt.

A descrip-  
tion of the  
city and  
walls of  
Babylon.

1. The whole city, which stood on a large flat, consisted properly of two parts, which were divided by the river Euphrates. That part of it, which was on the east side of the river was the old city; the other, on the west side, was added by Nebuchadnezzar, and the whole was a square of an hundred and twenty furlongs, or fifteen miles every way, which made the whole circumference of it to be four hundred and eighty furlongs, or exactly threescore miles. Its walls, which were in thickness 87 feet †, in height 350 feet, and in compass 480 furlongs, were all built of large bricks, cemented together with bitumen, a glutinous slime, which, issuing out of the earth in that country, binds stronger and firmer than lime, and, in a short time, grows harder than the very brick and stone which it cements.

The city was encompassed without the walls with a vast ditch, filled with water, and lined with bricks on both sides, after the manner of a counterscarp; and, as the earth which was dug out of it made the bricks wherewith the walls were built, we may judge of the depth and largeness of the ditch from the vast height and thickness of the walls. In the whole compass of the wall there were an hundred gates, *i. e.* five and twenty on each of the four sides, all made of solid brass; and, between every two of these gates, at proper distances, were three towers, *i. e.* at the four corners of this great square, there were four

† Some authors indeed will have them to have been no more than 50 cubits, but then they speak of them only as they were after the time of Darius Hystaspes: For the Babylonians having revolted from him, and, in confidence of their strong walls, stood out against him in a long siege, after he had taken the place, (in order to prevent their rebellion for the future), he took away their gates, and beat down their walls to the height above mentioned, and beyond this they were never after raised; *Prideaux's Connection, anno 570.*

towers,

towers † between each of these corners, and the next gate on either side three towers; and every one of these towers was ten feet higher than the walls.

Answering to every one of these gates, there was a street which led from gate to gate: so that there were fifty in all, each fifteen miles long; whereof 25 going one way, and 25 another, they crossed each other at right angles, and so cut the whole city out into 676 squares, each of which was four furlongs and an half on every side, *i. e.* two miles and a quarter in compass; and round these, on every side towards the street, stood the houses, all built three or four stories high, with fronts adorned with all manner of embellishments, and with yards and gardens thrown backwards. Besides these, there were four other streets, built only on one side, because they had the wall on the other, which went round the four sides of the city, and were all of them two hundred feet broad, though the other streets were but an hundred and fifty.

Quite cross the city ran a branch of the river Euphrates, which entered in on the north, and went out on the south side; and over it, in the very middle of the city, was a bridge of a furlong in length, and thirty feet in breadth, built with wonderful art, to supply the defect of a foundation in the bottom of the river, which was all sandy. By this bridge a communication was kept up between the two parts of the city; and, at the two extremities of it, stood two palaces, the old one on the east, and new one on the west side of the river. The former of these took up four of the squares abovementioned, the other nine; and the temple of Belus, which stood near the old palace, took up another.

2. The temple of Belus, which was one of the most wonderful works in the world, was a square of a furlong on each side, *i. e.* half a mile in the whole compass; and consisted of eight towers (or what seemed like towers) built one above another. Herodotus tells us, that the way to

A. M.  
3417, etc.  
Ant. Chris.  
587, &c.  
from Jer. xl.  
7. to xlv. all  
Daniel, and  
from Ezra  
i. to v.

† This is to be understood only of those parts of the walls where there was need of towers; for some parts of them lying against morasses always full of water, where they could not be approached by any enemy, had no need of any towers at all for their defence; and therefore in them there were none built: For, whereas the whole number of them amounted to no more than two hundred and fifty, had the same uniform order been observed in their disposition all round, there must have been many more; *Prideaux's Connection*, anno 570.

A. M.  
3417, &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
587, &c.  
from Jer.  
xl. 7. to xlv.  
all Daniel,  
and from  
Ezra i. to v.

go up it was by stairs on the outside round it; from whence it seems most likely, that the whole ascent to it was by the benching in, drawn in a sloping line, from the bottom to the top, eight times round it, and that this made the appearance of eight towers one above another. The eight towers (as they are called) being like so many stories, were each of them † seventy-five feet high, and in them were many great rooms, with arched roofs, supported with pillars, which, after that the place was consecrated to an idolatrous use, were all made parts of the temple: But the most sacred part of all, and where the chiefest devotions were performed, was the uppermost story, over which (on the top of the tower) was an observatory, by the benefit of which the Babylonians advanced their knowledge in astronomy beyond \* all other nations.

This

† Some, following the mistake of the Latin version of Herodotus, wherein the lowest of these towers is said to be a furlong thick and a furlong high, will have each of these towers to be a furlong high, which, amounting to a mile in the whole, is enough to shock any one's belief. But the Greek of Herodotus, which is the authentic text of that historian, says no such thing, but only that it was a furlong long and a furlong broad, without mentioning any thing of its height at all. And therefore Strabo, in his description of it, calling it a pyramid, because of its decreasing and benching in at every tower, says of the whole, that it was a furlong high and a furlong on every side, which, without any further addition, makes it exceed the greatest of the pyramids of Egypt, I mean for its height. For, whereas the height of the tallest pyramid was no more than 481 feet, that of the temple of Belus was 600, *i. e.* higher by 119 feet, which is one quarter of the whole; *Prideaux's Connection, anno 570.*

\* The Babylonians made great boasts of the antiquity of their knowledge in this kind of learning. They reckoned four hundred and seventy-three thousand years, from the observations of their first astrologers to the arrival of Alexander the great; but Aristotle, who was curious in inquiring into the truth of what was related of these observations, desired of Callisthenes, his scholar, who accompanied Alexander to Babylon, to send him the most certain and exact account that he could gather of this matter; and accordingly, he sent him astronomical observations that had been made for one thousand nine hundred and three years, which came within an hundred and fifteen years of the flood, or fifteen after the tower of Babel was built, but fell infinitely short of their other monstrous computation, though

This tower, and the several rooms in it, were all that was called *the temple of Belus*, until Nebuchadnezzar enlarged it with vast buildings, which were erected in a square of two furlongs on every side, or a mile in circumference. On the out-side of these was a wall inclosing the whole, in which were several gates leading to the temple, all made of solid brass, very probably from the brazen sea, the brazen pillars, and the other brazen vessels, which, (e) from the temple of Jerusalem, were carried to Babylon.

A. M.  
3417, etc.  
Ant. Christ.  
587, etc.  
from Jer. xl.  
7. to xlv. all  
Daniel, and  
from Ezra i.  
to v.

This temple stood till the time of Xerxes: But he, on his return from the Grecian expedition, having first plundered it of its immense riches, among which were several images or statutes of massy gold, demolished the whole of it, and laid it all in ruins. Alexander, upon his return to Babylon from his Indian expedition, proposed to have rebuilt it, and, to that purpose, set ten thousand men on work to clear away the rubbish: But his death, in a short time after, put an end to all further proceedings in that design, and (as modern travellers assure us) the knowledge of the very place where it once stood is at this time lost.

3. Near to this temple, on the east side of the river, as we said, stood the old palace of the kings of Babylon, four miles in circumference; and exactly over-against it, on the other side of the river, was the new palace, built by Nebuchadnezzar, eight miles in compass, and surrounded with three walls one within another. But the most wonderful things belonging to it were the hanging gardens, which Nebuchadnezzar made in complaisance to his wife Amylis, daughter of Astyages king of Media: For she, retaining a strong inclination for the mountains and forests of her own country, desired to have something like it in Babylon; and therefore, to gratify her, he erected this monstrous work of vanity.

The palaces and hanging gardens.

These gardens contained a space of four hundred feet square, and were carried up aloft into the air, in the manner of several large terraces, one above another, until the highest of them came up to the height of the walls of the

though this of Calisthenes seems to be a little enlarged; because, according to our chronology, we reckon no more than eighteen hundred years from Nimrod and the tower of Babel, to the reign of Alexander at Babylon; *Calmet's Dictionary*, under the word *Babylon*.

(e) Dan. i. 2. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 7.

city,

A. M. city, that is to say, was three hundred and fifty feet high.  
 3417, etc. The ascent was from terrais to terrais, by stairs teen feet  
 Ant. Chris. wide, and the whole pile was sustained by vast arches built  
 587, etc. upon arches, one above another, and strengthened by a  
 from Jer. xl. wall surrounding it on every side, of two and twenty feet  
 7. to xlv. all in thickness.  
 Daniel, and  
 from Ezra i.  
 to v.

On the top of the arches were first laid large flat stones sixteen feet long, and four broad; over them was a layer of reed, mixed with a great quantity of bitumen; over this were two rows of brick closely cemented together by plaster; over these were laid thick sheets of lead, and all this to keep the moisture of the mould from draining away; and then, lastly, upon this lead was laid such a large quantity of earth heaped together, as afforded depth enough for the largest trees to take root in it. For, in this garden there was every thing that could either delight the eye, or gratify the curiosity, beautiful and large trees, flowers, plants, and shrubs; and to keep every thing verdant and gay in the upper terrais, there was an aqueduct or engine which drew up water out of the river into a kind of a reservoir above, and from thence watered the whole garden.

The banks  
 of the river.

4. The river, indeed, at a certain season of the year, viz. in the months of June, July, and August, by the sun's melting the snow in the mountains of Armenia, used to overflow its banks, (in the same manner as the Nile in Egypt does), to the great damage of the city and country of Babylon; and therefore, to prevent this inconvenience for the future, Nebuchadnezzar had two artificial canals cut, on the east side of the Euphrates, in order to carry off the superfluous water into the Tygris. One of these canals discharged itself near Seleucia, and the other over-against Apamia: and, for the farther security of the country, from the head of these canals down to the city, and some way lower, he made vast banks of brick and bitumen; but the most wonderful part of the work was within the city.

There, on each side of the Euphrates, he built, from the very bottom of the channel, a great wall of the same thickness with the walls of the city, i. e. eighty-seven feet thick, and of an hundred and sixty furlongs (which are † twenty miles of our measure) in length; and over-against every

† And therefore this work must have begun two miles and an half above the city, and continued two miles and an half below it, because

every street that crossed the river, he made on each side a brazen gate in the wall, and stairs leading down to the river, from whence the inhabitants used to pass by boat from one part of the city to the other.

5. It was necessary, however, that while this work was carrying on, the stream should be diverted some other way; and therefore, to this purpose, he had a vast artificial lake made to the west of Babylon, which, according to the lowest computation, was forty miles square, and an hundred and sixty in compass; and being of a proportionable depth, was able to contain all the water until the work was finished. When this was done, the river was returned to its former channel; but the lake, and the canal which led to it, were still preserved, because they were found of use, not only to prevent the danger of all overflowings of the river, but to keep water likewise all the year round, as in a common reservoir, which might be let out upon proper occasions, by sluices, for the improvement and fertilizing of the ground.

These are some of the vast works † which the generality of historians ascribe to Nebuchadnezzar, and, upon the view and contemplation of which, he grew so arrogant and elated, as to think himself equal, if not superiour to God: For, *Is not this great Babylon, which I have built for the honour of my majesty?* say he of himself; (*f*) and, *Who is god but Nebuchadnezzar?* say his sycophants concerning him. The truth is, if we will credit the account in the book of Judith relating to this prince, he was, in his temper, a professed Atheist: The sense of his success in life, and of the wonderful works which he had achieved, both in a civil and military capacity, had so intoxicated his reason, as to make him become fool enough, to say in his heart there was no other god but himself; for this is the avowed purpose of his sending his armies under the general

A. M. 3417, &c.  
Ant Christ. 587, &c.  
from Jer. xl. 7. to xlv. all Daniel, and from Ezra i. to v. And the artificial lake.

because the city throughout was no more than fifteen miles; *Prideaux's Connection, anno 570.*

† Berosus, Megasthenes, and Abydenus attribute all these works to Nebuchadnezzar; but Herodotus tells us, that the bridge, the river banks, and the lake were the work of Nitocris, his daughter-in-law, who might possibly finish what he, at his death, left incomplete, and, upon that account, receive from this historian the honour of the whole.

(*f*) Judith vi. 2.

Holofernes,



A. M. Holofernes, (g) *That all nations should worship him only, and that all tongues and tribes should call upon him as God.*

3417, etc.  
Ant. Christ.  
587, etc.  
from Jer. xl.  
7. to xlv. all  
Daniel, and  
from Ezra i.  
to v.

Fit therefore it was, that such impious pride should be abased, and that he who set himself above the rank of men upon a level with God, nay, in an elevation, superiour to God, should be made sensible of his dependent state, and taught humility and self-annihilation, by being degraded to the condition of a brute. He *had said in his heart*, (for of him is that prophecy in Isaiah), (h) *I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; — I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High. — But how art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning? How art thou cut down to the ground, who didst weaken the nations? — They that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee, and consider thee, saying, Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake all kingdoms, that made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof? And well they might, when they saw, (i) him dwelling with the beasts of the field, eating grass like oxen, and wet with the dew of heaven, with his hair grown like eagles feathers, and his nails like the claws of birds. But then the question is, What the proper sense of these words is? Or, (what is the same thing), of what kind this divine infliction upon the king of Babylon was?*

Different opinions concerning it.

Origen, (k) who was for resolving every thing that he could not comprehend in Scripture into allegory, was of opinion, that, under the name of *Nebuchadnezzar*, Daniel intended to give us a representation of the fall of Lucifer, being probably led to think so by the above-cited passage in the prophet Isaiah. But the account of the punishment which befel this prince is so often inculcated in the same chapter; foretold in the dream explained by the prophet; repeated by the voice from heaven; and all this published in a solemn declaration by the king himself after the recovery of his senses, that there is no manner of grounds to think of any figure or allegory in this piece of history.

Nebuchadnezzar's real metamorphosis into an ox, both as to his outward and inward form, is a notion too gross, for any but the vulgar, who may be taken, perhaps, with

(g) *Ibid.* iii. 8. (h) *Ibid.* xiv. 13, &c. (i) *Dan.* iv. 32, 33. (k) Calmet's *Dissert. sur la metamorphose*, &c.

such fictions of the poets ; and what we have no need to recur to (thereby to multiply miracles to no purpose) from any words in the text which will fairly admit of another interpretation.

A. M.  
3417, e. c.  
Ant. Christ.  
587, etc.  
from Jer. xl.  
7. to xlv. all  
Daniel, and  
from Ezra i.  
to v.

The metempsychosis of an ox's soul into Nebuchadnezzar's body, thereby to communicate the same motions, taste, and inclinations, that are observable in that animal, is a notion unknown to all antiquity ; for, according to the doctrine of Pythagoras, such a transmigration was never made until the body was actually dead ; besides, the manifest incongruity of supposing two souls, a rational and a brutal, animating the same prince, or the prince's soul departed from him, and become the substitute to a brute.

A fascination, both in the eyes of Nebuchadnezzar's subjects, and in his own fancy and imagination, which might make them both believe, that he was really changed into an ox, and had the figure of one, is a notion every whit as liable to exception. For, besides that it is difficult to conceive, how a deception of this kind could abide upon a whole nation for the space of seven years, the Scripture takes notice of no evil spirit in this whole transaction, but imputes all to the sole power of God, who can humble the proud, and chastise the wicked, as he pleases.

The most general therefore, and most probable opinion is,——That Nebuchadnezzar, by the judgment of God, was punished with madness, which so disordered his imagination, that he fancied himself a beast, and was prompted to act like one.

The true  
and generally  
received opinion.

There is a distemper (not a very common one indeed, but what has befallen several) which naturalists and physicians call lycanthropy \*, when, by the power of a depraved imagination, and a distempered brain, a man really thinks that he is a wolf, an ox, a dog, or the like, and accordingly, in his inclinations, motions, and behaviour, cannot forbear imitating the particular creature which he

\* Such was the distemper of Lycaon king of Arcadia, which Ovid as described, as if he had been turned into a wolf.

Territus ipse fugit, natusque silentia ruris  
Exululat, frustra loqui conatur : ab ipso  
Colligit os rabiem, solitæque cupidine cædis  
Vertitur in pecudes ; et nunc quoque sanguine gaudet.  
In villos abeunt vestes, in crura lacerti,  
Fit lupus, et veteris servat vestigia formæ.

Ovid. Metam. lib. i.  
fancies

A. M. 3417, etc. Ant. Christ. 537, &c. from Jer. xl. 7. to xlv. all Daniel, and from Ez: ai. to v.

fancies himself to be. In this manner Nebuchadnezzar, imagining that he was become an ox, walked upon all four, fed upon grass, went naked, lowed with his voice, and butted (as he thought) with his horns; and, in short, did all the actions, as far as he was able, that a real ox is known to do. (l) Hereupon his subjects, perceiving this change in him, took him and bound him, (as madmen are wont to be treated), but, at last, he escaping out of their hands, fled to the fields, where he herded with the cattle, exposed to the dew of heaven, and the other inclemencies of the weather; where his neglected body became horrid and dreadful to behold; where his hair, and his nails, in process of time, grew in the hideous manner that the prophet had described them; and where his heart, *i. e.* his apprehension, appetite, and inclinations, by the continuance of his distemper, became quite brutal, and of the same cast with the beasts that graze.

How he might continue seven years in this condition.

The masters of the medics, who have treated of this kind of madness, have made it their observation, that the persons infected with it are generally so excessive strong that no bands or chains can hold them. They can live a long while without eating or drinking, and endure wet and cold without any great inconvenience to themselves; and therefore Nebuchadnezzar, though bred up in the pleasures and delicacies of the court, might, by the strength of his distemper, be enabled to do what otherwise he would not; to live in the fields for seven years together, naked, and exposed to the injuries of the weather, without any thing to nourish him, except either the grass on the ground, or the wild fruits on the hedges: but then, whether he retained the use of his reason whilst he continued in this disastrous state, is a question that is not so easily determined.

Whether he had his reason in the mean while.

The Scripture, indeed, at first sight, seems to intimate, that he had no sense of his misery, nor made any reflection upon himself, or upon what he was doing, until God was pleased to remove his afflicting hand: for these are his own words, (m) *At the end of my days, I Nebuchadnezzar lift up mine eyes unto heaven, and my understanding returned unto me;* which seem to imply, that all along before this, his reason was in a kind of deliquium, and without any consciousness of what he was about. But then it may be asked, Wherein would his punishment and humiliation consist, if the man

(l) Dan. iv. 33.

(m) Ibid. iv. 34.

was insensible ; if he knew nothing of the matter ; nay, if he took pleasure (as most madmen do) in the disorder of imagination ?

To be miserable, and not to know it, by some may be thought the very height of misery ; but the person in Horace, who frequented the empty theatre every day, and delighted himself with the reveries of his own fancy, with plays and shows which no body saw but himself, was not so well pleased with his friends, when they had recovered him to his senses :

— *Pol me occidistis, omici,  
Non servastis, ait, cui sic extorta voluptus,  
Et demptus per vim mentis gratissimus error.*

Hor. Ep. lib. ii.

To answer the ends of providence, therefore, in afflicting in this manner this haughty and assuming prince, which was to mortify his pride, and bring him to a state of humiliation and acknowledgment of God's superiour hand, we may suppose, that, at certain intervals at least, he had a sense and preception of his misery ; that he saw the condition to which he was degraded ; but being carried away with his brutal appetite, found it not in his power to extricate himself. St. Paul, in his description of a man given up to his lusts, (whereof Nebuchadnezzar, in his present condition, is no improper emblem), has these remarkable words. (n) *I know that in me (i. e. in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing ; for to will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good, I find not ; for the good that I would, I do not, but the evil that I would not, that I do. For though I delight in the law of God after the inner man, yet I see another law in my members, warring against the law in my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin, that is in my members. O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death !* And, in like manner, if we suppose this king of Babylon, in such a perpetual struggle and conflict with himself ; seeing his error, but not able to avoid it ; sensible of his disgrace, but not capable to redress it ; committing the things which his soul abhorred ; and detesting himself for what he found himself necessitated to do, till God should think fit to restore his understanding, by allaying the ferment of his blood and humours, correcting his ap-

(n) Rom. vii. 18, &c.

petite, and ranging his ideas into their proper order: If we suppose this, I say, we have before us the image of a creature completely miserable; reasons for his humiliation, during his affliction, innumerable \*; a fountain to supply his gratitude, upon the removal of it, inexhaustible; and from his example, this lecture of admonition to all succeeding generations: (o) *Thus saith the Lord, let not the wise man glory in his wisdom; neither let the mighty man glory in his might. Let not the rich man glory in his riches; but let him that glorieth, glory in this,——that he understandeth, and knoweth me, that I am the Lord, who exerciseth loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth; for in these things I delight, saith the Lord.*

## C H A P. II.

*From the death of Cyrus, to that of Nehemiah.*

## The History.

A. M. 3475, etc. Ant. Christ. 529, etc. from Ezra iv. 7. to the end, all Est. Neh. and part of Hag. Zech. and Mal.

CYRUS died when he was seventy years old, after he had reigned, from his first being made commander of the Persian and Median armies, thirty years; from his taking of Babylon, nine years; and from his becoming sole monarch of the east, seven years; and was succeeded by his son Cambyfes, whom the Scripture calls *Ahasuerus*.

\* What Nebuchadnezzar says of himself, with regard to this duty, is very remarkable.——*I blessed the Most High, and praised and honoured him, that liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation. All the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing, for he doth according to his will, in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What dost thou? I therefore now praise, and extol, and honour the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and his ways judgment, and those that walk in pride, he is able to abase, Dan. iv. 34. &c.* Which is enough, one would imagine, to make us think charitably of the conversion and final end of this prince; and with St. Austin, to conclude, that whatever happened to him, by way of punishment, was designed by providence for his soul's health: *Hoc enim erat in occulto iudicio, et misericordia Dei, ut huic regi eo modo consuleret ad salutem; Epist. iii.*

(o) Jer. ix. 23, &c.

As soon as he was well settled in the throne, the Samaritans (instead of applying themselves secretly to the ministers and officers of his court) presented their petition (a) to him openly, desiring that the rebuilding of Jerusalem might be stopped; and tho' they did not prevail with him to revoke his father's decree, yet by the several discouragements which he put upon it, he, in a great measure, defeated its main design, so that the work went on very heavily in his reign. But his reign was not long: It was but seven years and five months, before he came to an untimely end, and was succeeded, for a short time, by the Magian \*, who

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and part of  
Hagg. Zech.  
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(a) Ezra iv. 6.

\* The word *Magian*, or *Mige-gush*, in the old Persian language, signifies a person that had his ears cut off, and was a name of contempt given to the whole sect, upon account of a certain impostor among them, who had the misfortune to lose his ears, and yet had the confidence to usurp the crown of Cyrus; but before this incident they went under another name, and were held in great reputation among the Persians. They were indeed their chief professors of philosophy, and in matters of religion, made these the great articles of their faith: —

“ That there were two principles or gods, the one the cause of all the good, and the other the cause of all the evil in the world; but in this they were divided; that some of them held both these principles to have been from all eternity, whereas others maintained, that the good principle only was eternal, and the evil one created, in like manner as we believe, that the devil is a creature, who is fallen from his original purity and perfection. These two principles, they believed, were in continual opposition to each other, which was to continue till the end of the world; but then the good principle having overcome the evil, they should each of them have a distinct world to himself; the good reigning over all good beings, and the evil over all the wicked. They imagined farther, that darkness was the truest symbol of the evil, as light was of the good, god; and therefore they always worshipped him before fire, as being the cause of light, and before the sun more especially, because they accounted it the most perfect light. They paid divine honours, in short, to light, to the sun, to the fire in their temples, and to fire in their houses; but they always hated darkness, because they thought it a representation of the evil god, whom they ever had in the utmost detestation.” Such were the Magi among the ancient Persians, and such are the *Guebres*, or worshippers

of

A. M. who \* pretended to be his brother Smerdis, and whom the  
 3475, etc. history of Ezra † calls Artaxerxes. To him the Samaritans,  
 Ant. Chriſt. in

529, etc.  
 from Ezra  
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 end; all  
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of fire, among the present Persians and Indians; *Prideaux's Connection*, and *Calmet's Dictionary*, under the word.

\* The manner in which this Magian came to usurp the Persian throne, is thus related by most historians.—Cambyſes had a brother, the only ſon of Cyrus beſides himſelf, and born of the ſame mother. His name (according to Xenophon) was Tanaoxares, but Herodotus calls him *Smerdis*, and Juſtin *Margis*. He accompanied him in his wars for ſome time; but upon a pique of jealousy, the king ſent him back into Perſia, and there cauſed him to be murdered privately. The king, when he went upon the Egyptian expedition, had left the ſupreme government of his affairs in the hands of Patizithes, one of the chief of the Magians, (for the king was addicted to that ſect of religion), who had a brother that did very much reſemble Smerdis, the ſon of Cyrus, and was, for that reaſon perhaps, called by the ſame name. Patizithes, hearing of the young prince's death, and ſuppoſing that this, and ſome other extravagancies of Cambyſes, had made him odious to his ſubjects, placed this brother of his on the throne, pretending that he was the true Smerdis, the ſon of Cyrus, and ſo ſent heralds through the empire to proclaim him king. It was the cuſtom of the eaſtern princes, in thoſe days, to live retired in their palaces, and there tranſact all their affairs by the intercourſe of their eunuchs, without admitting any elſe, unleſs thoſe of the higheſt confidence, to have acceſs to them. This conduct the pretended Smerdis exactly obſerved: But Otanes, a Perſian nobleman, having a daughter, (whoſe name was Phedyma), who had been one of Cambyſes's wives, and was now kept by Smerdis in the ſame quality, and being deſirous to know whether he was the real ſon of Cyrus or no, ſent her inſtructions, that the firſt night ſhe lay with him, ſhe ſhould feel whether he had any ears, (becauſe Cyrus, for ſome crime or other, had cut off this Magian's ears), and ſhe acquainting her father that he had none, he immediately took ſix others of the Perſian quality with him, (among whom Darius was one), and entering the palace, ſlew both the uſurper, and his brother who had been the contriver of the whole plot; *Prideaux's Connection*, anno 522.

† That Cambyſes was the Ahaſuerus, (as we ſaid before, and the falſe Smerdis the Artaxerxes who obſtructed the work of the temple, is plain from hence,—That they are ſaid in Scripture (Ezra iv. 5. &c.) to be the kings of Perſia that reigned between the time of Cyrus, and the time of that Darius by whoſe

in like manner, addrest themselves, and in a memorial, represented, "That † the Jews were rebuilding their city and temple at Jerusalem, which might be a matter of pernicious consequence to his empire; that these Jews had always been a rebellious people, as he would find, if he consulted the records of his ancestors; that therefore there was reason to suspect, that in case they were permitted to go on, when once they had finished the work, they would withdraw their obedience, or refuse to pay tribute †; and that, by their example, very probably, all Syria and Palestine would be tempted to revolt; so that, in a short time, his Majesty would be excluded from having any benefit from his territories on that side of the river Euphrates."

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The purport of their memorial to Smerdis, or Artaxerxes.

Upon consulting the records which the Samaritans referred the king to, it plainly appeared, that the Jews had defended themselves with great valour, and had been subdued by Nebuchadnezzar, not without much difficulty;

whose decree the temple was finished: But as that Darius was Darius the son of Hytaspes, between whom and Cyrus there reigned none in Persia, but Cambyfes and Smerdis, it must follow from hence, that none but Cambyfes and Smerdis could be the Abasuerus and Artaxerxes who are said in Ezra to have put a stop to this work; *Prideaux's Connection*, anno 522.

† After the return from the captivity, the people in general came to be called *Jews*, because, though there were many Israelites among them, yet they chiefly consisted of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin; and though the edict of Cyrus gave all permission to return when they pleased, yet the sacred writers take notice only of those who returned in a body; *Patrick's Commentary* on Ezra.

† For this there are three expressions in the text, *toll*, *tribute*, and *custom*. By the first of these, Grotius, understands that which every head paid to the king, which we call *poll-money*: By the second, the excise (as we now speak) that was upon commodities and merchandize; and by the last the land-tax. But Watfius (in his *Miscell.* part. 2.) is of opinion, that the first word rather signifies that part which every man paid out of his estate, according as it was valued; the second, that which was paid for every head; and the third, that which was paid for every head; and the third, that which was paid upon the highways, by every traveller that went about the country with any kind of merchandize; *Patrick's Commentary*.

whereupon



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whereupon he issued out an edict, wherein he prohibited the Jews to proceed any farther in their building, and ordered his officers in Samaria to put it in execution. They immediately went up to Jerusalem with an armed force, and having pursued the king's orders with the utmost rigour, put a full stop to any farther proceeding in the work, until the second year of † Darius Hystaspes.

Darius, upon the death of the pretended Smerdis, was, \* by a stratagem, chosen king of Persia; and though

Their tampering with Tatnai, the governor of Palestine,

† There are some who take the Darius here mentioned, not to be Darius the Second, who was the son of Hystaspes, but the Darius who is commonly called *Nothus*; but then they are pressed with this difficulty, which may well be called insurmountable. For, from the first year of Cyrus, who gave orders for the building of the temple, to the sixth year of Darius Nothus, in which they suppose that it was finished, there were, at least, an hundred and thirteen years; according to some, an hundred and seventeen; and according to others, an hundred and forty-two. But now, if all this time Zerubbabel was in the government of Judea, and Joshua in the high-priesthood, so long an authority in church or state was never heard of in any age before. Nor must it be forgotten, what the prophet Haggai (chap. ii. 3.) supposes, *viz.* That some then alive, remembered the glory of the first temple, and compared it with the glory of the second; which, upon the supposition that this was in the sixth year of Darius Nothus, will make them at least an hundred and fourscore years old, a thing almost incredible. And therefore the most probable opinion is, that the Darius here meant, was Darius Hystaspes, whose second year was the eighteenth after the first of Cyrus, as Huetius reckons; *Patrick's Commentary.*

\* The seven princes, who had slain the usurper Smerdis, and his brother, consulting together about the settling of the government, came at length to this resolution, that the monarchy should continue in the same manner that it had been established by Cyrus, and that, to determine which of them should ascend the throne, they should all meet at a certain place, the next morning, against the rising of the sun, and that he whose horse first neighed, should be appointed king. For as the sun was the great deity of all the Persians, they seemed, by this method, to refer their election to it: But Darius's groom, being informed of this, tied a mare, on the night before the election, to the place where, the next morning, they were to meet, and brought his master's horse to cover her. As soon therefore as the princes

though the edict which prohibited the building of the temple expired with the usurper, yet had the prophets Zechariah and † and Haggai much ado to prevail with the people

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princes met together at the time appointed, Darius's horse remembered the place, ran immediately thither, neighing and prancing all along; whereupon the rest dismounting, saluted him as their king, and accordingly placed him on the throne; Prideaux's Connection, anno 521.

† Zechariah was the son of Barachiah, and grandson of Id-do; but the time and place of his birth are unknown. Some will have him to be born at Babylon, during the captivity; but others think that he was born at Jerusalem, before the tribes of Judah and Benjamin were carried away. It is certain, however, that he returned from Babylon with Zerubbabel, and very probable, that he began to prophesy in the second year of Darius, the son of Hytaspes. The number, excellency, and preciseness of his prophecies made him be styled *the sun among the lesser prophets*, and as he began his predictions about two months after Haggai, with him he encouraged the Jews to go on in the rebuilding their temple, and gave them assurance of the divine protection. But these prophecies were inconsiderable, in comparison of those which foretel the coming of the Messias in the plainest terms; the cruel war which Antiochus Epiphanes waged with the Jews, and God's severe judgments against this tyrant; the Jewish war with the Romans, and the siege of Babylon by Darius; the dissolution of the old covenant, and the substitution of a new one under Christ; the glorious state of the Christian church, and the conversion of the Gentiles; the persecutions which the Christians should endure, and the severe punishment of their persecutors, and other such like events, contained in the ninth and following chapters of his prophecies. Some critics, however, are of opinion, that the style of this prophet is a little interrupted, and without connection, and that the 9th, 10th, and 11th chapters, which go under his name, were originally written by Jeremiah; because in Matthew (chap. xxvii. 9, 10.), under the name of Jeremiah, we find Zechariah xi. 12. quoted; and as the aforesaid chapters make but one continued discourse, they conclude from thence, that all three belonged to Jeremiah. But it is much more natural to suppose, that the name of Jeremiah, by some unlucky mistake, has slip into the text of St. Matthew, instead of that of Zechariah. Cotemporary with him was the prophet Haggai, who, in all probability, was born at Babylon, and

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ple to reassume the work. They were fearful of the interest which the Samaritans were presumed to have at court; and accordingly found, that no sooner had they provided themselves with stone and timber, and other materials, in order to proceed in the building, but these implacable enemies betook themselves to their old practices, and endeavoured to possess Tatnai (whom Darius had made chief governour over the provinces of Syria and Palestine) with a notion that what the Jews were doing was without authority, and would prove prejudicial to the king.

Tatnai, upon this information, came to Jerusalem, and having called the governour and elders of the Jews together, \* he understood from them, that they had a decree

returned with Zerubbabel to Jerusalem. They both, with united zeal, encouraged the people to go on with the work of the temple, which, by the envy of the Samaritans, who were their enemies, and the ill offices of some at the court of Cyrus and Cambyfes, whom they influenced, was discontinued for some time: But upon the accession of Darius to the throne, Haggai, in particular, by reproaching the people with their indolence and infensibility, by telling them, that they were careless enough to lodge themselves very commodiously, while the house of the Lord lay buried in its own ruins, and by putting them in mind, that the calamities of drought and famine, wherewith God had afflicted them since their return, were owing to their neglect in repairing the temple, prevailed with them to set about the work in good earnest; so that, by virtue of these reproofs, as well as some encouragements which God occasionally authorised him to give them, they brought the whole to a conclusion in a short time; *Calmet's Dictionary*, under the words, and *Universal History*, lib. ii. c. 1.

\* The plea which Josephus makes Zerubbabel the governour, and Joshua the high-priest, make upon this occasion, is to this effect,—“ That they were the servants of the great God, “ to whose honour this temple was built, and to his service “ dedicated by the greatest, the happiest, and the wisest prince “ that ever sat on that throne; that it stood for many ages, “ till, by reason of the wickedness of their forefathers, the ci- “ ty, by God’s permission, was taken by Nebuchadnezzar, the “ king of Chaldea, the temple pillaged, and laid in ashes, and “ the people carried away captives into Babylon; that when “ Cyrus came to be possessed of the throne of Persia and Ba- “ bylon, he ordered, by his royal proclamation, the rebuild- “ ing of the temple, and the restoring of all the sacred ves-  
sels

decree from Cyrus; which impowered and authorised them in what they did: Whereupon the governour wrote to court, acquainting the king with the true state of the case, and desiring that search might be made into the public records, whether the Jews really had any such decree from Cyrus, and, upon the whole, that he would be pleased to signify his will, that he would have him to do in this affair.

A. M.  
3475, &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
529, &c.  
from Ezra  
iv. 7. to the  
end; all  
Eth. Neh.  
and part of  
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Darius, (a) who, the better to fortify his title to the crown, had married two of the daughters of Cyrus, thought himself concerned to do every thing that might tend to the honour of that great prince; and therefore confirmed the decree which he had granted to the Jews, with a fresh one of his own, wherein he gave them an assignment upon his revenues in several provinces for whatever money they wanted, to enable them to go on with the work, and to provide them sacrifices for the service of the temple, that the priests, in their daily offices, might \* put up their prayers

Darius's decree in favour of the Jews, and their finishing the temple thereupon.

“fels that had been taken away by Nebuchadnezzar, which accordingly were transported to Jerusalem, and laid up again in the temple; that, by the command of the same king, Abassar was sent to see the work expedited, and accordingly was present at the laying the of foundation; but that, ever since that time, by one artifice or other, their enemies had found means to obstruct and retard it; and that, for the truth of these allegations, they desired that Darius might be wrote to, that, by consulting the public records, it might be known, whether or no these facts were according to this their representation;” *Jewish History, lib. xi. c. 4.*

(a) Prideaux's Connection.

\* Though the Jews were not allowed to desire the Heathens to pray to their deities for their prosperity, because they were forbidden to acknowledge any other God but one; yet the Heathens, if they thought fit, might worship their God; nor did the Jews deny them that privilege, or refuse the offerings which they brought for that purpose, until in the time of their wars with the Romans, the faction of the zealots grew to be predominant: For then (as Josephus tells us, lib. ii. c. 7.) “one Eleazar, the son of Ananias the high-priest, a desperate daring young man, and a military officer then in command, pressed some of his freinds among the priests to receive no offering or sacrifice but from the Jews only; by which means it came to pass, that the very offerings of Cæsar, which were used constantly to be made for the welfare of the Roman people, came to be rejected; and this proved the very

A. M.  
3475, etc.  
Ant. Chris.  
529, &c.  
from Ezra  
iv. 7. to the  
end; all  
Esth. Neh.  
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Hagg Zech.  
and Mal.

prayers for the prosperity of the king and the royal family: And wherein he ordered, that the man should be hanged, and his house pulled down † for timber to make him a gallows, who should pretend to put any let or obstruction to this his injunction.

Upon the publication of this decree, and the great care that was taken to have it fully put in execution, the work of the temple went on so very successfully, that, in the sixth year of Darius, (according to the Jewish account), and on the third day of the twelfth month, (which is called *Adar*, and answers in part to our February and March), the whole of it was finished, and its dedication celebrated by the priests and Levites, and all the congregation of Israel, with great joy and solemnity. By the next month, which was the month Nisan, the first in the Jewish year, the temple was made fit for every part of divine service; and therefore, on the fourteenth day of that month, the passover was observed in it, according to the law of God, and, by all the Jews that had returned from the captivity, solemnized with great joy and gladness of heart, *because the Lord had made them joyful*, (as it is expressed in the book of

“ ground and foundation of the war with that nation. The  
“ high-priest, however, and the men of the best quality, de-  
“ clared themselves extremely dissatisfied with the novelty of  
“ this prohibition, and, with great importunities, desired the  
“ continuance of so pious a custom, as offering up prayers for  
“ princes and governours.” But all is in vain: though this  
place in Ezra, chap. vi. 10. one would think, sets the duty in  
a clear light; *Le Clerc's Commentary*, on Ezra.

† The most obvious sense of the words in the text (chap. vi. 11.) seems to be this: But Lud. De Dieu, observes, that, in the words which we there render *being set up*, there is no proper construction; and therefore he would rather have them translated, according to the Septuagint, *And standing, let him be beat upon it*, i. e. *whipped*, as we say, *at a post*, for that was a punishment among the Persians and other nations. But if a greater punishment than this should here be intended, then he makes the first words refer to the timber, and the latter to the man, in this manner, *And, from above, let it fall upon him*; i. e. the stake being lifted up, shall be struck into his body, and come out at his fundament, which was a cruel punishment among the Eastern people, and continues still in use to this day; *Patrick's Commentary*.

Ezra),

Ezra), and turned the heart of the king of Affyria † unto them, to strengthen their hands in the house of God, the God of Israel.

A. M.  
3475, etc.  
Ant. Chris.  
529, etc.  
from Ezra  
iv. 7. to the  
end; all  
Ezra, Neh.  
and part of  
Ezra, Zech.  
and Mal.

By the decree of Cyrus, which was thus confirmed by that of Darius, the tribute of Samaria had been assigned for the reparation of the temple; but now, that the body of the temple was finished, (though the outworks remained still untouched) the Samaritans pretended, that the end of this assignment was ceased, and thereupon refused to pay the tribute any longer. But the Jews, upon sending Zerubbabel their governour, with two other principal men, to Shushan, or Susa, (which was then the residence of the Persian monarchs), in order to complain of this unjust detention of the royal bounty, met with a proper redress; and returned with the king's order \* to his officers of Samaria, requiring them to take an effectual care, that, pursuant to his edict, the Samaritans paid their tribute to the temple, and gave the Jews for the future no cause to complain of their refusal herein: Which put a full end to all contest about that matter, and was the last good office

The Samaritans compelled to pay the tribute-money to the temple.

† Darius is called *the king of Affyria*, as now reigning over the kingdoms which were formerly under the power of the Affyrians; and from hence Archbishop Usher infers, that Babylon (which, in the beginning of his reign, had revolted) must necessarily have been reduced by Darius before this time, otherwise he thinks he could not have here been styled *king of Affyria*, whereof Babylon was then the metropolis; *Patrick's Commentary*; and *Prideaux's Connection*, anno 515.

\* A copy of the king's order, or the letter which he sent back by the Jewish commissioners to the officers and lieutenants of the province, and the senate of Samaria, Josephus has recorded in these words:

“ King Darius, to Tangar and Sambaba, masters of our horse  
“ at Samaria, and to Shadrach, Bobelon, and the rest of  
“ their fellow-subjects there, sendeth greeting:  
“ Whereas I am given to understand by Zerubbabel, Ananias,  
“ and Mardocheus, on the part of the Jews, that you stand  
“ accused of interrupting and discouraging the rebuilding of  
“ the temple, and of refusing to bear your part in the charge  
“ of the sacrifices, which, by my order and command, you  
“ ought to have done: This is to will and require you, upon  
“ sight of this letter, forthwith to supply them, out of my treasury at Samaria, with whatsoever they shall want for the use  
“ of their sacrifices and worship, to the end that they may offer  
“ up daily prayers and oblations, both for myself and all my  
“ people;” *Jewish Antiq. lib. xi. c. 4.*

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3475, &c.  
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we find recorded in Scripture, that Darius did the Jews. For, in the six and thirtieth year of his reign \* he died, and was succeeded by Xerxes, the † eldest of his sons by Atossa, daughter to Cyrus, the great founder of the Persian monarchy.

Xerxes, (c) according to Josephus, (for we have but

\* The character which our celebrated Connector of the Old and New Testament has given us of this Darius is,—That he was a prince of great wisdom, clemency, and justice, and has the honour to be recorded in holy writ, for a favourer of God's people, and a restorer of his temple at Jerusalem, and a promoter of his worship therein. For all this God was pleased to make him his instrument; and, with respect to this, I doubt not, it was, that he blessed him with a numerous issue, a long reign, and great prosperity. For, tho' he was not so very fortunate in his wars against the Scythians and Grecians, yet every where else he had full success in all his undertakings, and not only stored and fully settled the empire of Cyrus, after it had been much shaken by Cambyfes and the Magian, but also added many large and rich provinces to it, especially those of India, Thrace, Macedon, and the isles of the Ionian sea; *Prideaux's Connection*, anno 486.

† Darius had three sons by his first wife, the daughter of Gobrias, all born before his advancement to the throne, and four others by Atossa, the daughter of Cyrus, who were all born after it. Of the former Artabasan was the eldest; of the latter, Xerxes: And, as Darius advanced in years, between these two was the competition for the succession. Artabasan urged, that, as he was the eldest son, according to the custom and usage of all nations, he ought to be preferred before any that was younger. But Xerxes replied to this, That he was the son of Darius by Atossa, the daughter of Cyrus, who was the first founder of the Persian empire; for which reason he held it just and reasonable, that the crown of Cyrus should rather come to a descendant of Cyrus, than to one that was not; and to this he added, that tho' Artabasan was the eldest son of Darius, yet he was not the eldest son of a king; that he was born when he was only a private person, and could therefore claim no more than to be heir of of his private fortunes; but that, as to himself, he was the first-born after his father was king, and had therefore the best right to succeed him in the kingdom. Whereupon he was nominated to the succession, but not so much for the strength of his plea, as for the influence which his mother Atossa had over the inclinations of her husband; *Prideaux's Connection*, anno 486.

(c) Jewish Antiq. lib. xi. c. 5. Where we have a copy of his letter to his governours, and lieutenants of Syria, but too long to be inserted here.

little account of him in the sacred records) confirmed to the Jews all the privileges that his father Darius had granted them, and particularly that which assigned them the tribute of Samaria, for the charge of the sacrifices that were to be offered in the temple of Jerusalem. It is of him that the words of the prophet Daniel are meant : *(d) Behold, there shall stand up yet three kings in Persia, (which were Cyrus, Cambyfes, and Darius Hyftafpes), and the fourth shall be far richer than they all; and, by his strength, through his riches, he shall stir up all against the realm of Grecia :* For the story is well known, with what \* a prodigious armament, both by sea and land, he set out against the Greeks, but with what foul disgrace he returned

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3475, &c.  
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from Ezra  
iv. 7. to the  
end; all  
Ezra. Neh.  
and part of  
Hagg. Zech.  
and Mal.  
Darius's son  
favourites the  
Jews, but is  
murdered by  
the captain  
of his  
guards.

(d) Dan. xi. 2, 3.

\* After he had passed over the Hellespont, his land-army upon the muster, was found to be one million and seven hundred thousand foot, and fourscore thousand horse, besides his chariots and camels, for which, allowing twenty thousand more, the whole will amount to one million and eight hundred thousand men. His fleet consisted of 1220 ships of the line of battle, besides gallies transports, victuallers, and other sorts of vessels that attended, which were three thousand more; and on board of all these were reckoned to be five hundred and seventeen thousand, six hundred and ten men : So that the whole number of forces, by sea and land, which Xerxes brought with him out of Asia, to invade Greece, amounted to two millions three hundred and seventeen thousand six hundred and ten men. After his passing the Hellespont, the nations on the other side that submitted to him added to his land-army three hundred thousand men more, and two hundred and twenty ships to his fleet, on board of which were twenty-four thousand men; and the servants, eunuchs, women, sutlers, and all such other people as followed the camp, were computed to be no less than as many more. So that the whole number of the persons of all sorts that followed Xerxes in this expedition, were at least five millions. This is Herodotus's account of that armament : And, considering that he is the most ancient author that has written of this war, was himself alive when it happened, and has treated of it with greater appearance of exactness than any other, there is reason to believe, that his computation is the truest; *Prideaux's Connection, anno 480.*

\* For, having lost most of the forces which he left behind him at the battle of Plataea, and a great many of his ships at the fight in the streights of Salamis, and being frightened with



A. M. returned home from the inglorious expedition, when, falling into contempt with his own subjects, not a long while after, he was murdered by the captain of his guard, and succeeded by his son † Artaxerxes Longimanus, whom the Scripture calls Ahasuerus, and was the same † who had the beautiful Hebrew Esther for his queen.

Upon

an apprehension, lest the conquerors should sail to the Hellespont, and there obstruct his return, he fled thither with all the haste and precipitation that he could; but, at his coming thither, finding the bridge of boats which he had left there, broken by storms, he who had passed over that sea but a few months before with such pomp and pride, was forced to repass it in a poor fisher-boat. A piece of history this which Juvenal has not badly represented in these words.

~

Ille tamen qualis rediit, Salamine relicta,  
In Corum atque Eurum solitus sævire flagellis,  
Barbarus, Æolionunquam hoc in carcere passos? —  
Sed qualis rediit? nempe una nave cruentis  
Fluctibus, ac tardâ per densa cadavera prorâ. *Sat. x.*

† This prince, to distinguish him from others of that name, was called *Μακροχρῆς*, or *Longimanus*, upon the supposed length of his hands, with which it is said that he could have touched his knees, even when he stood upright; but this notwithstanding, it is reported of him, that he was both the handsomest person of the age in which he lived, and a prince likewise of a very mild and generous disposition; *Prideaux's Connection, anno 465.*

† Our learned Usher is of opinion, that Darius Hytaspes was the King Ahasuerus who married Esther, viz. That Atossa was the Vashti, and Artystona the Esther of the holy Scriptures. But Herodotus positively tells us, that Artystona was the daughter of Cyrus, and therefore could not be Esther; and that Atossa had four sons by Darius, besides daughters, all born to him after he was king; and therefore she could not be that Queen Vashti who was divorced from the king her husband in the third year of his reign, Esther i. 3.; nor he that Ahasuerus that divorced her. Joseph Scaliger is likewise of opinion, that Xerxes was the Ahasuerus, and Hamestris his queen the Esther of the holy Scriptures: But whatever seeming similitude there may be in the names, (and this is the whole foundation of his conjecture), it is plain from Herodotus, that Xerxes had a son by Hamestris, who was marriageable in the seventh year of his reign; and therefore it is impossible that he should be Esther's, because Esther was not married to Ahasuerus until the 7th year of his reign, (Esther ii. 16.); and, considering that the choice of virgins was made for him in the fourth of his reign, and a whole year employed in their purifications, the soonest that she could have a son

by

Upon † some occasion or other, Ahasuerus appointed a solemn rejoicing in the city of Shushan †, which lasted for an hundred and eighty days; and, in conclusion thereof, for seven days successively he made a great feast for all the princes and governours of his provinces; as the Queen

Vashti

A. M.  
3475, etc.  
Ant. Christ.  
529, etc.  
from Ezra  
iv. 7. to the  
end; all  
Ezra. Neh.  
and part of  
Hagg. Zeck  
and Mal.

Artaxerxes  
(called like-  
wise Ahas-  
uerus) di-  
vorces his  
queen Vashti.

by him, must be in the sixth; and therefore we may conclude, (with Josephus, the Septuagint, and the Apocryphal additions to the book of Esther), that the Ahasuerus in Scripture was Artaxerxes Longimanus, and Esther an Hebrew virgin, as she is all along represented; *Prideaux's Connection, anno 465.*

† The occasion of this great festival is, very likely, intimated to us in the phrase, *When the King Ahasuerus sat on the throne of his kingdom*, chap. i. 2. i. e. enjoying peace and tranquility through his large dominions; for the history of his accession to the throne is this:—Xerxes, his father, was privately murdered by Artabanus, captain of his guard. He coming to him, (who was then but the third son), made him believe, that Darius, his eldest brother, had done it, to make his way to the throne, and had a design likewise to cut him off, to secure himself in it. This Ahasuerus believing, went immediately to his brother's apartment, and, by the assistance of the wicked Artabanus and his guards, slew him, thinking all the while that he acted but in his own defence. Artabanus's drift was to seize on the throne himself; but, for the present, he took Ahasuerus, and placed him thereon, with a design to pull him down as soon as matters were ripe for his own ascent: but when Ahasuerus understood this from Magabyzar, who had married one of his sisters, he took care to counterplot Artabanus, and to cut him and his whole party off before his treason was come to maturity; and for this, and some other successes against his brother Hytaspes, which settled him in a peaceable possession of the whole Persian empire, very probably it was that a festival-season of above an hundred and fourscore days continuance was appointed, which, even to this day, (according to some travellers), is no uncommon thing in those parts of the world; *Prideaux's Connection, anno 465.*; and *Patrick's Commentary* on Esther, chap. i.

† Cyrus, and the rest of the Persian kings, after the conquest of the Medes, (whose country lay remote), settled their royal seat at Shushan, that they might not be too far from Babylon, and made it the capital of Persia. It stood upon the river Ulai, and was a place of such renown, that Strabo calls it *Πόλιν ἀξιολογόεσσαν, a city most worthy to be praised*. The whole country about it was wonderfully fruitful, producing an hundred and sometimes two hundred fold, as

A. M. 3475, etc. Ant. Christ. 529, &c. from Ezra iv. 7. to the end; all Esth. Neh. and part of Hagg. Zech. and Mal.

Vashti †, in her apartment, did for the ladies of the best distinction. In the last day of this feast, the king, either out of a frolic, or fondness to his queen, sent seven of his chamberlains to conduct her into his presence, that he might shew her to the company, for she was extremely beautiful; and ordered, at the same time, that she should come with the crown on her head.

This was an order so contrary to the usage of the Persians, and so little becoming her dignity and high station in life, that rather than be made a public spectacle, she adventured to disobey the king's command; which † incensed him

the same author informs us, lib. 15. Pliny indeed supposes, that Darius Hystaspes was the first founder of it, but he only enlarged and beautified it with a most magnificent palace, which Aristotle (in his book *Demundo*) calls *Θαυμάσιον βασιλευσιν οίκον* a wonderful royal palace, shining with gold, amber, and ivory. Nor is it altogether foreign to this purpose, what our learned Lightfoot (*De templo*, chap. iii.) tells us, viz. That the outward gate of the eastern wall of the temple was called *the gate of Shushan*, and had the figure of that city carved on it, in acknowledgment of the decree which this Darius granted in that place, in order to permit and encourage the Jews to rebuild their temple at Jerusalem; *Patrick's Commentary* on Esther, chap. i.; and *Calmet's Dictionary*, under the word *Shushan*.

† It has been a great inquiry among the learned, who this Vashti was. Those who make the Ahasuerus in Scripture to be Darius the son of Hystaspes, suppose that she was Atossa the daughter of Cyrus, who was first married to Cambyfes, her own brother, then to the Magian, who would have passed for Smerdis, and last of all to Darius. Others suppose, that she was Ahasuerus's own sister, because the Persians, in those days, made no scruple of these kind of marriages; tho' there is much more reason to think, that before her marriage, there had been such a collection of virgins made for the use of the king, as was before Esther's, (this is implied in chap. ii. 19.), and that having the good fortune then of obtaining the preference in the king's esteem, she was created queen; but being perhaps a woman of no high descent, her family-extraction, for that reason, might be concealed; *Calmet's Dictionary* under the name.

† The expression in the text is, *That the king was very wroth, and his anger burned in him*, Esther i. 12. It was more immoderate, because his blood was heated with wine, which made his passion too strong for his reason; otherwise he would not have thought it de-

cent

him to such a degree, that, † advising with his counsellors, in what manner he was to punish her for this public affront, he came to this resolution, (which was afterwards passed into an irreversible decree), that, for fear that Vasthi's ill example should encourage other women to contemn and disobey their husbands, she should be depōsed from her royal dignity, and an order be issued out, for the making a collection of the fairest virgins, in every province through the whole empire, that, out of them, one might be chosen whom the king should like best to be queen in the room of the divorced Vasthi.

A. M. 3475, &c.  
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At this time there lived at Shushan a certain Jew of the tribe of Benjamin, named Mordecai, a descendent of those who had been carried captive to Babylon with Jehoiachim king of Judah, and by his attendance at (e) the king's gate, seems to have been one of † the porters of the royal palace.

And marries Esther in a very pompous manner.

cent for the queen, nor safe for himself, to have her beauty (which was very great) exposed in this unusual manner; especially if there be any thing in what the Jewish Targum seems to suggest, viz. That he commanded her to be brought quite naked, that her comely proportion might be seen as well as her face; *Patrick's Commentary* on Esther, chap. i.

† The words in our translation are, *the wise men who knew the times*, chap. i. 13.; and from hence some have observed, that as the Persians kings did nothing without their magi, who were great pretenders to astrology, men of this sort were called, to know whether it was a proper time to set about the thing which the king might have then in his mind. For such was the superstition of the eastern people, that (as the Satyrists remarks),

— — — Quicquid

Dixerit astrologus, credent a fonte relatum

Ammonis.

*Juv. Sat. 6*

The explication, however, which Vitranga gives us of the original words, *Jodehe habitim*, is far from being improper, viz. That they were men well versed in ancient histories, and in the laws and customs of their country; and were therefore able to give the king counsel in all extraordinary and perplexed cases, as this certainly was; *Patrick's* and *Le Clerc's Commentaries* on Esther i.

(e) Esther ii. 19.

† But perhaps he might have been an officer of an higher rank, because it was an order instituted by Cyrus, (As Xenophon, in his *Cyropæd.* lib. viii. informs us), that all persons whatever, who had

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Hagg. Zech  
and Mal.

palace. He, having no children of his own, bred up Hadassah †, his uncle's daughter, who, being a very beautiful young woman, among other virgins, was made choice of upon this occasion. As soon as she was carried to court, she was committed to the care of an eunuch, who was to have the custody of these virgins, and by her sweet and engaging behaviour, made herself so acceptable to him, that he assigned her the best apartment in the house appointed for their habitation, and gave her a preference in other matters before all the rest of the virgins.

It was the custom, at this time, that every virgin, thus taken into the palace for the king's use, was to go through † course of purification, by sweet oils and perfumes, for a whole year; which, when Hadassah had done, and so prepared herself for the king's bed, the king was so

any employment at court, should attend at the palace gate, (where there was, doubtless, a proper waiting-room for their reception), that they might be in readiness, whenever they were wanted or called for: and that this custom was afterwards continued, we may learn from Herodotus, lib. iii. c. 120.; *Le Clerc's Commentary* on Esther, chap. ii.

† This woman was born in Babylon, and therefore, in analogy to that language, they gave her the name of *Hadassah*, which, in Chaldee, signifies *a myrtle*; but her Persian name was *Esther*, which some (a little incongruously) derive from *âstâr* *a star*, and others from *jatar*, which signifies *hidden*, because she was concealed in Mordecai's house; or rather, because her nation was concealed, and she not known, until Mordecai's merit and services to the crown came to be rewarded; *Patrick's Commentary*.

† The reason is assigned in the following verse, for their being kept so long in this course, viz. that for six months they might be anointed with the oil of *myrrh*, which, besides the fragrantcy of its smell, was good to make the skin soft and smooth, and clear it from all manner of scurf; and for six more with sweet odours, which, in these hot countries, were necessary to take away all ill scents and (as some think) to make the body more vigorous. But besides this there might be something of state in making those vassals (for such they were accounted) wait, before they were admitted to the honour of the king's bed; and something of precaution too, in keeping them seclude for so long a time, that the king might be satisfied, that he was not imposed upon by a child begotten by any other man; *Patrick's Commentary*; and *Pool's Annotations* on Esther ii. 12.

highly

highly delighted with her, that intending to make her † more than a concubine, he continued her in his own palace, and in a short time set the royal diadem upon her head, and made her queen in the room of Vashti. The nuptials were celebrated with great magnificence. A splendid entertainment was made, which, in honour to the new queen, was called *Esther's feast*, (for that was the Persian name which had lately been given her), and the king, upon this joyful occasion, not only gave † rich presents to the queen, and largesses to the guests, but granted pardons likewise to his subjects, and a relaxation of tribute for some time to all the princes of his dominions.

A. M.  
3475, &c.  
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from Ezra  
iv. 7. to the  
end; all  
Esth. Neh.  
and part of  
Hagg. Zech  
and Mal.

At Esther's first going to court, Mordecai had given her a strict caution, not to discover that she was a Jew, lest the king should despise her for being a captive, which she carefully observed; and he, for the same reason, concealed his relation to her, contending himself with the little employment he had at court, until a more favourable opportunity should present itself. In the mean time, he had the

Haman's  
indignation  
against  
Mordecai,  
and the  
king's de-  
cree against  
the Jews.

† According to this account of things, this Persian monarch seems to have had but one wife, at least but one in chief favour and esteem with him, though it is certain, he could not fail of having an infinite number of secondary wives or concubines. This was the name of every one that was taken from among the virgins, (who had a separate house for themselves), and conducted to the king's bed; where having passed a night, she returned no more to the virgin's apartments, but was, the next morning, received into the house of the concubines, and there treated in the state and port of one of the king's wives; for such they were accounted. No man was permitted to marry them, as long as the king lived; and upon his demise, they generally fell to his successor. Of these Darius Nothus is reckoned to have had no less than three hundred and sixty;  
*Pool's Annotations.*

† The manner of the Persian king was, to give his queens, at their marriage, such a city to buy them cloths; another for their hair; another for their necklaces; and so on for the rest of their expences. And as it was customary for him, (according to the testimony of Herodotus), upon his accession to the throne, to remit the tribute that was due to him from all the cities; so he might, upon this occasion, out of his abundant joy, make a release to the provinces, and forgive them some of the duties and imposts that they were bound to pay him; *Patriick's Commentary.*

good

A. M.  
3475, &c.  
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iv. 7. to the  
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and part of  
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and Mal.

good fortune to discover a conspiracy, which † two of the king's chamberlains were forming against his life. This he communicated to the queen, and the queen acquainted the king with it in Mordecai's name, so that the conspirators were seized, convicted, and executed: But though the whole affair was recorded in the Persian annals, yet Mordecai, for the present, was no more thought on, until his merit and great services came to be remembered, upon this occasion.

Haman, an Amalekite, of the posterity of Agag, king of Amalek, in the time of Saul, was become the king's chief favourite, and all the servants at court were ordered to show him great respect and reverence; which every one readily did, except Mordecai, who, upon his passing to and fro, took no manner of notice of him. \* This so exasperated the proud Amalekite, that being informed that Mordecai was a Jew, he was resolved, in revenge of the affront, not to destroy him only, but his whole nation with him: But because there might be some danger in so bold an undertaking, he called together his diviners, to find out what day would be most lucky for his putting his design in execution.

The way of divination, then in use among the eastern people, was by casting lots; and therefore, having tried, in this manner, first each month, and then each day in every month, they came at last to a determination, that

† These were two great men, who perhaps kept the door of the king's bedchamber, and being either incensed at the divorce of Vasthi, (whose creatures they were), or at the advancement of Esther, who, in all probability, would raise her kinsman Mordecai to a superiority over them, took disgust thereat, and so resolved to revenge themselves on the king for it; *Prideaux's Connection*; and *Patrick's Commentary*.

\* Josephus tells us, that Haman taking notice of this singularity in Mordecai, asked him, What countryman he was? And finding him to be a Jew, broke out into a violent exclamation at the insolence of such a scoundrel, that when all the natives of the free-born Persians made no difficulty in doing him that honour, this slave of a Jew should presume to affront him; and in this rage, he took up a desperate resolution, not only to be revenged of Mordecai, but to destroy the whole race of Jews likewise: Well remembering, that his ancestors, the Amalekites, had been formerly beaten out of their land, and utterly exterminated by the Jews; *Jewish Antiq. lib. 11. c. 6.*

the

the † thirteenth day of the twelfth month, which is called *Adar*, would be most fortunate for his design. Where-  
 upon he went to the king, and having intimated to him, “ That there were a certain people dispersed all o-  
 ver his empire, who called themselves *Jews*, and who  
 “ having laws and ordinances of their own, despised all  
 “ his edicts and injunctions; that their principles, in short,  
 “ tended to the disturbance of the good order of his go-  
 vernment, and the breach of all uniformity; that upon  
 “ these accounts, it was not consistent with the rules of  
 “ policy, to allow them any further toleration; and there-  
 fore he proposed, that they should be destroyed, and ex-  
 tirpated all out of the empire of Persia; and lest the  
 loss of so many subjects should be thought a diminu-  
 tion of the king’s revenue, he proposed to make up the  
 defect out of his own private fortune.” The king was  
 easy enough to be wrought upon by this court-minion;  
 who having obtained his royal consent, ordered the secre-  
 taries of state \* to form a decree pursuant hereunto, which,  
 when

A. M.  
 3475, etc.  
 Ant. Chris.  
 529, etc.  
 from Ezra  
 iv. 7. to the  
 end; all  
 Esth. Neh.  
 and part of  
 Hagg. Zech.  
 and Mal.

† It was in the first month in the year, when Haman began  
 to cast lots, and the time, for the execution of the Jews, was,  
 by these lots, delayed until the last month in the year; which  
 plainly shews, *That though the lot be cast into the lap, yet the whole*  
*disposing thereof is from the Lord*, Prov. xvi. 33. For hereby  
 almost a whole year intervened between the design and its  
 execution, which gave time for Mordecai to acquaint Queen  
 Esther with it, and for her to intercede with the king for the  
 revoking or suspending the decree, and thereby disappointing  
 the conspiracy: For we can hardly think, (what Le Clerc sug-  
 gests), that Haman gave the Jews all this time, that they  
 might make their escape out of the kingdom, and not stay to  
 be slain, which possibly might bring an odium upon himself,  
 when it came to be known by whose instigation this massacre  
 was committed; *Patrick’s* and *Le Clerc’s Commentaries*.

\* The decree itself (according to Josephus) was to this effect.—

“ The great King Artaxerxes, to the hundred and seven and twen-  
 ty governours of the provinces, between India and Ethiopia,  
 “ greeting:

“ Whereas it hath pleased God to give me the command of  
 “ so many nations, and a dominion over the rest of the world,  
 “ as large as I myself desire, I being resolved to do nothing that  
 “ may



A. M. when it was signed, he sent † by posts to all lieutenants,  
 3475, etc. and governours of provinces, with strict charge to destroy,  
 Ant. Christ. and  
 529, etc. from Ezra and

iv. 7. to the end; all  
 Esth. Neh. “ may be tyrannical, or grievous toward my people, and to  
 and part of “ bear a gentle and easy hand over them, with an eye more  
 Hagg. Zech. “ especially to the preservation of their peace and liberties, and  
 and Mal. “ to settle them in a state of tranquillity and happiness, not to  
 “ be shaken : All this I have taken into mature deliberation ;  
 “ and being given to understand by my trusty and well-belov-  
 “ ed friend and counsellor, Haman, a person of a tried faith,  
 “ prudence, and justice, and whom I esteem above all others,  
 “ that there is a mixture of a sort of inhuman people among  
 “ my subjects, that take upon them to govern by their own  
 “ laws, and to prescribe ways to themselves, in contempt of  
 “ public order and government; men depraved both in their  
 “ customs, and in their manners, and enemies not only to mo-  
 “ narchy, but to the methods of our royal administration : This  
 “ is therefore to will and require, that upon notice given you  
 “ by Haman (who is to me as a father) of the persons intended  
 “ by this my proclamation, you put all the said persons, men,  
 “ women, and children, to the sword, without any commise-  
 “ ration or favour, in a strict pursuance of my decree. And  
 “ it is my further command, that you put this in execution  
 “ upon the thirteenth day of the twelfth month of the present  
 “ year, to make but one day’s work of the destruction of all  
 “ mine and your enemies, in order to a future peace and secu-  
 “ rity of all our lives after;” *Jewish Antiq. lib. xi. c. 6.*

† The first institution of posts is generally ascribed to the Persians; for the kings of Persia, (as Diodorus Siculus, lib. xix. observes), that they might have intelligence of what passed in all the provinces of their vast dominions, placed centinels on eminences, at convenient distances where towers were built, and these centinels gave notice of public occurrences to one another, with a very loud and thrill voice, by which means, news was transmitted from one extremity of the kingdom to the other, with great expedition. But as this could be practised only in the case of general news, which might be communicated to the whole nation, Cyrus (as Xenophon relates, *Cyropæd. lib. viii.*) set up couriers, places for post-horses on all high-roads, and offices, where they might deliver their packets to one another. This, says our author, they did night and day; so that no rain or hard weather being to stop them, in the judgment of many, they went faster than cranes could fly. The like is said by Herodotus, lib. viii. And he acquaints us farther, that Xerxes, in his famous expedition against Greece, planted posts from

and caused to be killed, all the Jews, of whatever sex or condition, both young and old, that were any where within their jurisdiction, on the thirteenth of Adar following.

The publication of this horrid decree occasioned an universal grief and lamentation, wherever the Jews inhabited; and in the city of † Shushan, (which was not well pleased with it), Mordecai in particular having put on sackcloth, and covered his head with ashes, went along the

A. M.  
3475, &c.  
Anc. Christ.  
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from Ezra  
iv. 7. to the  
end; all  
Eith. Neh.  
and part of  
Hagg. Zech.  
and Mal.

from the Aegean sea to Shushan, at certain distances, as far as a horse could ride with speed, that thereby he might send notice to his capital city of whatever might happen in his army. The Greeks borrowed the use of posts from the Persians; and, in imitation of them, called them *ὑπὸ ποσὶ*. Among the Romans, Augustus was the person who set up public posts, who at first were running foot-men, but were afterwards changed into post-chariots and horses, for the greater expedition. Adrian improved upon this; and having reduced the posts to great regularity, discharged the people from the obligation they were under before of furnishing horses and chariots. With the empire the use of posts declined. About the year 807, Charlemagne endeavoured to restore them; but his design was not prosecuted by his successors. In France, Lewis XI. set up posts at two leagues distance through the kingdom. In Germany, Count Taxis set them up, and had, for his recompence, in 1616, a grant of the office of postmaster-general, to himself and his heirs for ever. Above eight hundred years ago, couriers were set up in the Ottoman empire: and, at this time, there are some among the Chinese; but their appointment is only to carry orders from the king, and the governours of provinces, and, in a word, for public affairs, and those of the greatest consequence; *Calmet's Dictionary*, under the word.

Mordecai  
puts Queen  
Esther upon  
interced-  
ing with  
the King.

† Not only the Jews, but a great many others in Shushan, might be concerned at this horrid decree, either because they were related to them, or engaged with them in worldly concerns, or perhaps out of mere humanity and compassion to so vast a number of people, now appointed as sheep for the slaughter. They might apprehend likewise, that, upon the execution of the decree, some sedition or tumult might ensue; that, in so great a slaughter, it was hard to tell, who would escape without being killed or plundered, because those who were employed in this bloody work would be more mindful to enrich themselves than to observe their orders; *Pool's Annotations*; and *Patrick's* and *Le Clerc's Commentaries*.

A. M.  
3475, &c.  
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iv. 7. to the  
end; all  
Esth. Neh.  
and part of  
Hagg. Zech.  
and Mal.

streets, † bemoaning his and his countrymens hard fate, even until he came to the palace-gate; which, when the queen understood, and sent to inquire the cause, he returned her a copy of the king's decree, whereby she might plainly perceive what mischief was intended against all the nation, unless, by a timely intercession with the king, she would endeavour \* to prevent it.

† The latter Targum, upon the book of Esther, gives us this account of Mordecai's behaviour upon this sad occasion, viz. That in the midst of the streets he made his complaint, saying, *What an heavy decree is this, which the king and Haman have passed, not against a part of us, but against us all, to root us out of the earth!* Whereupon all the Jews flocked about him, and having caused the book of the law to be brought to the gate of Shushan, he, being covered with sackcloth, read therein these words out of Deut. iv. 30, 31. *When thou art in tribulation, and all these things are come upon thee, in the latter days, if thou turn to the Lord thy God, and shalt be obedient to his voice, (for the Lord thy God is a merciful God), he will not forsake thee, nor destroy thee, nor forget the covenant of thy fathers, which he swore unto them:* After which he exhorted them to fasting, humiliation, and repentance, according to the example of the Ninevites; *Patrick's Commentary.*

\* Ever since the reign of Dejoces king of Media, Herodotus, lib. i. informs us, that, for the preservation of royal majesty, it was enacted, "That no one should be admitted into the king's presence; but that, if he had any business with him, he should transact it by the intercourse of his ministers." The custom passed from the Medes to the Persians; and therefore we find it in the same historian, lib. iii. that after the seven Persian princes had killed the Magian, who had usurped the throne, they came to this agreement, that whoever should be elected king, should allow the others to have at all times a ready access to his presence, (which is an implication, that they had it not before), whenever they should desire it, except only when he was in company with any of his wives. This, therefore, was the ancient law of the country, and not procured by Haman, as some imagine; though it cannot be denied, but that the reason of the law at first might be, not only the preservation of the majesty and safety of the king's person, but a contrivance likewise of the great officers of state, that they might ingross the king to themselves, by allowing admittance to none but whom they should think proper to introduce; *Pool's Annotations; and Le Clerc's Commentary.*

Esther,

Esther, at first, excused herself from engaging in this affair, because an ordinance was passed, inhibiting any person, whether man or woman, upon pain of death, from approaching the king's presence without a special order. But when he returned her in answer, "That the decree" extended to the whole Jewish nation, without any exception; that if it came to execution, she must expect to escape no more than the rest; that God very probably raised her to her present greatness, on purpose that she might save and protect his people: but that if she neglected to do this, and their deliverance should come some other way, then should she, and her father's house, by the righteous and just judgment of God, most certainly perish." Which so roused her drooping courage, that she sent him word again, that he and all the Jews in Shushan should † fast for her three days, (as she herself intended to do), and offer up their humble supplications to God, that he would prosper her in so hazardous an undertaking, and then she would not fail to address the king, though it were at the utmost peril of her life.

The people fasted, as she had enjoined them; and on the third day, she dressed herself in her royal apparel, and † went toward the room, where the king was sitting upon his throne in the inner part of the palace. Upon the first sight of her, he held out his golden sceptre, (a token that he pardoned her presumption, and spared her life), and then asked her, what the request was that she had to make to him. At the extension of this favour, she approached

† This is not to be understood, as if the people were to take no manner of sustenance for three days, because few or none could undergo that, but only, either that they should abstain from all delicacies, and content themselves with coarse fare, as Josephus expounds it, or that they should make no set meals of dinner or supper in their families, but eat and drink no more than would suffice to sustain nature, and support them in prayer to God for a blessing upon her undertaking; *Patrick's and Le Clerk's Commentaries*.

† But first, says the latter Targum, she made a solemn prayer to God, with many tears, as soon as she was dressed, saying, *Thou art the great God, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of my father Benjamin; as thou didst deliver Hananiah, Michael, and Azariah, out of the fiery furnace, and Daniel from the lion's den, so deliver me now out of the hand of the king, and give me grace and favour in his eyes, &c.*

A. M.  
3475, etc.  
Ant. Christ.  
529, etc.  
from Ezra  
iv. 7. to the  
end; all  
Esth. Neh.  
and part of  
Hagg. Zech.  
and Mal.

A. M. nearer, and having touched the end of his † sceptre, only  
 3475, etc. desired, that he and Haman would come to a banquet  
 Ant. Christ. which she had prepared for him. Haman, who happened  
 529, etc. then to be absent, was called to attend the king; and  
 from Ezra iv. 7. to the when the king and he were at the banquet, he asked her  
 end; all again concerning her petition, promising that he would grant  
 Esth. Neh. it her, even were it to extend to half his kingdom: But †  
 and part of Hagg. Zech. her  
 and Mal.

† A sceptre was the ensign of the highest and most absolute authority; and therefore some have observed, that when Mordecai was advanced to the greatest dignity, next the king, having the royal robes on, and other ensigns of royal dignity, no mention is made of any sceptre, for that was proper and peculiar to the king; and the queen's touching, or, as some say, kissing it, was a token of her subjection, and thankfulness for his favour. But Josephus has mightily improved upon the story; for he tells us, "That as the queen, with her two handmaids, approached the room where the king was, leaning gently upon one, and the other bearing up her train, her face being covered with such a blush, as expressed a graceful majesty, but at the same time some doubtful apprehensions upon her approaching of the king, mounted on his throne, and the sparkling glory of his robes, that were all over-embroidered with gold, pearl, and precious stones, she was taken all on a sudden with a trembling at so surprising a sight; and upon fancying that the king looked upon her as if he were uneasy, and out of humour, she fell into the arms of one of her maids in a direct swoon. This accident, (says he), by the intervention of God's holy will and providence, put the king into a fright, for fear she might not come to herself again; so that making what haste he could from his throne, he took her up in his arms, and with the kindest words that could be, gave her this comfort:—That no advantage should be made of the law to her prejudice, though she came without calling, because the decree extended only to subjects; whereas he looked upon her as his companion and partner in the empire;" *Jewish Antiq. lib. xi. c. 6.*

† Her intention in desiring thus to entertain the king twice at her banquet, before she made known her petition, was, that thereby she might the more endear herself to him, and dispose him the better to grant her request; for which reason she thought it a piece of no bad policy to invite his first favourite to come along with him. But in the whole matter, the singular providence of God is not a little conspicuous, which so disposed her mind, that the high honour which the king bestowed upon

Mordecai

her request again was no more, than that he and Haman would favour her again, the next day, with their company at the like entertainment, and that then she would not fail to disclose her request.

Haman \* was not a little proud of the peculiar honour which both the king and queen had done him ; but upon his return home, seeing Mordicai sitting at the palace-gate, and refusing to shew him the least obeisance, though † he restrained himself at present, yet so moved was he with indignation against him, that when he came home, and related to his family the favours which that day he had received, he could not forbear complaining of the affront and disrespect which Mordecai had put upon him ;

A. M.  
3475. &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
529, &c.  
from Ezra  
iv. 7. to the  
end ; all  
Esth. Neb.  
and part of  
Hagg. Zech.  
and Mal.  
~~~~~  
Haman's
fresh indig-
nation a-
gainst Mor-
decai.

Mordicai the next day, might fall out in the mean time, and so make way for her petition, which would come in very seasonably at the banquet of wine : For as then it was most likely for the king to be in a pleasant humour, so it was most usual for the Persians to enter upon business of state, when they began to drink ; *Le Clerc's* and *Patrick's Commentary* ; and *Prideaux's Connection*, anno 453.

* Athenæus mentions it as a peculiar honour, which no Grecian ever had before or after, that Artaxerxes vouchsafed to invite Timagoras the Cretan to dine even at the table where his relations eat, and to send sometimes a part of what was served up at his own ; which some Persians looked upon as a diminution of his Majesty, and a prostitution of their nation's honour. In the life of Artaxerxes, Plutarch tells us, that none but the king's mother, and his real wife, were permitted to sit at his table ; and therefore he mentions it, as a condescension in that prince, that he sometimes invited his brothers : So that this particular favour was a matter that Haman had some reason to value himself upon ; *Le Clerc's Commentary*.

† It may seem a little strange, that so proud a man as Haman was, should not be prompted immediately to avenge himself on Mordecai for his contemptuous usage of him, since he had enough about him, no doubt, who, upon the least intimation of his pleasure, would have done it ; and since he, who had interest enough with his prince to procure a decree for the destruction of a whole nation, might have easily obtained a pardon for having killed one obscure and infamous member of it. But herein did the wise and powerful providence of God appear, that it disposed Haman's heart, (contrary to his own inclination and interest), instead of employing his power against his enemy, to put fetters, as it were, upon his own hands ; *Poole's Annotations*.

inasmuch,

A. M. 3475, etc. Ant. Christ. 529, &c. from Ezra iv. 7. to the end, all Esth. Neh. and part of Hagg. Zech. and Mal. infomuch, that his wife, and others that were present, advised him to have a gibbet of † fifty cubits high instantly erected, and the very next morning, to go to the king, and obtain a grant of him to have that insolent fellow hanged upon it.

This project he liked very well, and therefore caused the gibbet to be set up : But when he came to court in the morning, he found that things had taken quite another turn. The king, that very morning, happened to awake sooner than ordinary, and being not able to compose himself to sleep again, he called for † the annals of his reign, and ordered a person, that was then in waiting, to read them to him. The reader went on, until he came to the passage which made mention of Mordecai's discovery of the treason of the two chamberlains ; and when the king upon inquiry was given to understand, that the man, for so signal a service, had received no reward at all, he called unto Haman, (who was waiting for admittance upon a quite different intent), and asked him, What it was he would advise him to do to the man, on whom he designed to confer some marks of his favour.

Haman,

† That men might at a great distance see him, to the increase of his disgrace, (as Haman might think), and that struck with the greater terrour by that spectacle, they might not dare, for the future to despise or offend him ; *Patrick's Commentary* ; and *Pool's Annotations*.

† In these diaries (which we now call journals) wherein was set down what passed every day, the manner of the Persians was, to record the names of those who had done the king any signal service. Accordingly Josephus informs us, “ That upon the secretary's reading these journals, he took notice of such a person, who had great honours and possessions given him, as a reward for a glorious and remarkable action ; and of such another, who made his fortune by the bounties of his prince, for his fidelity : But that, when he came to the particular story of the conspiracy of the two eunuchs against the person of the king, and of the discovery of this treason by Mordecai, the secretary read it over, and was passing forward to the next, when the king stopped him, and asked if that person had any reward given him for his service ?” &c. which shews indeed a singular providence of God, that the secretary should read in that very part of the book, wherein the service of Mordecai was recorded. But the latter Targum (to make a thorough miracle of it) tells us, that when the

Haman, who never dreamt but that the person he meant of was himself, was resolved to lay it on thick ; and therefore he gave advice, * that the royal robe should be brought, which the king, on solemn occasions, was wont to wear; the horse, which was kept for his own riding *, and the

A. M.
3475, etc.
Ant. Christ.
529, etc.
from Ezra
iv. 7. to the
end; all
Esth. Neh.
and part of
Hagg. Zech.
and Mal.

the reader opened the book at the place where mention was made of Mordecai, he turned over the leaves, and would have read in another, but that the leaves flew back again to the same place where he opened it at first, so that he was forced to read that story to the king; *Patrick's Commentary*; and *Jewish Antiq. lib. xi. c. 6.*

* To form a notion of that height of pride and arrogance, to which Haman (who thought all the honours he specified were designed for him) was arrived, we may observe, that, for any one to put on the royal robe, without the privity and consent of the king, was, among the Persians, accounted a capital crime. To which purpose Plutarch, in his life of Artaxerxes, has related this story: —

“ That one day, when in hunting, the king happened to tear his garment, and Tiribazus was telling him of it, the king asked him, what he should do? Why, put on another, says Tiribazus, and give that to me. That I will, says the king, but then I injoin you not to wear it. Tiribazus however, (who was a good enough kind of a man, but a little weak and silly), ventured to put it on, with all its fine ornaments; and when some of the nobles began to resent it, as a thing not lawful for any subject to do, I allow him, says the king, laughing at the figure he made, to wear the fine trinkets as a woman, and the robe as a madman;” *Le Clerc's Commentary.*

* There was a custom, not unlike this, among the Hebrews, (as appears from the history of Solomon, 1 Kings i. 33.), for the person that was to be declared successor to the crown, on the day of his inauguration, to be mounted on the king's horse: and, to the like custom among the Persians, it is highly probable, that the poet Statius, in his description of a young king succeeding to his father's throne, may allude.

Sicut Abæmenius solium gentesque paternas
Excepit si forte puer, cui vivere patrem
Tutius, incerta formidine gaudia librat,
An fidi proceres, an pugnet vulgus habenis,
Cui latus Euphratæ, cui Caspia limina mandet,
Sumere nunc arcus, ipsumque onerare veretur
Patris equum, visusque sibi nec sceptrum capaci
Sustentare manu, nec adhuc implere tiaram.

Thebaid. lib. viii.
crown,

A. M. 3475, etc. Ant. Christ. 529, etc. from Ezra iv. 7. to the end; all Esth. Neh. and part of Hagg. Zech. and Mal.

crown, which was used to be set upon the horse's head *, and that, with this robe, the person whom the king thought proper to distinguish should be arrayed, and the chief man in the kingdom appointed to lead his horse by the reins, walking before him in the quality of an officer, and proclaiming, *Thus shall it be done to the man whom the king desires to honour.* "Take then the horse and the robe, says the king, and do all that thou hast mentioned to Mordecai the Jew, who has not been yet rewarded for the discovery of the treason of the two eunuchs that intended to have taken away my life."

Nothing certainly could cut a proud man more to the heart, than to be employed in such an office; * but the king's command was positive, so that Haman was forced to do it, how much soever it might go against the grain: and when the irksome ceremony was over, he returned to his house, lamenting the disappointment and great mortification he had met with, in being forced to pay so signal an

* Commentators are not agreed, whether this crown was placed upon the king's head, or his horse's. Those who refer it to the king, will have it to be what we call a *turbant*, made of fine white and purple linen, which it was death for any one to put on his head, without the king's express order; to which purpose Arrian (Alex. exped. lib. vii.) tells us this story:—"That as Alexander was sailing on the Euphrates, and his turbant happened to fall off among some reeds, one of the watermen immediately jumped in and swam to it; but as he could not bring it back in his hand without wetting it, he put it upon his head, and so returned with it. Whereupon most historians that have wrote of Alexander (says he) tell us, that he gave him a talent of silver for this expression of his zeal to serve him, but, at the same time, ordered his head to be struck off, for presuming to put on the royal diadem." Other commentators are of opinion, that this *Keter*, which we render *crown*, being a word of a large signification, will equally denote that ornament which the horse that the king rode, wore upon his head: As it must be acknowledged, that this application of the thing agrees better with the signification and order of the Hebrew words; with the following verses, wherein no mention is made of the *Keter*, but only of the robe and the horse to which this crown belonged; and with the custom of the Persians, who used to put a certain ornament (in Italian called *fiocco*) upon the head of that horse whereon the king was mounted; *Le. Clerk's* and *Patrick's Commentaries*; and *Pool's Annotations*.

honour

honour to his most hated enemy. But while he was relating this to his family, and they thereupon expressing some uneasy apprehensions, as if this were a very bad omen, one of the queen's chamberlains came to his house to hasten him to the banquet; and, having seen the gallows which had been set up the night before, he fully informed himself of the intent for which it was prepared.

A. M.
3475, &c.
Ant. Christ.
529, &c.
from Ezra
iv. 7. to the
end; all
Esth. Neh.
and part of
Hag. Zech.
and Mal.

When the king and Haman were set down to the entertainment, the king asked Esther again, what her request was; renewing his promise, that he would not fail to grant it her, even though it extended to the half of his kingdom.

"But my petition, O king, says she, is only for my own life, and the life of my people, because there is a design laid against us, not to make us bond-men and bond-women, (for then I should have been silent), but to slay and destroy us all. If therefore I have found favour in thy sight, O king, let my life, and the life of my people, be given at my request." At this the king asking, with some commotion, who it was that durst do any such thing? The Haman then present, she told him, was the contriver of all the plot: Whereupon the king, rising up from the banquet in a passion, † went into the garden adjoining; and Haman taking this opportunity, † fell prostrate on the bed where the queen was sitting, to supplicate his life; but the king, coming in the mean time, and seeing him in this posture, What, will you ravish the queen before my eyes? cried out aloud: Whereupon those that were in waiting came, and covered his face, as a token

† Partly, as disdaining the company of so audacious and ungrateful a person; partly, to cool and allay his spirit, boiling and struggling with such a variety of passions; and, partly, to consider within himself the heinousness of Haman's crime, the mischief which himself had like to have done by his own rashness, and what punishment was fit to be inflicted on so vile a miscreant; *Patrick's Commentary*; and *Pool's Annotations*.

† It was a custom among the Persians, as well as other nations, to sit, or rather to lie upon beds, when they eat or drank; and therefore, when Haman fell down, as a suppliant at the feet of Esther, and (as the manner was among the Greeks and Romans, and not improbably among the Persians) embraced her knees, the king might pretend that he was offering violence to the queen's chastity. Not that he believed that this was his intention, but, in his furious passion, he turned every thing to the worst sense, and made use of it to aggravate his crime; *Patrick's Commentary*.

A. M.
3475, etc.
Ant. Chris.
529, etc.
from Ezra
iv. 7. to the
end; all
Fifth. Neh.
and part of
Hag. Zech.
and Mal.

of the king's indignation against him; and when the chamberlain who had been to call him to the banquet, acquainted the king of the gallows which he had prepared for Mordecai, who had saved the king's life, he gave immediate orders, that * he should be hanged thereon, (which accordingly was done), and his whole estate given to the queen, whereof she appointed Mordecai her steward. At the same time she informed the king of her near relation to Mordecai; so that he took him into his royal favour, advanced him to great power, riches, and dignity in the empire, and made him keeper of his signet, in the same manner as Haman had been before.

And the decree which he procured against the Jews is made ineffectual.

But though Haman was thus removed, yet the decree which he had procured remained still in full force; nor could it be repealed, because the laws of the Medes and Persians were such, that nothing written in the king's name, and signed with the royal signet, could be reversed. All therefore that the king could do (upon the queen's second petition, to have the decree cancelled) was, to ~~revert~~ ^{grant} the Jews (by another * decree) such a power to defend themselves.

* Josephus indeed tells us, that he died on the cross: But others have observed, that crucifixion was not a Persian punishment; and Salmasius (in his book *De cruce*) shews, that it was the manner of the Persians, first, to cut off the heads of malefactors, and then to hang on a gibbet. However this be: "I cannot pass over the wonderful harmony of Providence, (says Josephus), without a remark upon the almighty power, and the admirable justice and wisdom of God, not only in bringing Haman to his deserved punishment, but in trapping him in the very same snare that he had laid for another, and turning a malicious invention upon the head of the inventor."

Nec lex est justior ulla,
Quam necis artifices arte perire sua.

Antiq. lib. 9. c. 6.

* Josephus has given us a true copy, as he says, of this decree, or (as he calls it) of the letters, which Artaxerxes sent to the magistrates of all the nations that lie between India and Ethiopia, under the command of an hundred and seven and twenty provinces:—"Wherein he represents the abuse which favourites are wont to make of their power and credit with their prince, by insulting their inferiors, by flying in the face of those that raised them, and (to gratify their resentments)

themselves against all that should assault them on the day
 † when the former decree was to be executed, as might
 render it, in a great measure, ineffectual.

To this purpose, a fresh edict was drawn up in the third
 month, signed by the king, and transmitted to the pro-
 vinces: So that, when the thirteenth day of Adar came,

“sentments) calumniating the innocent, and putting honest men
 “in danger of their lives: Wherein he makes mention of the
 “uncommon favours and honours which he had bestowed upon
 “Haman the Amalekite, who had notwithstanding taken mea-
 “sures to supplant him of his kingdom, to destroy Mordecai,
 “the preserver of his life, together with his dearest wife the
 “the queen, and to extirpate the whole nation of Jews, who
 “were good and peaceable subjects, and worshippers of that
 “God to whom he was indebted for the possession and preserva-
 “tion of his empire: Wherein he acquaints them, that for these
 “wicked and treasonable practices, having caused him and his
 “whole family to be executed before the gates of Susa, his roy-
 “al pleasure, by these presents, was, that they should not only
 “discharge the Jews from all the pains and penalties to which
 “they are made liable by his letters which Haman had sent
 “them; but that they should likewise aid and assist them in
 “vindicating themselves upon those that spitefully and injuri-
 “ously oppressed them; and wherein he tells them, that where-
 “as the time appointed for the utter destruction of these people
 “was to have been on the thirteenth day of the month Adar, his
 “further pleasure was, that the same month and day should be
 “employed in their rescue and deliverance; and that if any
 “person, either by disobedience or neglect, should act in any
 “thing contrary to the tenor of this his imperial command, he
 “should be liable to military execution by fire and sword.”

† It might be presumed that some, out of hatred to the Jews,
 might be inclinable to obey Haman's decree: For tho' he him-
 self was gone; yet it cannot be imagined, that all the friends
 and creatures that he had made perished with him. He might
 have a great party every where, and some of them so furiously
 enraged at his fall, as (even at the hazard of their own lives)
 would not fail to shew their indignation at those who were the
 occasion of it: And therefore this second decree, procured by
 Mordecai, gave them authority, if any attempt was made up-
 on them, either in great bodies, or small parties, not only to
 defend themselves and repel them, but to make as great a
 slaughter of them as they were able, and even to take possession
 of their goods, as Haman had procured them licence (chap. iii.
 13.) to seize the goods of the Jews; *Patrick's Commentary.*

A. M.
 3475, &c.
 Anf. Chris.
 529, &c.
 from Ezra
 iv. 7. to the
 end; all
 Esth. Neh.
 and part of
 Hag. Zech,
 and Mal.

A. M.³ by the means of these different and discordant decrees, a
 3475, etc. war was commenced between the Jews and their enemies,
 Ant. Chris. through the whole Persian empire; but as the rulers of
 529, etc. the several provinces, and other officers of the king, well
 from Ezra understood what power and credit Esther and Mordecai
 iv. 7. to the had then with him, they so favoured the Jews every where,
 end; all that on that day they slew, in the whole empire, seventy-
 Esth. Neh. five thousand persons, and in the city of Shushan, on that
 and part of day and the next, eight hundred more; among whom were
 Hag. Zech. † the ten sons of Haman, whom, by a special order from
 and Mal. the king, they hanged perhaps on the same gallows where-
 on their father had hung before; and in memory of this
 their wonderful deliverance, the Jews did then, (and have
 ever since), on the fourteenth and fifteenth days of the
 month Adar, keep a great festival, which they called † *the*
feast of lots. But proceed we now to some other affairs.

In

† It is not unlikely, that many might be enraged at his death, and his sons, in particular, might set themselves at the head of those who were bold enough to attempt the destruction of the Jews in Shushan, being resolved to revenge their father's death, though in so doing they were sure to meet their own. And this seems to suggest one reason why Esther was so solicitous to have their dead bodies (for they were slain already) hung upon the gallows, chap. ix. 13. even because they had shewn more malice and indignation against the Jews, and on the day when the cruel edict came to take place, had made more desperate attacks upon them than any; though the reason of the state, in this severity, might be to expose the family to the greater infamy, and to deter other counsellors from abusing the king at any time with false representations. For though the Jews suffered none to hang on the tree (as they called the gallows) longer than till the evening of the day whereon they were executed; yet other nations let them hang until they were consumed, (as appears from the story of the Gibeonites, 2 Sam. xxi. 9, 10), or devoured by crows, vultures, or other ravenous creatures; from whence that vulgar saying among the Romans, *pascere in cruce corvos*, had its rise; *Patrick's Commentary*; and *Pool's Annotations*.

† *Pur*, in the Persian language, signifies a *lot*, and the feast of *Purim*, or *lots*, (which had its name from Haman's casting lots, in order to divine which day would be most lucky to prefix for the murder of all the Jews in the whole Persian dominions), is, to this very day, celebrated by the Jews, with some peculiar ceremonies, but most of them reducible to these three things, reading, resting, and

In the beginning of the seventh year of Ahasuerus, Ezra, (a priest descended from Seriah the high-priest,

who
A. M.
3475, &c.
Ant. Christ.
529, &c.
from Ezra
iv. 7. to the

and feasting. Before the reading, which is performed in the synagogue, and begins in the evening, as soon as the stars appear, they make use of three forms of prayer: In the first of these, they praise God for counting them worthy to attend this divine service; in the second, they thank him for the miraculous preservation of their ancestors; and in the third, they bless his holy name, for having continued their lives to the celebration of another festival in commemoration of it. Then they read over the whole history of Haman from the beginning to the end, but not out of any printed book, (for that is not lawful), but out of an Hebrew manuscript, written on parchment.

end; all
Esth. Neh.
and part of
Hagg. Zech.
and Mal.

Ezra, with
some other
Jews, goes
to Jerusalem
with
the king's
commission,

There are five places in the text, wherein the reader raises his voice with all his might: When he comes to the place that mentions the names of the ten sons of Haman, he repeats them very quick, to shew that they were all destroyed in a moment; and every time that the name of Haman is pronounced, the children, with great fury, strike against the benches of the synagogues, with the mallets that they bring for that purpose. After that the reading is finished, they return home and have a supper, not of flesh, but of spoon-meat: and early next morning they arise, and return to the synagogue; where, after they have read that passage in Exodus, which makes mention of the war of Amalek, they begin again to read the book of Esther, with the same ceremonies as before, and so conclude the service of the day, with curses against Haman and his wife Zereth, with blessings upon Mordecai and Esther, and with praises to God, for having preserved his people. Their resting on this day is observed so religiously, that they will not so much as set or sow any thing in their gardens, with full persuasion that it would not come up, if they did; and therefore they either play at chess, and such like games, or spend the time in music and dancing, until it be proper to begin their feasting, wherein they indulge themselves to such an immoderate degree, that their feast of Purim has, with great justice, been called *the Bacchanals of the Jews*. They allow themselves to drink wine to excess, nay even to such a pitch, as not to be able to distinguish between the blessing of Mordecai, and the curse of Haman, as themselves speak; and, amidst the other sports and diversions of the day, they used formerly to erect a gibbet, and burn upon it a man made of straw, whom they called *Haman*; but herein it was thought, that they might have a design to insult Christians, upon the death of our crucified Saviour; and therefore Theodosius the Second (*anno Dom.* 408.) forbade them to use this ceremony, under

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and Mal.

who was slain by Nebuchadnezzar, when he burnt the temple and the city of Jerusalem, a man of great learning, and excellently † skilled in the knowledge of the Scriptures, who had hitherto continued in Babylon, with others of the captivity, that had not yet returned, obtained leave of the king to go to Jerusalem, and to take as many of his own

under the penalty of forfeiting all their privileges. We have only farther to remark concerning this festival, that it is always kept for two days together, and the reason hereof is this:—The Jews at Shushan had two days allowed them to revenge themselves of their enemies, Esther ix. 13. but the rest of the Jews in other nations had but one. This caused, at first, some difference in their time of feasting; for the Jews, in all other parts of the kingdom, having done execution on their enemies on the thirteenth day, kept their rejoicing feast on the fourteenth; but the Jews at Shushan, being engaged in this work both on the thirteenth and fourteenth days, kept their festival for their deliverance on the fifteenth. When Mordecai however had made a record of this great deliverance, he sent letters to all the Jews throughout the dominions of Ahasuerus, to establish it as a standing ordinance among them, that they should keep both the fourteenth and fifteenth of the month Ader every year, as the days whereon the Jews rested from their enemies: And this is the reason why the festival continues for two days, though the former of them is only kept with great solemnity; *Patrick's Commentary*; *Howell's History*, in the notes; and *Calmet's Dictionary*, under the word *Purim*.

† Both the Septuagint, Vulgate, and our translation, render the words *Sopher Mahir*, a ready scribe, Ezra vii. 6. as if to have a quick hand at writing out the law, were any great perfection, or that any aged man (as Ezra was) should be renowned for it. It was not then for writing, but for explaining the things contained in the Scriptures, that Ezra was so famous. For as *Sepher* signifies a book, so *Sopher* denotes one skilled and learned in that book; and as there was no book comparable to the book of the law, therefore *Sepher* became a name of great dignity, and signified one that taught God's law, and instructed the people out of it; in which sense we find the word *γραμμatics*, or *Scribes*, used in the New Testament. For when our Saviour is said to have taught the people, as one having authority, and not as the scribes, this plainly shews, that these scribes were not transcribers, but teachers and expounders of the laws, though they did not do it with a proper authority; *Patrick's* and *Le Clerc's Commentaries*.

nation

nation with him, as were willing to accompany him thither.

On the first day of the first month (which is called *Nisan*, and might fall about the middle of our March) he set forward on his journey from Babylon, † with an ample commission, and authority to restore and settle the state, reform the church of the Jews, and regulate and govern both, according to their own laws. When he came to the river *Ahava* †, he there halted, until the rest of his company was come up; and then, having, in a solemn fast, † recommended

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† It can hardly be imagined, but that some more than ordinary means were used to obtain so great a favour from the king, as this commission was; and therefore we may suppose that it was granted at the solicitation of *Esther*, who was become the best beloved of the king's concubines, though not as yet advanced to the dignity of queen: For seeing it was usual for the kings of Persia, on some particular days and occasions, to allow their women to ask what boons they pleased, it is not unlikely, that, by the direction of *Mordecai*, upon some such time and occasion as this, *Esther* (though she had not discovered her kindred and nation) might make this the matter of her request; *Prideaux's Connection*, anno 459.

† This was a river of Assyria, and very probably, that which ran along the *Adiabene*, where the river *Diava*, or *Adiava*, is known to be, and upon which *Ptolemy* places the city of *Abanc*, or *Aavane*. Here, some imagine, was the country which, in the second book of *Kings* xvii. 24. is called *Ava*, from whence the king of Assyria translated the people called *Avites*, into Palestine, and, in their room, settled some of the captive Israelites. It was a common thing for those that travelled from Babylon to Jerusalem, in order to avoid the scorching heat of the desert of Arabia, to shape their course northward at first, and then, turning to the westward, to pass through Syria into Palestine; but *Ezra* had a farther reason for his taking this rout: For as he intended to get together as many Israelites as he could to carry along with him to Jerusalem, he took his course this way, and made an halt in the country of *Ava*, or *Ahava*, from whence he might send emissaries into the Caspian mountains, to invite such Jews as were there to come and join him; *Le Clerc's Commentary* on *Ezra* viii. and *Calmet's Dictionary*, under the word *Ahava*.

† This they had the greater reason to do, because they carried things of considerable value along with them; were apprehensive of enemies that lay in wait for them; and were ashamed

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and Mal.

and makes
a reformation
among
the people
in relation
to their
marriages.

commended himself, and all that were with him, to the divine protection, on the twelfth day he set forward for Jerusalem, where they all safely arrived on the first day of the fifth month, called *Ab*, i. e. about the middle of our July, having spent four whole months in their journey from Babylon thither.

Upon his arrival, Ezra delivered up to the temple the offerings which had been made to it by the king, his nobles, and the rest of the people of Israel that staid behind, which † amounted to a very large sum; and having communicated his commission to the king's lieutenants and governors throughout all Syria and Palestine, he betook himself to the executing of the contents of it.

He had not been long in his government, before he found that many of the people had taken wives of other nations, contrary to the law of God; and that several of the priests and Levites, as well as other chief men of Judah and Benjamin, had transgressed in this particular. And therefore after he had, * in mourning and fasting, and

ashamed to ask any guard of the king, who being not much instructed in divine matters, might possibly think, that what they said of God's favour towards them, and the prophecies concerning their restoration, were but vain boasts, in case they should seem to distrust his power and favour, (of whom they had spoken so magnificently), by making application to the king for his protection and defence. Rather therefore than give any such umbrage, they were resolved to commit themselves entirely to God; but then it was necessary that they should beseech that of him, which, without giving offence, they could not request of the king; *Patrick's Commentary*.

† According to the account we have of them, (Ezra viii. 26, 27.), there were six hundred and fifty talents of silver, which, at three hundred seventy-five pounds to the talent, make two hundred forty-three thousand seven hundred and fifty pounds. The silver-vessels weighed an hundred talents, which came to thirty-seven thousand and five hundred pounds. The gold in coin was an hundred talents, which, at four thousand five hundred pounds per talent, made four hundred and fifty thousand pounds: And, besides all this, there were twenty basons of gold of a thousand drachms, and two vessels of fine copper, as valuable as gold; *Howell's History*, in the notes.

* The manner in which Ezra is said to have expressed his concern for the people's unlawful marriages, is, by *rending his garment and his mantle*, chap. ix. 3. i. e. both his inner and upper garment; which was a token, not only of great grief and sorrow,

and † prayer, deprecated God's wrath for so sad an apostacy, he caused proclamation to be made, for all the people of the land, that had returned from the captivity, to meet together at Jerusalem, under the penalty of excommunication and confiscation of their goods; and when they met, he endeavoured to make them sensible of their sin, and engaged them in a promise, and covenant before God, to depart from it, by putting away their strange wives, and the children that were born of them, that the seed of Israel might not be polluted by such an undue commixture; and accordingly commissioners were appointed to inspect this affair, who, in three months time, made a proper enquiry, and a thorough reformation of this enormity.

Upon the death of Zerubbabel, the administration, both of civil and ecclesiastical affairs, devolved upon Ezra; but in the twentieth year of Ahasuerus, Nehemiah, a very sorrow, but of his apprehensions likewise of the divine displeasure; and by *pulling off the hair of his head and beard*, which was still an higher sign of exceeding great grief among other nations, as well as the Jews; and therefore we find in Homer, that when Ulysses and his companions bewailed the death of Elpenor,

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and Mal.

Nehemiah
is sent as
governour,
and with a
commission
to rebuild
the walls of
Jerusalem.

Ἐξόμνοι δ' ἐνταῦθα γόων, τίλλοντο τε χεῖρας.

Odyss. x.

† The prayer we have in Ezra ix. 6. etc. the purport of which is this: — “ That he was confounded when he thought of the
“ greatness of their sins, which were ready to overwhelm them,
“ and of the boldness and insolence of them beyond measure, even
“ tho' they had seen the divine vengeance upon their forefathers,
“ in so terrible a manner, that they had not yet worn off the marks
“ of his displeasure. He had begun indeed to shew favour to some
“ of them; but this so much the more aggravated their wicked-
“ ness, in that, so soon after their restoration, and settlement in
“ their native country, they had returned to their old provoca-
“ tions, notwithstanding the many admonitions in the law and
“ the prophets, to have nothing to do with the people of Canaan,
“ except it were to expel and root them out. What then can we
“ expect, (says he,) but the utter destruction of the small rem-
“ nant that is left of us, if, after all the punishments God has
“ inflicted on us, and his beginning now to be gracious unto
“ us, we relapse into the same offences, for which we have so
“ severely suffered? For while we remain monuments of his
“ mercy, and yet appear before him in our abominations, we
“ must be dumb, and have nothing to plead in excuse of our
“ detestable ingratitude;” *Patrick's Commentary.*

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religious and excellent person † among those of the captivity, and who was a great favourite with that prince, succeeded him in the government of Judah and Jerusalem. He had informed himself, from some people that were come from Jerusalem, of the miserable state and condition of that city; that † its walls were broken down, and its gates burnt, so that its inhabitants lay open not only to the incursions and insults of their enemies, but to the reproach likewise and contempt of their neighbours. This mournful relation affected the good man to such a degree, that he applied himself in fasting and (f) prayer to God, and humbly besought, that he would be pleased to favour the design which he had conceived of asking the king's permission to go to Jerusalem.

By his office † he was cup-bearer to the king; and therefore,

† It may well be questioned, whether this Nehemiah be the same that is mentioned in Ezra, (chap. ii. 2. and Neh. vii. 7.), as one that returned from the Babylonish captivity under Zerubbabel; since from the first year of Cyrus, to the twentieth of Artaxerxes Longimanus, there are no less than ninety-two years intervening; so that Nehemiah must, at this time, have been a very old man, upon the lowest computation, above an hundred, and, consequently, utterly incapable of being the king's cup-bearer, of taking a journey from Shushan to Jerusalem, and of behaving there with all that courage and activity recorded of him. Upon this presumption, therefore, we may conclude, that this was a different person, tho' of the same name; and that *Tarshatha* (the other name by which he is called, Ezra ii. 63. and Neh. vii. 65.) denotes the title of his office, and, both in the Persian and Chaldean tongues, was the general name given to all the king's deputies and governours; *Le Clerc's* and *Pool's Annotations* on Neh. i.

† The commissions which had hitherto been granted to the Jews were supposed to extend no farther than to the rebuilding of the temple, and their own private houses; and therefore the walls and gates of their city lay in the same ruinous condition in which the Chaldeans left them after that devastation; *Patrick's Commentary*; and *Pool's Annotations*.

(f) Neh. i. 5.

† This was a place of great honour and advantage in the Persian court, because of the privilege which it gave him that was in it. of being daily in the king's presence, and the opportunity which he had thereby of gaining his favour, for the obtaining of any petition that he should make to him. And that it was a place of great advantage seems evident, by Nehemiah's gaining those immense riches, which enabled him, for so many years,

therefore, when it came † to his turn to wait, the king, observing that his countenance was not so chearful as at other times, and being told, that the distressed state of his country, and of the city where his ancestors were buried, were the only cause of it, gave him, at his request, through the intercession of the queen, (who (g) was then sitting with him), leave to go to Jerusalem, and a full commission (as his governour of the province of Judea) to repair the walls, and to set up the gates, and fortify the city again in the same manner that it was before it was dismantled and destroyed by the Babylonians; but, upon this condition it was, that he should return to court again, at such a † determinate time.

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end; all
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and part of
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and Mal.

The king, at the same time, wrote letters to all the governours beyond the Euphrates, to be aiding and assisting to him in the work. He sent his order to Adaph, the keeper of his forests in those parts, to furnish him with whatever timber he should want, not only for the reparation of the towers and gates of the city, but for the building of himself an house likewise, as governour of the province, to live in; and (to do him still more honour) he sent a guard of horse, under the command of some of the captains of his army, to conduct him safe to his government.

With

years, (Neh. v. 14, 19.), out of his own private purse only, to live in his government with all that splendour and expence, (that will hereafter be related), without burdening the people at all for it; *Prideaux's Connection, anno 445.*

† Commentators have generally observed, that it was almost four months between his hearing of the disconsolate condition wherein Jerusalem lay, and his requesting leave of the king to go thither. But (besides that it might not come to his own turn of waiting sooner) there might be these farther reasons assigned for this his long silence and delay: As, that he could not take so long and dangerous a journey in the winter; that he could no sooner meet with a seasonable opportunity of speaking with the king upon so critical an affair; or (as others will have it) that he retired all this intermediate while, and spent it in fasting and prayer; *Peol's Annotations; and Patrick's Comment.*

(g) Neh. ii. 6.

† How long this was, it is not certain. It is said, indeed, that he was governour in the land of Judah for twelve years, chap. v. 14. to xiii. 6. But considering what haste he made in dispatching the building of the walls, which he finished in two and fifty

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and Mal.

Which he
carried on
with great
success, not-
withstanding
Sanballat's
designs to
defeat him.

With these letters and powers, Nehemiah arrived at Jerusalem, and was kindly received by the people: but it was three days before he acquainted any one with the occasion of his coming. On the third day at night, he, with some few attendants, went privately round the city, to take a view of the walls, which he found in a ruinous condition; and, on the next, called together the chief of the people, and, * having reminded them of the desolate manner in which the walls of their city lay, and exhorted them to set about the reparation of them, he produced his commission and letters to that purpose, which, when they were read, so gladdened and revived their drooping spirits, that they joyfully and unanimously cried out, *Let us rise and build.*

In carrying on the building, Nehemiah divided the people into several companies, and assigned to each of them the quarter where they were to work, reserving to himself the reviewal and direction of the whole. But they had not

days, the leave which he asked might be but for a year, or perhaps half so much; after which time, it is likely, that he returned to Shulhan, according to his promise; but, some time after, was sent back again by the king, (who found his presence there serviceable, or perhaps necessary, for the better regulation of that province), to be his governor for twelve years; *Patrick's Commentary.*

* The speech which Josephus puts in the mouth of the governor, upon this occasion, is to this effect.—“ You cannot but see and understand, you men of Judea, that we ourselves are, at this day, under the power and providence of the same almighty and merciful God, that did so many things for our forefathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, out of a gracious regard to their piety and justice: And it is by the favour of that God, that I have now obtained leave from the king to enter upon the rebuilding of your wall, and the putting of an end to the work of the temple that is yet unfinished. But taking this for granted, that you live among a sort of malicious and spiteful neighbours, who would do all that is to be done in nature for the crossing of your design, when they come once to see you heartily intent upon the undertaking, I shall therefore recommend it to you, in the first place, resolutely and fearlessly to cast yourselves upon God, who will most certainly defeat all the practices of your enemies; and, in the next place, to ply your business day and night, without any intermission either of care or of labour, this being the proper season for it;” *Jewish Antiq. lib. xi. c. 3.*

long

long proceeded in the work, before Sanballat, an officer of the Moabites, and Tobiah, a man of note among the Ammonites, two bitter enemies to the Jewish nation, began to scoff and ridicule their undertaking. As the work, however, advanced, they changed their note, and apprehending themselves in danger from the growing greatness of the Jews, were resolved to put a stop to their future progress.

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and part of
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To this purpose they entered into a confederacy with some neighbouring nations, to come upon them by surprise, demolish their works, and put them all to the sword; but the governour having notice of this their design, and sending out scouts daily to observe their motions, placed a guard well armed to defend and encourage the workmen; and ordered, that each workman should have his arms nigh at hand, in case they were attacked; while himself went often in person among them, by his precept and example, encouraging them to trust in the Lord, and, in his speeches and exhortations, putting them frequently in mind, that it was for their wives, their brethren, and children, (in case they were compelled to it), that they fought: So that, by these means, they secured themselves against all the attempts and designs of their enemies, until the work was brought to a conclusion.

Sanballat, and the rest of his confederates, perceiving that their plot was discovered, and not daring to attack Nehemiah by open force, had recourse to craft and stratagem. To this purpose, under pretence of ending the difference between them in an amicable manner, they sent to invite him to a conference, in a certain village, in the plain of Ono, which belonged to the tribe of Benjamin, intending there to do him a mischief; but Nehemiah, very probably suspecting their wicked design, returned, in answer to the four messages of the same import, which they successively sent, "That the work wherein he was engaged required his personal attendance, and therefore he could not come."

Sanballat, perceiving that Nehemiah was too cautious to be insnared by a general invitation, sent, by his servant, a letter, wherein he informed him, that the current report was,—"That he was building the walls of Jerusalem only to make it a place of strength, to support his intended revolt; that, to this purpose, he had suborned false prophets to favour his design, and to encourage the people to chuse him king; and that therefore, to stop the course of these rumours, (which in a short time would

" come

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“ come to the king’s ears), he advised him to come to him, “ that they might confer together, and take such resolutions as were convenient.” But Nehemiah, knowing his own innocence, easily saw through this shallow contrivance, and returned him for answer, That *all these accusations were false, and the inventions only of his own naughty heart*; so that finding himself disappointed here likewise, he betook himself to this last expedient.

There was one Shemaiah, the son of Delaiah the priest, a great friend to Nehemiah, whom Sanballat had bribed to his interest. This man pretended to the gift of prophecy: And therefore, when Nehemiah came to his house one day, he foretold, that his enemies would make an attempt to murder him that very night, and therefore advised him to go with him into the inner † part of the temple, and so secure themselves by shutting the doors. But though Nehemiah did not apprehend the other’s design, (which he came to find out afterwards), yet, out of a sense of honour and religion, he declared positively, “ That, come what would †, “ he

† By the house of God within the temple, (as it is in the text, Neh. vi. 10.), Shemaiah certainly meant the sanctuary; and to advise Nehemiah to retreat thither, he had a good pretence, because it was both a strong and a sacred place, being defended by a guard of Levites, and by its holiness, privileged from all rude approaches. But his real design herein might be, not only to disgrace Nehemiah, and dishearten the people, when they saw their governour’s cowardice, but to prepare the way likewise for the enemies assaulting and taking the city, when there was no leader to oppose them; to give countenance to the calumny that had been spread abroad, of his affecting to be made king, because he fled upon the report of it; and perhaps, by the assistance of some other priests, that were his confederates, either to destroy him, or to secure his person, until the city was betrayed into the enemies hands; *Patrick’s Commentary*; and *Pool’s Annotations*.

† The words of Nehemiah, upon this occasion, are very significant; as well as magnanimous. *Should such a man as I flee?* “ I “ the chief governour, upon whose presence, and counsel, and “ conduct, the very life and being of the whole city and nation “ does, in a great measure, depend: I, who have professed such “ resolution, courage, and confidence in God; I, who have had “ such eminent experience of God’s gracious and powerful assistance, of his calling me to this employment, and carrying me “ through

“ he would not quit his station, because it would badly be-
 “ come a man in his character, to seek out for refuge,
 “ when he saw danger approaching.”

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These, and many more difficulties, the good governour had to contend with; but, by God's assistance, he overcame them all, and in the space of two and fifty days, having completed the whole work, he afterwards held † a dedication of the walls and gates of Jerusalem, with such solemnity and magnificence as a work of that nature required.

His dedica-
 tion of the
 walls, and
 gate orders
 for the pre-
 servation of
 the city.

To this purpose he separated the priests, the Levites, and the princes of the people, into two companies, one of which walked to the right hand, and the other to the left, on the top of the walls. The two companies, which were to meet at the temple in their procession, were attended with music, both vocal and instrumental. When they came to the temple, they there read the law, offered sacrifices, and made great rejoicings; and as the feast of tabernacles happened at the same time, they failed not to celebrate it with great solemnity.

When the walls were finished, Nehemiah, to prevent any treachery from his enemies, either within or without the city, † gave the charge of the gates to his brother Hanani,

“ through it, when the danger was greater than now; shall I dis-
 “ honour God and religion, and betray the people and city of God
 “ by my Cowardice? God forbid.”

† Dedication is a religious ceremony, whereby any temple, altar, and vessel thereunto belonging, is, by the pronounciation of a certain form of blessing, consecrated to the service of God; and this dedication, we may observe, extends not only to things sacred, but to cities, and their walls, and sometimes to private houses, Deut. xx. 5. As therefore Moses in the wilderness dedicated the tabernacle, and Solomon the temple, when he had finished it; so Nehemiah, having put things in good order, built the walls and set up the gates, thought proper to dedicate the city, as a place which God himself had chosen, and sanctified by his temple, and gracious presence; and by this dedication, to restore it to him again, after it had been laid waste, and profaned by the devastation of the Heathens; *Patrick's Commentary*; and *Pool's Annotations*.

† Nehemiah, very likely, was now returning to Shushan to give the king an account of the state of affairs in Judea; and therefore he

A. M. Hanani, and to Hananiah, marshal of his palace †, two
3475, etc. Ant. Chris. 529, &c. from Ezra iv. 7. to the end; all Esth. Neh. and part of Hagg. Zech. and Mal. men in whom he could confide; commanding them not
 to suffer the gates to be opened till some time after sun-
 rising, to see them safe barred at night, and to set the
 watch, which should consist of settled house-keepers,
 that were careful and diligent men: And for the still far-
 ther security of the city, observing that the † number of
 its inhabitants was too few, he ordered that the princi-
 pal men of the nation should there fix their habitations,
 and, at the same time, caused the rest to † cast lots,
 whereby

he took care to place such men in the city, as he knew would faith-
 fully secure it in his absence. Hanani is said to be his brother; but
 he chose his officers, not out of partial views to his own kindred,
 but because he knew that they would acquit themselves in their em-
 ployment with a strict fidelity. Hanani had given proof of his zeal
 for God and his country, in his taking a tedious journey from Je-
 rusalem to Shushan, to inform Nehemiah of the sad estate of Jeru-
 salem, and to implore his helping hand to relieve it, chap. i. And
 the reason why Nehemiah put such trust and confidence in Hana-
 niah, was, because he was a man of conscience, and acted upon re-
 ligious principles, which would keep him from those temptations to
 perfidiousness, which he might probably meet with in his absence,
 and against which a man, destitute of the fear of God, has no suffi-
 cient fence; *Patrick's Commentary*; and *Pool's Annotations*.

† So the house which was built for Nehemiah's residence might
 justly be called, because he lived there in great splendour, tho' wholly
 at his own charge, and as the king's viceroy, there gave audience
 to the people, as a king is wont in his palace; *Patrick's Commen-
 tary*; and *Pool's Annotations*.

† One reason why the bulk of the Jews (who were originally
 pastors, and lovers of agriculture) might rather chuse to live in the
 country than at Jerusalem, was, because it was more suited to their
 genius and manner of life: But at this time their enemies were so
 enraged to see the walls built again, and so restless in their designs
 to keep the city from rising to its former splendour, that it terrified
 many from coming to dwell there, thinking themselves more safe in
 the country, where their enemies had no pretence to disturb them;
Le Clerc's and *Patrick's Commentaries*.

† Though the casting of lots be certainly forbidden, where the
 thing is done out of a spirit of superstition, or with a design
 to tempt God; yet, on some occasions, it is enjoined by God
 himself;

whereby a tenth part of the whole people of Judah and Benjamin † became obliged to dwell at Jerusalem, though those who came voluntarily were better received.

While the walls of the city were building, there happened a kind of mutiny among the common people, which might have been of fatal consequence, had it not been timely composed: For the rich taking the advantage of the meaner sort, had † exacted heavy usury of them, insomuch, that they made them pay the *centesima* for all the money that was lent them, i. e. one per cent. for every month, which amounted to twelve per cent. for the whole year. This oppression reduced them so low, that they were forced to mortgage their lands, houses, and tenements, and even to sell their children into servitude,

A. M.
3475, etc.
Ant. Christ.
529, etc.
from Ezra
iv. 7. to the
end; all
Ezra. Neh.
and part of
Hagg. Zech.
and Mal.
His oppression of
usury, and
generous
manner of
living.

to

himself; and the most holy persons both in the Old and New Testament, in particular cases, have practised it. The wise man acknowledges the usefulness of this custom, when he tells us, *that the lot causeth contention to cease, and parteth between the mighty*, Prov. xviii. 18.; and therefore it was not bad policy (as things now stood) to take this method of decision, since the lot (which all allowed was under the divine direction) falling upon such a person, rather than another, would be a great means, no doubt, to make him remove more contentedly to the city; *Patrick's Commentary* and *Calmet's Dictionary*, under the word *Lot*.

† These were the two tribes, that anciently possessed Jerusalem, which stood partly in one tribe, and partly in the other; for which reason, in some places of Scripture, Jerusalem is reckoned as belonging to the children of Judah, Josh. xv. 63. and Judg. xviii. and in others, to the children of Benjamin, Judg. xxi. 23.; but what part of the city belonged to the one, and what to the other, is not so well agreed among learned men. Since these two tribes, however, were the ancient inhabitants of the city, there was all the reason in the world, why, in this scarcity of inmates, they, above any others, should be obliged to come and dwell there; *Patrick's Commentary*.

† This usury was the more grievous, because it was not only contrary to their law, and demanded at a time when they were hard at work, and their enemies threatening to destroy them all; but (as some have observed) that the twentieth of Ahasuerus (wherein this was done) began about the end of a sabbatical year, after the law, which forbade every creature to exact any debt of *his neighbour or his brother*, Deut. xv. 2. had been so frequently read. This raised the cry of the poor to a greater height, having been forced to sell their chil-

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iv. 7. to the
end; all
Esth. Neh.
and part of
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and Mal.



to have † wherewith to buy bread for the support of themselves and their families; which being a manifest breach of the law of God, (for (b) that forbids all the race of Israel to take usury of any of their brethren), Nehemiah, as soon as he was informed thereof, resolved to remove so great an iniquity. And accordingly having called a general assembly of the people, wherein he set before them the nature of the offence, how great a breach it was of the divine law, and how heavy an oppression upon their brethren; what handle it might give their enemies to reproach them; and how much it might provoke the wrath of God against them all; he caused it to be enacted, by the general suffrage of the whole assembly, that every one should return to his brother whatever he had exacted of him upon usury, and should likewise release all the lands, houses, and tenements, that he had, at any time, taken of him upon mortgage; which act presently removed all uneasiness, and pacified the minds of the people.

The governour himself indeed was so far from countenancing any manner of oppression, that he did not exact the daily revenue of forty shekels of silver, and the constant furniture of his table with provisions; but remitted these, and all other advantages of his place, that might any way be troublesome and chargeable to the people. Nay, he not only refused the allowance which was due to him,

dren, and deprived now of all power of redeeming them, because their lands were mortgaged to these oppressors; *Patrick's Commentary.*

† Not long before this there had been a great scarcity for want of rain, which God thought proper to withhold, in punishment for the people's taking more care to build their own houses, than his, as we read, Hag. i. 9, &c. In which time the rich had no compassion on their poor brethren, but forced them to part with all they had for bread; and now (what made them still more miserable) another dearth was come upon them, which might easily happen, from the multitude of people that were employed in the repair of the walls; from the building-work, which hindered them from providing for their families some other way; and from the daily dread they had of their enemies, which might keep them from going abroad to fetch in provision, and the country-people from bringing it in; *Patrick's Commentary*; and *Poole's Annotations.*

(b) Exod. xxii. 25.

as governour, but, at his own charge †, kept open house, entertaining every day at his table an hundred and fifty of the Jews, and their rulers, besides strangers; for which he constantly allowed an ox, six fat sheep, and fowl in proportion, and, on every tenth day, wine of all sorts. Besides this, he gave (i) many rich presents to the temple; and, by his generous example, encouraged others, both princes and people, to do the like.

Thus Nehemiah, with great honour and applause, having executed the commission with which he was sent to Jerusalem, at the expiration of the time which was allowed him, he returned to Sushan, according to his promise to the king. But before he did that, † Ezra the learned scribe, at the request of the people, produced the book of the law, which he had now completed, and having divided the company into several parts, he (with thirteen priests more) read from a wooden pulpit †, and as he went

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from Ezra
iv. 7. to the
end; all
Ezra. Neh.
and part of
Hagg. Zech.
and Mal.

Before he
returns to
court, he
makes all
the principal
people
sign a covenant.

† From this great and daily expence, it seems most probable, either that Nehemiah had large remittances from the Persian court (even besides his own estate) to answer it, or that he did not continue at Jerusalem for the whole twelve years together; or that, if he did, he did not continue this expensive way of house-keeping all the time, but only during the great and present exigencies and distresses of the Jews, which ceased in a good measure after that the walls were built, the act against usury passed, and the people discharged to their ordinary course of maintaining themselves and families; *Pool's Annotations*; and *Le Clerc's Commentary*.

(i) Neh. vii. 70. &c.

† This Ezra, without all controversy, was the same Ezra who came from Babylon to Jerusalem, in the seventh of Artaxerxes, with a full commission to assist Zerubbabel in the reformation of the whole state of the Jewish church. After the death of Zerubbabel, the whole administration devolved upon him; but as his commission lasted but for twelve years, upon its expiration Nehemiah succeeded to the government, and we hear no more of Ezra, until he is here called upon to read and expound the law to the people; whether (as some think) he returned to Babylon, to give the people an account of affairs in the province of Judea, or whether, in this intermediate time, he employed himself (in some retirement) in the great work of preparing a new and current edition of the Holy Scriptures, of which we shall give a full account in our next dissertation; *Patrick's Commentary*; and *Pool's Annotations*.

† The pulpit was to raise him up higher than the people, the better to be seen and heard by them; but we are not to think,

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end; all
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and Mal.



went along, expounded it to them. This they all listened to with a very devout attention; † and celebrated the ensuing feast of tabernacles with great gladness of heart; and on a day appointed for a solemn fast, confessing their own sins, and deprecating the judgments due to the iniquity of their fathers; acknowledging the omnipotence of God in creating and preserving all things, and enumerating his gracious mercies in their sundry deliverances from their enemies and persecutors, they made a covenant with him, that they would walk in his law, which was given by Moses; and (to oblige themselves to a more † strict performance of this covenant) it was ordered to be ingrossed, that the princes, priests, and Levites, might set their † hands and seals

that it was made in the fashion of ours, which will hold no more than one person; for (as we may observe by the very next words) it was made large and long enough to contain fourteen people at once; *Patrick's Commentary*, on Neh. viii. 4.

† The words in the text are, *Since the days of Joshua, the son of Nun, unto that day, had not the children of Israel done so; and there was very great gladness*, Neh. viii. 17. But it can hardly be thought, that this festival had never been observed since Joshua's time; because we read in the foregoing book of Ezra, that it was kept at their return from Babylon; but the meaning is, that the joy since that time had never been so great, as it was upon this occasion; for which the Jews themselves assign this reason, *viz.* That in the days of Joshua they rejoiced, because they had got possession of the land of Canaan, and now they equally rejoiced, because they were restored, and quietly settled in it, after they had been long cast out of it; *Patrick's Commentary*.

† The observances, which they chiefly obliged themselves to in this covenant, were, 1st, Not to make intermarriages with the Gentiles. 2dly, To observe the Sabbaths and Sabbatical years. 3dly, To pay their annual tribute for the reparation and service of the temple. And, 4thly, To pay their tithes and first-fruits for the maintenance of the priests and Levites: From which particulars thus named in this covenant, we may learn what were the laws of God, which hitherto they had been most neglective of, since their return from the captivity; *Prideaux's Connection*, anno 444.

† It signified little indeed what such untoward people promised; for what regard would they have to their own handwriting, who regarded not the ten commandments, written on tables of stone by the finger of God? It was very useful, however, that there should be a public instrument to convince them

seals to it; and those who did not set their seals, of what age, sex, or condition soever, did bind themselves with an oath punctually to observe it.

But, notwithstanding all this precaution, Nehemiah had not been long come from Jerusalem, before the people relapsed into their old corruptions; which, in a great measure, was owing to the mismanagement of † *Eliashib* the high-priest, who, being by marriage allied to Tobiah, the Jews great enemy, had allowed him an apartment in the temple, in the very place where the offerings, and other things appertaining to the priests and Levites, used to be repositied. So that when Nehemiah returned from the Persian court with a new commission for the reforming of all abuses, both in church and state, he was not a little surpris'd to find such a gross profanation of the temple, and that chambers should be provided in the house of God for one who was a declared enemy to his worship.

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from Ezra
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and part of
Hagg. Zech.
and Mal.

Upon his
coming a-
gain, he ex-
pels Tobia-
h, the Am-
monite,
from having
an apart-
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temple.

them of their impiety, and that they might be publicly confounded when they proved perfidious deserters, by shewing them, under their own hands, their engagements to future fidelity; *Patrick's Commentary.*

† Some are apt to imagine, that this *Eliashib* was no more than a common priest, because he is said to have had *the oversight of the chamber of the house of God*, Neh. xiii. 4. which was an office too mean (as they think) for the high-priest. But we cannot see why the oversight of the *chamber of the house of God* may not import the whole government of the temple, which certainly belonged to the high-priest only; nor can we conceive how any one that was less than absolute governour of the whole temple could make so great an innovation in it. He was assistant indeed in the reparation of the walls of the city; but excepting this one act, where do we read of his doing any thing worthy of memory, towards the reforming of what was amiss either in church or state, in the times either of Ezra or Nehemiah? And yet we cannot but presume, that had he joined with them in so good a work, some mention would have been made of it in the books written by them. Since therefore, instead of this, we find it recorded in Ezra (chap. x. 18.), that the pontifical house was, in his time, grown very corrupt, and, not improbably, by his connivance, began to marry into Heathen families, (Neh. xiii. 28.), it seems most likely, that it was *Eliashib* the high-priest, who was the author of this great profanation of the house of God; but as he might die before Nehemiah returned from Babylon, for this reason, we hear nothing of the governour's reprehending him for it; *Prideaux's Connection, anno 528.*

He

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He therefore resolved to put an end to this; but found himself under a necessity of proceeding with caution in the affair, because † Tobiah had insinuated himself into the good opinion of most of the people, and especially those of note. The first step therefore that he took towards this reformation was; to convince them of their error, by causing the book of the law to be read publicly, and in the hearing of all the people; so that when the reader came to that place in Deuteronomy, wherein it is commanded, that (k) an Ammonite or Moabite † *should not come into the congregation*

† By his making two alliances with families of great note among the Jews: For Johanan his son had married the daughter of Meshullam the son of Berechiah, (Neh. vi. 18.—iii. 4.) who was one of the chief managers of the building of the wall of Jerusalem, under the direction of the governor; and he himself had married the daughter of Shecaniah the son of Arah, another great man among the Jews; by which means he had formed an interest, and was looked upon as a worthy man, though (being an Ammonite) he could not but bear a national hatred to all that were of the race of Israel; *Prideaux's Connection, anno 428.*

(k) Deut. xxiii. 3.

† They who, by *the congregation of God*, in this place, do understand *the public assemblies for divine worship*, lie under a great mistake; for no man of any nation was forbidden to come and pray unto God in the temple. Men of all nations, indeed, that were willing to become proselytes, were admitted into the Jewish communion; and, if they submitted to be circumcised, were allowed to eat the passover, and to enjoy all the privileges that true Israelites did, except only in the case of marriage; and therefore this phrase of *not entering into the congregation of the Lord*, must be understood to mean no more than a prohibition of marriage: for this (according to their rabbins) was the case of such prohibitions. None of the house of Israel, of either sex, were to enter into marriage with any Gentiles, of what nation soever, unless they were first converted to their religion, and became entire proselytes to it; and even in that case, some were debarred from it for ever; others only in part; and others again only for a limited time. Of the first sort were all of the seven nations of the Canaanites, mentioned in Deut. vii.; of the second sort were the Moabites and the Ammonites, whose males were excluded for ever, but not their females; and of the third sort were the Edomites and Egyptians, with whom the Jews might not marry until the third generation:

but

gregation of God, even to the tenth generation for ever; they being sensible of their transgression in this respect, separated themselves immediately from the mixed multitude, which gave Nehemiah an easy opportunity of getting rid of Tobiah, who was an Ammonite; and therefore he ordered the people, while they were in this good disposition, to cast his furniture out of the sacred chambers, and † to have them cleansed again, and restored to their former use.

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and Mal.

Among other corruptions that grew up during the governor's absence, there was one of which (as he was a constant frequenter of the public worship) he could not but take notice, and that was, the neglect of carrying on the daily service of the house of God, in a proper and decent manner. For the tithes, which were to maintain the ministers of the temple in their offices and stations, being either embezzled by the high-priest, or withheld by the laity, for want of them the Levites and singers were driven from the temple into the country, to find a subsistence some other way: and therefore, to remedy this abuse, he forthwith ordered the people to bring in their tithes of corn, wine, and oil, into the treasury of the temple; and having appointed proper officers to receive and distribute them,

Orders the
repayment
of tithes,

but with all others who were not of these three excepted sorts, they might freely make intermarriages whenever they became thorough proselytes to their religion. At present, however, because through the confusions which have since happened in all nations, it is not to be known who is an Ammonite, who an Edomite, a Moabite, or an Egyptian, they hold this prohibition to have been long out of date, and that now, any Gentile, as soon as proselyted to their religion, may immediately be admitted to make intermarriages with them; *Prideaux's Connection*, anno 428.

† The method of purifying any thing or person that was legally unclean, is thus described: — *For an unclean person, they shall take of the ashes of the burnt heifer of purification for sin, (i. e. of the heifer that was sacrificed on the great day of expiation), and running water shall be put thereto in a vessel, which being afterwards strained off and kept for this purpose, a clean person, i. e. the priest, (for to him the work of purifying is appropriated, Lev. xiii.) shall sprinkle upon the unclean person; and on the seventh day at even, after having bathed himself, and washed his cloaths, he shall be deemed clean; but it is likely, that things inanimate were, immediately upon their being sprinkled with this water of separation, as it is called, (Numb. xix. 9.), reputed clean; Patrick's Commentary.*

he

A. M. he recalled the absent ministers, and restored every thing to its former order.

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Ant. Chris.
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from Ezra
iv. 7. to the
end ; all
Esb. Neh.
and part of
Hagg. Zech.
and Mal.

A more
strict obser-
vation of
the Sab-
bath,

The neglect of the service of God had introduced a profanation of the Sabbath : for, during Nehemiah's absence, the Jews had not only done all manner of servile works on that day, but had permitted strangers, Tyrians, and others, to come and sell their fish, and other commodities, publickly in the streets of Jerusalem. Against these wicked and irregular practices, Nehemiah remonstrated to the chief men of the city with some warmth ; and, to let them see that he was resolved to make a thorough reformation in this matter, he gave a strict order, that, towards the evening, before their Sabbath began, the city-gates should be shut, and not opened, until the Sabbath was over : And to have this order more duly executed, he appointed † some of his own servants for the present to guard the gates, that no burthen might pass through on the Sabbath-day. So that when the merchants and other dealers came, and finding the gates shut against them, took up their lodgings without the walls in hopes of selling to the county-people, (though they could not to the citizens), the next day he threatened to take them into custody, if they did not go about their business ; and to this purpose, appointed a guard of Levites † to take up their station at the gate, and to stop all comers-in, that might any way profane the Sabbath.

And a dis-
solution of
unlawful
marriages,

Another reformation, and the last indeed that we find recorded of Nehemiah, was his dissolution of unlawful marriages among the Jews. Their law strictly forbid them to make intermarriages with any foreign nations, either by giving their daughters to them for wives, or by taking their daughters to themselves ; but, since their return from

† It seems as if matters were come to that pass, that he could not trust the common porters of the gates ; and therefore appointed some of his own domestics (who, he knew, would neither be careless nor corrupted) to see that the gates were kept shut, and all traffic prohibited ; *Patrick's Commentary*.

† The reason why he appointed the Levites to this office of keeping the gates on the Sabbath-day, was, because he not only thought, that, by virtue of their character, they would meet with more deference and respect than his domestic servants, but that when he and his servants were gone from Jerusalem, he was resolved to have this watch continued, until this evil custom of admitting dealers into the city on the Sabbath-day was quite broken ; *Patrick's Commentary*.

captivity,

captivity, people of all conditions had paid so little regard to this command, that even the pontifical house (which of all others ought to have set a better example) was become polluted with such impure mixtures, insomuch that Joiada the high-priest had a son, who married the daughter of Sanballat the Horonite, who, at that time, very probably was governour of Samaria.

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from Ezra
iv. 7. to the
end; all
Eith. Neph.
and part of
Hag. Zech.
and Ma'.

These mixed marriages (besides many other damages that accrued to the state) would in a short time (as he observed to them) quiet corrupt their native language †, because he perceived, that the children already began to smatter the speech of their foreign parent; and therefore he required them all, under the penalties ‡ (which he inflicted upon

† What the natural language of the Jews at this time was, whether the Hebrew or Chaldee, is matter of some inquiry among the learned. Those who suppose that it was Hebrew, produce the books of Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther, besides the prophecies of Daniel, which, for the most part, were written in Hebrew, and which they suppose the authors of them would not have done, if Hebrew at that time had not been the vulgar language. But to this it is replied, That these Jewish authors might make use of the Hebrew language in what they wrote, not only because the things which they recorded concerned the Jewish nation only, among whom there were learned men enough to explain them; but chiefly because they were minded to conceal what they wrote from the Chaldeans, who, at that time, were their lords and masters, and, considering all circumstances, might not perhaps have been so well pleased with them, had they understood the contents of their writings. Since it appears then, say they, by several words occurring in the books of Maccabees, the New Testament, and Josephus, that the language which the Jews then spoke was Chaldee; that this language they learned in their captivity, and after their return from it, never assumed their ancient Hebrew tongue, so as to speak it vulgarly, it hence must follow, that what is here called *the language of the Jews*, and their native tongue, was at that time no other than the Chaldee, for the ancient Hebrew was only preserved among the learned; *Le Clerc's Commentary*.

‡ There are some things in the text, which, as they are made to proceed from Nehemiah's own mouth, and appear in our translation, sound a little oddly:—*I contended with them, and cursed them, and smote certain of them, and plucked off their hair*, chap. xiii. 25. But the sense of these words is no more than this:—*I contended with them*, i. e. I expostulated the matter with them.

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and Mal.

upon some that were obstinate) to put away their wives, and to have no more communion of that kind with any foreign nation: In which he proceeded with such impartiality, that when the son of Joiada refused to quit his wife, he ordered him immediately to depart the country †; which accordingly he did, and, with several others that were in the like circumstances, went, and settled under his father-in-law in Samária.

These were some of the reformations which Nehemiah, as a wise and pious governour, made in the Jewish church and state. But, after his death, it was not long before the people relapsed into the same enormities; for which reason we find Malachi †, the last prophet under the law, and

I cursed them, i. e. excommunicated them, in the doing of which I denounced God's judgments against them. *I smote certain of them*, i. e. ordered the officers to beat some of the most notorious offenders, either with rods or with scourges, according to Deut. xxv. 2. And *I plucked off their hair*, i. e. I commanded them to be shaved, thereby to put them to shame, and make them look like vile slaves: For, as the hair was esteemed a great ornament among eastern nations, so baldness was accounted a great disgrace; and to inflict these several punishments upon them, Nehemiah had a sufficient provocation, because, in their marrying with Heathen nations, they had acted contrary, not only to the express law of God, but to their own late solemn covenant and promise, Ezra x. 19; *Pool's Annotations*.

† Josephus relates the matter, as if this expulsion had been effected by the power of the great Sanhedrim: But whether the Sanhedrim was at this time in being or no, (as we have no clear footsteps of it until the time of Judas Maccabæus), there was no occasion for their interposing, since Nehemiah, no doubt, as governour of the province, had authority enough to banish him out of Judea, as Bertram, *De repub. Jud. c. 13*, expounds the phrase, *I chased him from me*, Neh. xiii. 28.

† Whether the word *Malachi* be the proper name of a man, or only a generical name to denote an angel, a messenger, a prophet, or the like, has been a matter of some inquiry. From the prophet Haggai, chap. i. 13. and this other, whom we cite under the name of *Malachi*, chap. iii. 1. it appears, that, in these times, the name of *Malach-Jehovah*, or *the messenger of the Lord*, was often given to prophets; and, under this title, the Septuagint have characterized, and the fathers of the Christian church have frequently quoted, this prophetic writer. But the author of the lives of the prophets, under the name of *Epiphanius Dorotheus*, tells us, that this writer was of the tribe of

and who (not long after Haggai and Zechariah) must have lived in the time of Nehemiah, reproving the priests for their iniquity and scandalous lives, and upbraiding the people with their neglect of the worship of God, with their refusal to pay their tithes and offerings, with their divorcing their own wives, and marrying strange women, and with their inhumanity and cruel usage of their indigent brethren, the very same enormities which this good governour laboured to reform.

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How long after this Nehemiah lived at Jerusalem, is uncertain: It is most likely, however, that (notwithstanding all the revolutions * in the Persian court) he continued in his

of Zebulun, a native of Sapha, and that the name of *Malachi* was given him, because an angel used visibly to appear to the people after the prophet had spoken to them, to confirm what he had said; though most of the ancient Jews (as well as the Chaldee paraphrast) were of opinion, that *Malachi* was no other than *Ezra* under a borrowed name. However this be, it is agreed on all hands, that he was the last of the prophets of the synagogue, and lived about four hundred years before Christ; of whose coming, and the coming of his forerunner John the Baptist, and of whose religion, and the institution of a catholic and universal church, in the room of the Jewish, he speaks in very full and express terms, chap. iii. 1, &c.; *Calmet's Dictionary*, under the word.

* Upon the death of Artaxerxes, (in Scripture called *Ahasuerus*) Xerxes, his only son by his queen, (for he had several by his concubines, and among these, the most famous were Sogdianus, Ochus, and Arsites), succeeded in the Persian throne; but, by the treachery of one of his eunuchs, Sogdianus came upon him while he was drunk, and, after he had reigned no more than five and forty days, slew him and seized on the kingdom. But his unjust possession did not hold long; for his brother Ochus, being then governour of Hyrcania, raised a considerable army, and, having gained many of the nobility and governours of provinces to his interest, marched against him, and, under a pretence of a treaty, having got him into his power, threw him headlong into ashes, (a punishment used among the Persians for very enormous criminals); so that, after he had reigned only six months and fifteen days, he died a very miserable death, and was succeeded by Ochus; who, as soon as he was settled in the kingdom, took the name of *Darius*, (and is therefore, by historians, called *Darius Nothus*), and, after he had slain his brother Arsites, (who thought to have supplanted him, as he had done Sogdianus, and Sogdianus Xerxes), and suppressed several other insurrections against him, continued to sway the Persian

A. M. 3475, etc.
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his government to the time of his death, but when that happened, it is no where said; only we may observe, that, at the time when he ends his book, he could not be much less than seventy years old.

The OBJECTION.

“ **B**UT how good, and wise, and pious men soever, the two governours of the Jewish church and nation, Ezra and Nehemiah, might be; yet it cannot but be thought an act of extreme severity, if not a violation of all justice and equity, for them to decree, (as we find they both did), that, upon the dissolution of all illegal marriages, the poor children (who were intirely innocent as to their parents transgression) should be turned adrift, and sent a starving: As, indeed, the whole matter of these divorces seems to be abhorrent to the apostle’s directions: *(l)* *If any brother hath a wife that believeth not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away.*

“ Nehemiah, no doubt, was a zealous reformer of the vices of his countrymen; but how these vices came to sprout up again so soon, (as we find they did, chap. xiii.), and in the short time of his absence from Jerusalem, which was but for *(m)* *certain days*, we cannot conceive. And, though he was confessedly a man of a large and liberal spirit, yet the author of his history seems to have tarnished his character in this respect, when he makes him so lavish in his own praise, so ostentatious of his good works, and, even in his very generosity, discovering a mercenary temper, by his so frequently calling upon God, *(n)* *to think upon him for good according to all that he had done for his people.* Nor has the author of the book of Ezra concerted his matters much better, when he makes an Heathen prince (as Artaxerxes was) write in a style more becoming the Sa-hedrim, and, in the preamble to his commission, com-

sceptre for nineteen years, but whether he or Nehemiah, his governour of Judea, died first, we have no certain account: All that we know is, that the last act of the governour’s reformations, viz. his dissolution of strange marriages, was in the fifteenth year of this prince’s reign, and consequently but four before his death; *Prideaux’s Connection, anno 425.*

(l) 1 Cor. vii. 12. *(m)* Neh. xiii. 6. *(n)* Chap. v. 19.

“ pliment

“ pliment him with the title of (o) *the scribe of the law of the God of heaven*, as if that idolater had any knowledge of the God of heaven, or any perception that the Jews were the true worshippers of him. A. M. 3475, etc. Ant. Christ. 529, etc. from Ezra iv. 7. to the end; all Esth. Neh. and part of Hagg. Zech. and Mal.

“ The truth of the matter is, (p) these books of Ezra and Nehemiah were never written at the time of their pretended date, nor by the persons whose names they bear; but by some ignorant Sadducee or other, unacquainted with the affairs he pretended to treat of, and badly versed in points of chronology. For it is next to a thing incredible, that either Ezra or Nehemiah should be old enough to be acquainted with that Sanballat, whose daughter Manassa (as he is called by Josephus) married, or that Sanballat himself should extend his life to the days of Alexander the Great, according to the same historian.

“ Nor is the authority of the book of Esther (q) clear of all suspicion; since, in all Hebrew copies, we find nothing of the six last chapters of it; no mention made of its contents in any exotic writer; and so many unaccountable absurdities every where occurring in it, that we cannot but look upon it as a spurious piece, that has in it the air of a romance, or a kind of tragi-comedy, rather than real history.

“ For (to begin with the very foundation of the whole story) how absurd is it to think, that Mordecai should refuse to pay all manner of obeisance to Haman, who, at that time, was the king's great favourite, and first minister of state; when to bow the knee, and even prostrate the whole body, in the salutation of their betters, was a common custom among the Hebrews, as well as Persians? And how unreasonable is it to imagine, that Ahasuerus should divorce his queen merely because she was a modest woman, because she would not do a thing unbecoming her dignity, and contrary to the laws of the Persians *, (which allowed no woman of fashion to appear

(o) Ezra vii. 12. (p) Huetii Demonst. propos. 4. (q) Ibid.

* To this purpose Josephus (lib. xi. c. 6.) informs us, that the reason why Vashti refused to go to the king, when sitting in public company, was, because she thought herself bound by the laws of Persia, which would not allow wives to be seen by any besides their domestics: “ For most barbarous nations (says Plutarch in his Themistocles) are so very rigid and troublesome in their jealousy of their women, that they keep not only

A. M. 3475, &c. Ant. Christ 529, etc. from Ezra iv. 7. to the end; all Esth. Neh. and part of Hagg. Zech. and Mal.

“ appear in public) merely to gratify the mad frolic of a drunken husband?
 “ Say what we will, we can never apologize for Esther’s turning concubine, though it were to the greatest prince in the universe, much less for her kinsman’s abetting her unchastity, how much however he might raise his fortune by it. And though it sounds a little strange, that the king should forget to recompense a man who had been so signal an instrument in preserving his life from a treasonable conspiracy, as Mordecai had been; yet all on a sudden (r) to confer such vast honours upon him, as would necessarily expose him to the envy and indignation of the whole Persian nobility, seems to be but an ill-judged method of rewarding him.

“ How Mordecai’s (s) being a Jew (when at that time the Jews had no interest at the Persian court, nay, when at that time a decree was issued out for their utter extirpation) could portend Haman’s downfall, we cannot see; but a manifest thing it is, that when they grew in to favour, (t) they became too bloody and outrageous to deserve the name of *God’s peculiar people*; and that how far soever Haman’s resentment against Mordecai might carry him, yet for him to have (u) *ten thousand talents of silver* (which upon the lowest computation amount to almost three millions of our Sterling money) to lay down for his life, and the lives of his countrymen, has as little credibility in it, as that the walls of Jerusalem (x) were built by Nehemiah (notwithstanding all the interruptions he met with) in two and fifty days.”

Answered, by shewing the utter illegality of marrying with Heathens,

The Jewish law against marrying with Heathens runs thus:—(y) *When the Lord thy God shall bring thee into the land whither thou goest to possess it, and hath cast out many nations before thee, —Thou shalt not make marriages with them; thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take to thy son.* And the reason of the law is assigned in the following verse: *For they*

“ only their wives, but their very maid-servants and concubines shut up at home, from seeing any but their own family; and when they travel, they carry them in covered waggons, and lodge them under tents shut up, and quite closed round;” *Le Clerc’s Commentary.*

(r) *Le Clerc’s Commentary* on Esther vi. 10. (s) *Ibid.* on ver. 13. (t) Chap. ix. 5, 16. (u) Chap. iii. 9. (x) Neh. i. 15. (y) Deut. vii. 1, 3, 4.

will

will turn away thy sons from following me, that they may serve other gods : For did not Solomon (z) king of Israel, (as Nehemiah argues with the people), sin by these things? And if so great a man as he, who excelled all mankind in wisdom, was not safe from the seducement of these outlandish women, how shall ye be able to preserve yourselves from their enticements? And yet (as Moses goes on in his reasoning) (a) *Thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God; and the Lord hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself; above all the people that are upon the face of the earth.*

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Here then is an express law, enforced with weighty reasons, against these Pagan marriages : And therefore, since whatever is done contrary to law, is *ipso facto* null and void, these marriages with idolatrous women, which were strictly forbidden by God, were (properly speaking) no marriages at all; and the children, which proceeded from them, were in no better condition than those whom we call bastards. (b) No interposition of civil authority was therefore needful to dissolve these marriages. The infidelity of the party espoused was as much an interdiction, as any of the most proximate degree of consanguinity, which, by the laws of all civilized nations, is known to vacate the marriage.

But even suppose that the civil authority thought proper to interpose in this matter, yet wherein had the Jews any reason to complain, if, in just punishment for their wilful breach of a known and positive law, they were excluded from cohabiting with these illegal wives? The Jews, I say, especially, who for every light and trivial cause † made no scruple to give even their lawful wives a bill of divorcement, and might therefore, with much less difficulty, be supposed willing to repudiate those whom the laws of their

(z) Neh. xiii. 26. (a) Deut. vii. 6. (b) Patrick's Commentary on Ezra x. 3.

† The school of Shammah, who lived a little before our Saviour, taught, that a man could not lawfully be divorced from his wife, unless he had found her guilty of some action which was really infamous, and contrary to the rules of virtue. But the school of Hillel, who was Shammah's disciple, taught, on the contrary, that the least reasons (such as, if she did not dress his meat well, if she was not agreeable to him in person or temper; or if he found any other woman that he liked better) were sufficient to authorize a man to put away his wife; *Selden's Uxor. Hebraica, lib. iii. c. 18.*

God

A. M. 3475, etc. Ant. Christ. 529, &c. from Ezra iv. 7. to the end; all Esth. Neh. and part of Hagg. Zech. and Mal.

God (for fear of their catching their infection of idolatry) had forbidden them to live with?

St. Paul indeed is not for *turning away an unbelieving wife*, in case she is *willing to dwell with her husband*; but then he supposes, that this couple were married when they were both Heathens, and in a state of infidelity, in which case there was no law, either divine or human, forbidding them to marry, (whereas in these Jewish marriages with Pagans, the prohibition is strict); and therefore, as there was no sin in their coming together at first, and the Christian religion (whether it was the man or the woman that embraced it) made no alteration in the case, his advice is, that they continue to dwell together, even though they be of different persuasions in matters of religion; because (as he farther adds this reason) (c) *The unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife; and how knowest thou, O man, but that by thy peaceable cohabitation with her, thou mayest convert, and save thy wife?*

Though therefore the apostle is not for encouraging any separation between husband and wife upon account of their difference in religion, when their marriage was previous to either of their conversions to Christianity; yet (if we will make him consistent with himself) we must allow, that he is utterly averse to all mixed marriages with infidels, when, in his following epistle, he advises all Christians, (d) *not to be unequally yoked together with unbelievers; for what communion, says he, has light with darkness, or what concord has Christ with Belial?* &c. Whereby he gives us to think, that he esteemed all marriage with Heathens illegal, and that had the apostle, at that time, been either of Ezra's or Nehemiah's council, he would have given his vote for their dissolution among the Jews.

In what sense children do not suffer for their parents' offences,

We own indeed, that it a very gracious declaration of God, *Behold, all souls are mine, as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine; that soul that sinneth, it shall die*; but then we are to consider, that as life signifies, in general, all that happiness which attends God's favour, so death denotes all those punishments which are the effects of divine displeasure; and among these, the miseries of the next world are chiefly intended. These indeed shall be allotted to men, according to their own demerits, without any regard to the faults of their forefathers, which shall neither be laid to their charge, nor

(c) 1 Cor. vii. 16.

(d) 2 Cor. vi. 14.

made an aggravation of their guilt; but as to temporal evils and calamities, it cannot well otherwise be, but that, in the very course of things, children should suffer for the iniquities of their parents.

Though therefore it may seem a little hard, that the children should be included in their mother's divorce, yet the laws of most nations have determined this point:— That children are to follow the condition of their mothers, be it what it will, and consequently as they are unlawfully born, they must of course be alienated from the family, at the same time that the mother is repudiated, and in virtue of that very law which declares her marriage to be null. So that it was no arbitrary act in Ezra to abdicate the children, as well as the mothers: Though (c) to prevent the danger of their corrupting the other children of the family, (if they were allowed to stay), and of insinuating themselves so far into their fathers affections, as to prevail with them in time to recall their ejected wives, might be motive enough to a prudent ruler (considering the then situation of affairs) to put the law rigidly in execution. As this however was an act of the government, wherein Ezra, and other good men who feared the Lord, were concerned, we may reasonably presume, that some provision was made for the maintenance, and perhaps the education of these poor children, in the principles of the Jewish religion, at the public charge.

How long Nehemiah was in finishing the walls of Jerusalem, interpreters are not agreed; because some of them supposing the space of two and fifty days, (f) mentioned in the Scripture, to be too short for the perfecting of the whole, have begun their computation from the time that Nehemiah returned his answer to Sanballat's first message, and others from the time that the stone-wall was finished, and so allowing the whole fifty-two days for the perfecting of the rest. But if we look into the compass of time, from Nehemiah's being at Shusan, to the day of the month when the walls are said to have been finished, we shall find, that no more than fifty-two days could well be allowed for the perfecting of the whole.

It was (g) in the first month called by the Jews *Nisan*, that Nehemiah was at Shushan, and obtained of the king leave to go to Jerusalem: And though we have no express account, what time he spent in his journey, and

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and Mal.

Why the
children by
mixed mar-
riages might
be justly put
away.

And how
the walls of
Jerusalem
might be
built in fifty-
two days.

(c) Pool's Annotations. (f) Neh. vi. 15. (g) Chap. ii. 1.
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and Mal.



when he came to Jeruſalem; yet if we may make a conjecture from the time that Ezra expended in the ſame journey, we can ſcarce ſuppoſe that he arrived at Jeruſalem before the end of the fourth month. Ezra ſet out on the firſt day of the firſt month. He made a (*b*) ſhort ſtay indeed at the river Ahava; but it was the firſt day of the fifth month before he reached Jeruſalem. Nehemiah could not poſſibly ſet out ſo ſoon in the year, becauſe his commiſſion (*i*) from the king, and inſtructions to the neighbouring governours, muſt have taken ſome time in paſſing through the ſeveral offices: And therefore we can ſcarce ſuppoſe that he reached Jeruſalem ſooner than the time ſpecified; and from thence to the twenty-fifth day of the ſixth month, (including the three days of the reſt that he gave himſelf before he began), the ſpace will be much about fifty-two days, wherein we ſuppoſe that the whole work was finiſhed: (*k*) For if Alexander the Great (as Arrianus and Curtius relate) built the walls of Alexandria (which were ſeven miles in compaſs) in the ſpace of twenty days, why ſhould it be thought a thing incredible, that a vaſt number, not of hired but voluntary men, full of zeal for the work themſelves, animated by the example of their rulers, and ranged and diſtributed in a proper manner for diſpatch, ſhould, in almoſt thrice that ſpace of time, be able to finiſh a work of leſs compaſs; when they had long ſummer-days for it, plenty of ſtones, and other materials hard at hand, the foundation of the wall unrazed, ſome parts of it ſtanding entire, only ſome breaches here and there to be amended; and when their deſign in the whole was, not to ſtudy curioſity but ſtrength, and to provide themſelves with ſuch a fortification for the preſent, as would ſecure them from any ſudden invaſion of their enemies?

The author
of the book
of Nehemiah,
not pro-
fuſe in his
praiſe.

How (*l*) long Nehemiah continued at the Perſian court, after his return from Jeruſalem, the ſacred hiſtory nowhere informs us. It tells us indeed, that he came back again after certain days; but ſince the word *Tamin*, which we render *days*, does equally ſignify *years*, and in many places of the Hebrew Scriptures is uſed in that ſenſe, we cannot but wonder how the generality of chronologers, as well as commentators, came to overlook this ſenſe of the word, and in ſo doing, to make Nehemiah's ſtay at Shuſhan much ſhorter

(*b*) Ezra viii. 15, 31. (*i*) Neh. ii. 6, etc. (*k*) Patrick's Commentary, and Pool's Annotations on Neh. vi. 15. (*l*) Pri-
deaux's Connection, anno 428.

than

than it possibly could be. For since he had been twelve years in reforming what ~~he~~ found amiss among the Jews, and Ezra had been doing the same for thirteen years before him; they must, one would think, have brought their reformation to such a state and stability, that a little time could not been sufficient so totally to have unhinged it: And therefore we may conclude, that his absence at court, which gave room for these irregularities to grow to such an height, was not for certain days, but for some years continuance; and consequently that the author of this part of his life had no intention, either to magnify his good offices, or to relate any thing incredible concerning him; since, though he acquaints us with sundry corruptions that had sprung up, yet he makes the time of his absence (if we take his words in their proper sense) long enough for that purpose.

That Nehemiah was the writer of the account of his own government in Judea, (for that is the subject of his book), most interpreters are agreed: (m) And, as he appears in that character, it cannot misbecome him to give the world a narrative how himself behaved in that high station; though, in doing of this, he could not avoid the saying of something in his own commendation, unless he had been minded, out of his excessive modesty, to conceal from posterity (which it had been invidious to do) an excellent example of his extraordinary virtue, and love of his country.

St. Paul, no doubt, was a very modest man: (n) He *durst not*, as he tells us, *make himself of the number, or compare himself with such, as commended themselves*; and yet, in the very next chapter, (that (o) he might stop the mouths of false apostles, and covetous people), we find him telling the Corinthians, that he preached the gospel to them freely, and without desiring any contributions of them for his necessary support: (p) *I robbed other churches, says he, taking wages of them, to do you service; and when I was present with you, and wanted, I was chargeable to no man: —For in all things I have kept myself from being burdensome to you, and so will I keep myself; and as the truth of Christ is in me, no man shall stop me of this boasting in the regions of Achaia; for what I do, that I will do, that I*

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end; all
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and part of
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and Mal.

Though he
might in
some things
commend
him;

(m) Patrick's Commentary on Neh. v. 19. (n) 2 Cor. x. 12.
(o) Chap. xi. 7. (p) Ibid. ver. 8, etc.

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3475, etc.
Ant. Christ.
529, etc.
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iv. 7. to the
end; all
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and part of
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and Mal.

*may cut off occasion from those that desire occasion, that where-
in they glory, they may be found even as me : And after all
this, can any find fault with Nehemiah, for telling his
reader, that (q) what was prepared for me daily, was an
ox and six choice sheep, fowls in proportion, and once in ten
days, store of all sorts of wine ; yet for all this, required not
I the bread of the governour, i. e. the allowances which
were made to the governours appointed by the kings of
Persia, to provide them a table, because the bondage was
heavy upon this people, and they not in a condition, without
much difficulty, to maintain themselves ; Wherefore think
upon me, O God, for good, according to all that I have done
for this people.*

And ex-
pects a re-
ward from
God well e-
nough.

To serve God for nothing, or purely for his own sake, is a notion that perhaps may comport with our glorified state, where our service will be attended with vision ; but, at present, it is too romantic, and what the author of our being expects not from us. He who made us, and set the springs in our nature, knows very well, that we are principally moved by hopes and fears, and for this reason has propounded rewards and punishments to us ; nor did we ever find it (till now) accounted a flaw in the character of the worthies of old, or an indication of their mercenary spirits, that in all their good works or sufferings, they (r) *had a respect to the recompence of the reward which God the righteous judge had promised to give unto his faithful servants.*

Why Ezra
might be
styled the
scribe of the
God of hea-
ven.

Ezra, no doubt, was at this time a man of great esteem among his brethren, and no less favoured in the Persian court ; otherwise Artaxerxes would never have granted him a commission to reform and regulate the affairs of the Jewish church, fraught with such ample powers. Ever since that time, the Jews have looked upon him as another Moses, who (as Moses was the giver of the law) revived and restored it, after it had been in a manner quite lost and extinguished in the Babylonish captivity. There is some reason to believe therefore, that (s) *this scribe of the law of the God of heaven*, was the usual title or appellation of honour, whereby Ezra was dignified and distinguished among his countrymen ; and that Artaxerxes might take it upon common report, and so insert in it his commission, as the name whereby he was generally styled

(q) Neh. v. 18.

(r) Heb. xi. 26.

(s) Esther vii. 12.

among the Jews, without ever giving himself time to consider what was the full purport and intendment of it.

But if even he did attend to this, yet, as the Heathens had different kinds of gods, celestial, terrestrial, and infernal, he might easily reconcile this to his own principles, only by supposing that this God of the Jews was one of the celestial order, and (though a deity peculiar to them) might nevertheless be revered and worshiped by him in conjunction with his other gods.

But, after all, if we reflect a little on the ease and indolence, and, in a manner, total sequestration from all business, wherein these great monarchs of the east were used to indulge themselves, we shall find reason to believe, that Artaxerxes knew nothing of the matter. If he be the same who goes under the name of Ahasuerus in the book of Esther, he had been imposed on by Haman to consent to a bloody decree against the Jews, with so little thought and consideration of what he was about, that (t) he did not so much as remember the person at whose instigation it was done: And yet, notwithstanding the great mischief which this negligence of his might have brought upon him, we find him instantly sinking into the like sleepy and careless temper. (u) *Write ye for the Jews* (says he to Mordecai and Esther) *as it liketh you, in the king's name, and seal it with the king's ring, and whatever is thus wrote and sealed, no man may reverse.* And, by parity of reason, why may we not suppose, that when Ezra applied to court for his commission, the whole form of drawing it up was referred to him, and such other Jews as he thought proper to take into his council? For, *Write ye, as it liketh you, in the king's name*, might (in one case as well as in the other) be all that the king had to say to the matter. And indeed, if we look into the contents of the commission itself, we shall soon perceive that it must have been drawn by something more than a heathen hand. For if Ezra himself had been to dictate the words, how could he have expressed the tenour of his commission more fully than in these: (x) *Forasmuch as thou art sent by the king, and his seven counsellors, to enquire concerning Judah and Jerusalem, according to the law of thy God, which is in thine hand: What Jewish king could have given more pious instructions than these: (y) And thou Ezra, after the*

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end; all
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and Mal.

(t) Esther vii. 5.

(u) Ibid. viii. 8.

(x) Ezra vii. 14.

(y) Ibid. ver. 25.

A. M.
3475, etc.
Ant. Chris.
529, etc.
from Ezra
iv. 7. to the
end; all
Ezra. Neh.
and part of
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and Mal.

wisdom of thy God, set magistrates and judges, such as know the laws of thy God, and teach ye them that know them not? And where can we find a livelier sense of God's supreme authority, and of that regard which is due from the greatest kings and potentates to his commands, more emphatically expressed than here: *Whatsoever is commanded by the God of heaven, let it be diligently done for the house of the God of heaven? O verba!* (as Jacobus Capellus, in a kind of rapture, cries out), *litteris aureis regum palatiis inscribenda, atque adeo stylo adamantino fidelium omnium animis insculpenda*: Words fit to be written upon the palaces of kings in letters of gold, and engraven on the minds of all the faithful with a style of adamant.

The author
of the book
of Ezra.

(2) Who the author of the six first chapters of Ezra was, is a matter of some uncertainty; though it is generally agreed, that the same hand which composed the two books of Chronicles was concerned in writing that part of Ezra, because the Chronicle concludes with the very same words wherewith the history begins, which, in ancient authors, to connect the thread of the discourse, (as Grotius observes), is no unusual thing. The Jewish doctors indeed are chiefly of opinion, that these Chronicles were written by Ezra. But this can hardly be, because the author (whoever he was) continues the (a) genealogy of Zerubbabel to the twelfth generation, which is lower than Ezra lived. Nor can Ezra be the author of the six first chapters of the book which bears his name, because the person who wrote it (b) is said to have been at Jerusalem in the time of Darius Hystaspes; whereas Ezra (c) did not go thither until the reign of Artaxerxes. It is most likely, therefore, that Ezra, upon his coming to Jerusalem, might meet with certain annals or memoirs kept of the several transactions that had happened since the time of the people's return from captivity, and that to these (after he made an extract of such as were true and authentic) he added a farther continuation of the history of his own government. For, that the four last chapters of the book were of his own composing, is evident from this testimony. (d) *And at evening sacrifice, I arose up from my heaviness, and having rent my garment, and my mantle, I fell upon my knees, and spread out my hands unto the Lord.* Then follows the prayer

(2) Huetii Demonstr. prop. 4. (a) 1 Chron. iii. 19.
(b) Ezra v. and vi. (c) Chap. vii. (d) Chap. ix. 5.

which he made, and immediately it is subjoined, (*e*) *Now when Ezra had prayed, and when he had confessed, and cast himself down before the house of God*: Which plainly shews, that Ezra was the author of that part of the book, which speaks of himself in the first person.

And, in like manner, that Nehemiah was the writer of what is reputed his, seems to be evident, (*f*) not only from his own declaration in the front of it, (which was the practice of Herodotus, Thucydides, and other ancient historians in those days), but from the testimony of the Jewish church likewise, which all along received it into their canon, and from the approbation of the seventy interpreters, who, from the very first, gave it a place in their translation under that name.

There is some difficulty, indeed, in reconciling the account of Josephus concerning Sanballat, and what is recorded of him in Nehemiah. Josephus (*g*) tells us, "That he, being made governour of Samaria under the last Darius, married his daughter to one whose father had been high-priest of the Jews, and that when his son-in-law was thereupon driven out of Jerusalem, he obtained leave of Alexander to build a temple on mount Gerizim, like that at Jerusalem, and to make him the priest thereof." Now, to make this accord with what we read in Nehemiah, (*h*) the general opinion is, that there were two Sanballats, the first the Sanballat of the Holy Scriptures, and the other the Sanballat of Josephus; and that there were two marriages contracted by two different persons, sons of two different high-priests of the Jews, with two different women, who were each daughters of two different Sanballats; the first the daughter of the Sanballat of the Scriptures, and the other the daughter of the Sanballat of Josephus, and that he who married the first of them was the son of Joida, but he who married the second of them was the son of Johanan, and brother of Jaddua. But there is no reason to have recourse to this perplexed solution, seeing that Josephus has incurred a palpable mistake in point of chronology. For, (*i*) since this marriage was consummated while Joida, the son of Elia-

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Eth. Neh.
and part of
Hagg. Zech.
and Mal.

A gross mistake in Josephus, concerning Sanballat, and the age when he lived.

(*e*) Ezra x. 1.
lib. 11. c. 7. and 8.
(*i*) Neh. xiii. 28.

(*f*) Huetii, *ibid.* (*g*) Jewish Antiqu.
(*h*) Prideaux's Connection, anno 409.

A. M.
3475, etc.
Ant. Chris.
529, etc.
from Ezra
iv. 7. to the
end; all
Esth. Neh.
and part of
Hagg. Zech.
and Mal.



shib, was the high-priest of the Jews, even in the fifth year of his pontificate; (*k*) and since he entered upon that office, in the eleventh year of Darius Nothus, who reigned in all nineteen years, it must follow, that the licence which Sanballat obtained for the building of a temple at Samaria, was not from Alexander, but from this Darius, in the fifteenth year of his reign, and above eighty years before the Darius Codomannus whom Alexander vanquished was known. There is no occasion, therefore, to suppose any more Sanballats than one, or to extend his life to any immoderate length; only we may perceive, that Josephus was under a mistake in placing this Sanballat under the reign of Codomannus, who should have been placed under a former Darius, surnamed *Nothus*; and consequently, that all he tells us of this Sanballat's attending Alexander in his wars, and obtaining of him a licence to build a temple, is a mere fiction founded on that mistake; because, in Alexander's time, the Samaritans, by murdering Andromachus, his governour of Syria, had so incensed that great conqueror against them, that, instead of granting them any favours, (*l*) we find him making all the havock of them that he could.

The author
of the book
of Esther
unknown.

Who the author of the book of Esther was, the opinions of the learned are various. Some ascribe it to Ezra, others to Mordecai, others to Mordecai and Esther in conjunction, and others again to the joint labours of the great synagogue, who, from the time of Ezra to Simon the Just, superintended the edition and canon of Scripture. Those who contend for Mordecai have these words to alledge in his behalf: (*m*) *And Mordecai wrote these things, and sent letters unto all the Jews, that were in all the provinces of King Abasuerus, and the Jews undertook to do as Mordecai had written to them*: (*n*) But the thing is evident, that these words relate, not to the book itself, but to the circular letters which Mordecai sent to the Jews, in all the provinces of the Persian empire, signifying what a mighty deliverance God had vouchsafed them, and, in commemoration of it, instituting an annual festival to be observed for ever.

Its genu-
ness.

And indeed the institution of this annual festival, and its continued observation, is a standing proof that this history of Esther is real, and not fictitious; since we can hardly

(*k*) Patrick's Commentary. (*l*) Joseph. contra Apion, lib. 2.
(*m*) Esther ix. 20, 23. (*n*) Huetii Demonstr. propof. 4.

conceive, how a wise nation should at first appoint, and afterwards continue the celebration of this solemn time of feasting and rejoicing every year, merely because a certain man among them had once the good fortune to write an agreeable fable or romance; much less can we conceive, from what motive a whole assembly of learned doctors should receive a writing of no better character into the canon of their Scriptures, or (to make it of more universal use) should honour it with a Greek translation.

It must be owned, indeed, that no foreign author has taken any notice of this piece of history; but the reason hereof is obvious, *viz.* (o) because the authors who wrote of the affairs of Persia at this time, entered no farther into them than as they were coincident with the affairs of Greece; and though the six last chapters of this history are not to be found in any Hebrew copy, yet Origen is of opinion, (p) that once they were extant, though now lost, and that from it the Septuagint formed their translation; though others (with more probability) think, that (as the history of this memorable transaction might be recorded by divers hands) there were once two Hebrew copies of it, one in a larger, and the other in a less volume, and that, as the less is what we have at present, from the larger has proceeded the Greek copy, with its fundry additions.

Haman, we read, was an Amalekite, one of that nation (q), against which God had pronounced a curse; and therefore, upon this consideration, Mordecai might think himself not obliged to pay him the reverence which he expected; and, if the rest of the Jews had the like notion of him, this might be reason sufficient for his extending his resentment against the whole nation. But there seems to be something more in the reverence which the people were commanded to pay him, than what is the effect of civil respect. The king of Persia, we know, expected a kind of divine adoration from all that approached his presence; (r) as we read of one Timagoras, upon whom the people of Athens passed sentence of death, for his worshipping of Darius, accounting the honour of their whole city debased by this mean submission of one of their citizens, though at that time Darius was one of the greatest monarchs upon earth. And as the kings of Persia did arrogate this to themselves, so they sometimes imparted it to their chief friends

A. M.
3475, etc.
Ant. Christ.
529, etc.
from Ezra
iv. 7. to the
end; all
Estr. Neh.
and part of
Hagg. Zech.
and Mal.

Objections
against it
answered.

Why Mor-
decai would
not revere
Haman.

(o) Huetii Demonst. propos. 4. (p) Patrick's Commentary.
(q) Exod. xvii. 14. (r) Valer. Max. lib. vi. c. 3.

A. M.
3475, &c.
Ant. Chris.
529, &c.
from Ezra
iv. 7. to the
end; all
Esth. Neh.
and part of
Hag. Zech.
and Mal.

and favourites, as it seems at this time to have been the case with Haman. For we can hardly conceive, why the king should give a particular command, (s) that all his servants should reverence him, if by this reverence no more is intended than that they should shew him a respect suitable to his station: But now, if we suppose that the homage expected from them was such as came near to idolatry, (t) we need not wonder, that a Jew should deny that honour, or the outward expressions of it, to any man, since the wise and sober Grecians did positively refuse to give it to the very kings themselves. And that this was the case before us, the author of the Apocryphal additions to the book of Esther seems to imply, when he introduces Mordecai as praying in these words—(u) *Thou knowest, O Lord, that it is not contumacy, nor pride, nor desire of vain glory, that makes me not worship Haman; for I would willingly kiss his feet for the safety of Israel. But I do it, that I may not prefer the glory of a man, to the glory of God, nor adore any one but thee, my Lord, alone.*

The conduct of Ahasuerus
Esther, and
Mordecai,
in some
measure
atoned.

Though we are far from pretending to apologize, either for the injustice of Ahasuerus in abdicating his queen, or for the conduct of Esther in going to his bed, yet a good deal of this might be resolved into the custom of a nation, where the king was absolute, and his subjects mere vassals; where the will of the prince, I say was a perfect law, and a plurality of wives and concubines reputed honourable. This, however, may be said in behalf of Ahasuerus, that he did not divorce his wife without first consulting his counsellors, and such as were best acquainted with the laws of their country; and therefore, if there was any iniquity in it, they were the persons chiefly to be blamed, who represented the queen's disobedience as a crime of such a dangerous nature, that it would have had a noxious influence upon the whole nation, had it not been severely punished. And this may be said in excuse for Esther, that the words which we render (x) *she was brought*, may equally signify *she was taken away*, viz. by violence; (y) for (as the Targum upon this passage relates the matter) "Mordecai, hearing of the king's edict for the collection of all the beautiful virgins in his dominions, hid his cousin in a private place, where the officers could not find her; but

(s) Esther iii. 2.
(u) Esther xiii. 12, &c.
Commentary.

(t) Pool's Annotations on Esther iii.
(x) Esther ii. 8. (y) Patrick's

“ when Esther (whom all the neighbourhood knew to be
 “ a great beauty) was missing, an order from the king to
 “ Mordecai was procured, which, upon pain of death, ob-
 “ liged him to produce her.” However this be, it is cer-
 tain, that the persons whom the king took to his bed in
 this manner, were not reputed harlots, but became his
 lawful wives, though wives of an inferiour degree; and
 therefore it is no great wonder, that Esther, in these circum-
 stances, (though a very virtuous woman), should consent;
 nor can we tell, but that Mordecai and she might have a
 dispensation from God, (as God, no doubt, can dispense
 with his own laws), supposing there were any contrariety
 to the divine laws in this transaction.

A. M.
 3475, &c.
 Ant. Chriſ.
 529, &c.
 from Ezra
 iv. 7. to the
 end; all
 Eſth. Neh.
 and part of
 Hagg. Zech.
 and Mal.

To account for the humour of princes, and their ma-
 nagement of public affairs, is next to a thing impossible.
 We see, even among us, that great men are sometimes un-
 mindful of the highest services that are done them, and
 take no care to reward them, especially if the person be in
 himself obscure, and not supported by a proper recommen-
 dation. And therefore we are not at all to wonder, if a
 prince that buried himself in idolence, and made it a part
 of his grandeur to live unacquainted and unconcerned with
 what passed in his dominions, (as this was the custom of
 most eastern kings), should overlook the great service which
 Mordecai had done him, or if he ordered them a reward,
 that, by the artifice of those at court, who were no well-
 wishers to the Jews, he might be disappointed of it.

Why Aha-
 suerus did
 not reward
 Mordecai
 at first.

There seems, however, to have been a particular direc-
 tion of providence, in having his reward delayed till this
 time, when he and all his nation were appointed to de-
 struction, when the remembrance of his services might be
 a means to recommend them to the king's mercy, and the
 honours conferred on him a deep mortification to his ad-
 versary. These honours indeed were very remarkable;
 but by Haman's manner of proposing them, they seem to
 have been the usual marks of distinction and esteem, that
 the kings of Persia conferred on those whom they were
 minded to make conspicuous; and so far was Mordecai
 from being elated with them, that as soon as the solemnity
 was over, we read, that (z) he returned to his duty, and
 attendance at the king's gate.

He had declared himself a Jew, to satisfy the people at
 court, that he could not, with a good conscience, comply

Why Ha-
 man's wife
 men might
 predict his
 ruin from
 Mordecai's
 being a Jew

(z) Esther. vi. 12.

A. M.
3475, etc.
Ant. Christ.
529, etc.
from Ezra
iv. 7. to the
end. all Est.
Neh. and
part of Hag.
Zech. and
Mal.

with the king's command relating to the reverence which was to be paid to Haman; and the interposition of Providence in behalf of the Jewith nation, even during their captivity, had been so visible, that the wise men about Haman might, from experience, form a conjecture, that if their God was become their friend, (as by this strange turn of affairs in favour of Mordecai it looked as if he was), no weapon forged against them would prosper; because they had seen so many plots, which would have crushed any other nation, turn to their advancement, as well as their enemies destruction. The advice (a) which Achior gave to Holofernes, is founded upon the known experience of those times, and bespeaks a man well acquainted with the state of the Jews: *Now, therefore, my lord and governour, if there be any error in this people, and they sin against their God, let us consider, that this will be their ruin.——But, if there be no iniquity in their nation, let my Lord now pass by, lest their Lord defend them, and their God be for them, and we become a reproach before all the world.* Considering, then, that Mordecai was of the seed of the Jews, a people whom God had wonderfully raised from under great oppressions, and that, at this time, there was a desperate design, by Haman's management, carrying on against them, Haman's wise men might easily, and without the spirit of prophecy, divine, (b) that as Mordecai (whom they knew to be a man of great courage and wisdom) was now got into the king's favour, it would not be long before he would find an opportunity of applying to him (who was a person of a mild disposition) for a revocation of the bloody decree which Haman, by imposing upon his credulity, had procured, and consequently of ruining Haman in the king's good graces. For the known instability of court favours, and the little quarter that there is given to rivals or enemies, made it no hard matter, from Mordecai's advancement, to read Haman's destiny.

That Haman might have all the money that the Scripture mentions.

Haman, indeed, was outrageously bent against the Jews, and what he offered the king in lieu of the damage which his revenues might sustain by the destruction of so many of his subjects, is a prodigious sum for any private man to be owner of; but we read of several such persons in history, who, in

(a) Judith v. 20, 21. (b) Pool's Annotations, and Patrick's Commentary on Esther vi. 13.

those ancient times, were possessors of much greater. A. M. 3475, &c. Ant. Chris. 529, &c. from Ezra iv. 7. to the end; all Esth. Neh. and part of Hagg. Zech. and Mal. Thus the Lydian, for instance, (*c*) when Xerxes passed in-
to Greece, was possessed of two thousand talents of silver,
and four millions of daricks in gold, which, together, a-
mounted to near five millions and an half of our Sterling
money: And Marcus (*d*) Crassus, the Roman, after he
had consecrated the tenth of what he had to Hercules,
feasted all the people of Rome at ten thousand tables, and
given a donative of corn to every citizen, as much as would
last him three months, found the remainder of his estate
to be seven thousand one hundred Roman talents, which
amount to above a million and an half of our money. This
may seem a little strange to us at present; but our wonder
will cease, if we consider, that, from the time of David
and Solomon, and for fifteen hundred years afterwards,
the riches of this kind were in much greater plenty than
they are now. The prodigious quantities of gold and sil-
ver which Alexander found in the treasures of Darius; the
vast loads of them which were often carried before the Ro-
man generals, when they returned from conquered pro-
vinces; and the excessive sums which certain of their em-
perours expended in donatives, feasts, shows, and other in-
stances of luxury and prodigality, are of this proof suffi-
cient: (*e*) But at length the mines of the ancient Ophir,
which furnished all this plenty, being exhausted, and by
the burning of cities, and devastation of countries, which
followed upon the eruptions of the Goths, Vandals, and
Huns, and other barbarous nations in the West, and of the
Saracens, Turks, and Tartars, in the East, a great part of
the gold and silver, which the world then abounded with,
being wasted and destroyed by this means, the great scarcity
of both, which afterwards ensued, was occasioned; nor
have the mines of Mexico, Peru, and Brasil, been, as yet,
able fully to repair it.

The great sum which Haman would have given to gra- How the Jews came to slay so many.
tify his revenge against the Jewish nation, was an addi-
tional provocation to them, no doubt, to slay every one
who came to annoy them; but then, it must be consider-
ed, that, in this, they acted by virtue of an edict, which
authorized them to stand upon their own defence; that
they were not the first aggressors, but only opposed those

(*c*) Herodotus, lib. vii. (*d*) Plutarch, in Crasso. (*e*) Pri-
deaux's Connection, anno 543.

that

A. M.
3475, &c.
Ant. Chris.
529, &c.
from Ezra
iv. 7. to the
end; all
Esth. Neh.
and part of
Hagg. Zech.
and Mal.

that openly assaulted them, and were for putting an unjust decree in execution against them; and as the Amalekites, who might be dispersed throughout the Persian dominions, were the known and inveterate enemies of the Jews; and, following now the fortune of Haman, might be forward enough to execute the decree which he had procured against them, it is therefore reasonably presumed, that most of those whom the Jews, in their necessary defence, both in Shushan and in the provinces, did destroy, were of that devoted nation; and that, by this their slaughter, the prophecies against Amalek were accomplished.

And the
wonderful-
ness of their
escape,

However this be, we cannot take leave of this wonderful deliverance of the Jewish nation, without making this one reflection upon it, *viz.* (f) “ That though, in the whole, there was no extraordinary manifestation of God’s power, no particular cause or agent, that was, in its working, advanced above the ordinary pitch of nature; yet the contrivance, and suiting these ordinary agents appointed by God, is, in itself, more admirable, than if the same end had been effected by means that were truly miraculous. That a king should not sleep, is no unusual thing, nor that he should solace his waking thoughts by hearing the annals of his own kingdom, or the journals of his own reign, read to him, &c.; but that he should lie awake, at that time especially, when Haman was watching to destroy the Jews; and that, in the chronicles of the kingdom, they should light on that place where Mordecai’s unrewarded services were recorded; that the king thereupon should resolve forthwith to do him honour; that Haman should come in at the very nick of time, when he was so disposed, and should ignorantly determine what honour should be done him, and be appointed to that ungrateful office himself: This was from the *keeper of Israel*, who *neither slumbers nor sleeps*, and was truly *marvellous in his peoples eyes*. For though miracles in their nature, are more apt to strike the sense, yet such secret contrivances of God’s wisdom and providence do more affect the understanding: The one works astonishment, the other admiration.”

(f) Patrick’s Commentary on Esther vii. 10.

DISSERTATION II.

Of Ezra's Edition of the Holy Scriptures, and the Institution of Synagogue-worship.

EZRA, no doubt, in his knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, was a great man. The sacred history gives him this character, that (g) *he was a ready scribe in the law of Moses, which the Lord God of Israel had given.* The Jewish doctors look upon him as the second founder of it; and are generally of opinion, that he was the Prophet Malachi, (h) and had that title given him, because he was sent, as God's messenger to revive their religion, after it had been, in a manner, quite extinguished. Nay, (i) many ancient fathers of the Christian church attribute more to him, in this particular, than even the Jews themselves; for they suppose, that, in the Babylonish captivity, all the Scriptures were entirely lost and destroyed, but that Ezra, by divine revelation, renewed and recovered them again. This, however, is carrying the compliment too far, and leaving the authority of the Holy Scriptures to stand upon a very precarious bottom; since some may be apt to infer, That he who is said thus wonderfully to have restored them, might much more likely have forged the whole.

We readily acknowledge, indeed, that in the time of Josiah, (through the two preceding reigns of Manasseh and Ammon), copies of the law might be very scarce: But by the pious care of that good prince, we are informed, that this defect was soon remedied; that copies were taken of the original law that was then found in the temple; that search was made in the schools of the prophets, and in all other places where they could be found, for the other parts of Holy Writ, and transcripts formed out of these likewise; so that, in a short time, all that were desirous to know the law of their God, either by writing them out themselves, or procuring others to do it for them, were

A. M.
3475, &c.
Ant. Christ.
529, &c.
from Ezra
iv. 7. to the
end; all
Ezra's great
skill in the
Holy Scrip-
tures.

Ezra's great
skill in the
Holy Scrip-
tures.

That he did
not recover
them by di-
vine reve-
lation,

(g) Ezra vii. 6. (h) Vid. Chald. Paraph. in Malach.; and Buxtorf in Tiberiade, c. 3. (i) Vid. Irenæum adversus Hæres. lib. iii. c. 15.; Tertul. De habitu mulierum, c. 3.; Hieronym. contra Helvidium; August. De miraculis Sacræ Scrip. lib. ii.; and Chrysost. Hom. 8. in Ep. ad Hebræos.

furnished

A. M.
3475, etc.
Ant. Christ.
529, etc.
from Ezra
iv. 7. to the
end; all
Esth. Neh.
and part of
Hagg. Zech.
and Mal.

furnished with copies both of the law and the prophets. Within a few years indeed, the city and temple were destroyed, and with them was the authentic copy of the laws, which was repositied in the temple, burnt and consumed; but before this calamity befel the Jews, all the sacred writings then extant were got into private hands, and carried away with them into captivity.

That Daniel had a copy of the Holy Scriptures with him in Babylon, is certain, because (*k*) he not only quotes the law, but makes mention likewise (*l*) of the prophecies of the Prophet Jeremiah, which he could not have done, had he not had them by him. That, at the finishing of the temple, (which was in the sixth year of Darius, and above fifty years before Ezra came to Jerusalem), copies of the law were in common use, no one can doubt, who reads, how the priests and Levites were settled in their respective functions, (*m*) *according as it is written in the books of Moses*: and that when the people called for the Scripture, to have it read unto them, they did not request of Ezra to get it anew dictated to him, but that he (*n*) *would bring forth the book of the law of Moses, which the Lord had commanded Israel*; which plainly implies, that all the people well knew, that this book was then extant, and needed not such a miraculous expedient as that of a divine revelation for its recovery.

but only
published a
correct edi-
tion of
them.

But if Ezra did not restore the Scripture in this manner, the question is, what he did towards it? Now, to this it may be answered, that, upon his coming to Jerusalem, (*o*) he got together as many copies as he could meet with, either in private hands, or public repositories; that, by comparing these copies one with another, he found out the true reading, and so corrected all the mistakes that had crept into them, either through the negligence or ignorance of transcribers; that, having thus made the copies perfect, he collected from them all the books of which the Holy Scriptures did then consist, (for some books that appear later were admitted after this time), disposed them in their proper order, and so far settled the canon of Scripture, that, for the illustration, connection, and completion of these books,

(*k*) Dan. ix. 11, 13. (*l*) Ibid. ver. 2. (*m*) Ezra vi. 18.
(*n*) Neh. viii. 1. (*o*) Prideaux's Connection, anno 446.

(especially)

(especially such as were historical), he added some passages that were not in them before, and changed some names that were then grown obsolete, for such as were more modern, and better understood, which, as he was a prophet, he was authorised to do; that having thus made the books, in all their parts, perfect and intellegible, for the still greater ease and convenience of the vulgar, he caused the whole to be wrote out in the Chaldee character, which (after the Babylonish captivity) was in ganeral use among the people, so that the old Hebrew letters were, from that time, laid aside among the Jews, and only retained by the Samaritans; and lastly, that to ascertain the reading of this introduced character, he added the vowel-points that are now found in our Hebrew Bibles: But whether this was of his doing, or the work of some later hand, is a matter of much debate among the learned.

A. M.
3475, etc.
Ant. Christ.
529, etc.
from Ezra
iv. 7. to the
end; all
Esth. Neh.
and part of
Hagg. Zech.
and Mal.

Those who maintain that Ezra (whom all held to be a prophet) was the author of these points, and that they, consequently, are of the same authority with the text itself, argue in this manner, — That when the Hebrew language ceased to be the mother-tongue of the Jews, (as all agree it did after the Babylonish captivity), it thence became in a manner impossible to teach it, without the assistance of the vowel-points; and therefore, at least, they must have begun in the time of Ezra, and continued in use ever after: That two ancient books, called *Bahir* and *Zohar*, which are said to have been written the one a little before, and the other a little after the time of our Saviour, make express mention of these points in more places than one: That whereas it is said, on the other side, that the Masorites of Tiberias (above five hundred years after Christ) were the inventors of these points; this appears unlikely, because the schools which the Jews once had in Judea were at this time all suppressed; nor was there any number of learned men left in the nation, of sufficient ability for such a work: And, lastly, that if it be allowed that the present points are not of the same authority with the letters themselves, but only of a late and human invention, this will weaken the authority of the Scriptures, and leave the sacred text to an arbitrary and uncertain reading and interpretation.

Whether he
added the
vowel-
points? Ar-
guments on
both sides.

Those who maintain the contrary opinion, viz. that those vowel-points are of a later date than Ezra, fortify themselves with such arguments as these, — That the sa-

A. M.
3475, etc.
Ant. Christ.
526, &c.
from Ezra
ix. 7. to the
end, all
Ezth. Neh.
and part of
Ezra, Zech.
Mal.

cred books, which the Jews make use of in their synagogue-service, neither have, nor ever had, any of these points in them, which can only be imputed to this, — That when the Holy Scriptures began first to be publicly read in the synagogues, (which was presently after this edition which Ezra made of them), there were no such vowel-points then in being: That if we compare the translation of the Septuagint, the Chaldee paraphrases, or the Latin version of St. Jerom, with the present pointed Hebrew Bibles, we shall in several places find, that they read the text otherwise than according to the present punctuation; which is an argument that these points were either not in being, or not in any great authority in those times: And lastly, that if we consult Philo Judæus, or Josephus, who are two of the oldest authors of the Jews, or any of the ancient Christian writers, for several ages after Christ, we shall not find one word mentioned of these points, though they could not but have sundry occasions to take notice of them, if either they had been in use, or of such great credit and authority with the Jews, as is pretended. And therefore (to answer the arguments on the other side) they alledge, that the books of Bahir and Zohar are not near so ancient as they are reputed; that for above a thousand years after their pretended compofure, the Jews themselves knew nothing of them, nor were they once mentioned by any author whatever during that interval; and therefore there is reason to think, that a false date of antiquity was fraudulently put to them, to give them some sanction, and to recommend them to the world with a better credit.

That the Masorites of Tiberias were certainly in being a long time in Judea, and in their way of learning were not a little eminent; for St. Jerom himself informs us, that he made use of them: That though there may be some difficulty in reading without points; yet since we find that the Samaritans, who understand Hebrew no better than the Jews, have no points to this day, yet can read the Hebrew text, in the Samaritan character, we need not doubt but that custom, good sense, and the coherence of the discourse, will supply rules for the remedying of these inconveniencies. And lastly, since there is no language in the world wherein there are not several equivocal expressions, which may occasion an ambiguity in the sense; though points in this case may be of some use, yet they cannot totally secure us from error, because faults in transcribing or printing, and variations in pointing, are unavoidable.

To

To accommodate the matter then, as well as we can, between these contending parties; though these vowel-points were never anciently esteemed any part of the sacred Scripture of the Old Testament, but only additions of human invention, for the more easy reading of the text, because they were never received by the Jews (to whom were committed the oracles of God) into the books which were read in their synagogues; yet we have good reason to conclude, that upon the Hebrew's ceasing to be a vulgar language, (as it certainly did in the time of Ezra), they must of necessity have been introduced.

A. M. 3475, etc.
A. M. Christ. 529, etc.
from Ezra iv. 7 to the end; all Eth. Neh. and part of Hagg. Zech. and Mal.
The decision of the controversy.

When every child learned the Hebrew tongue from his cradle, it was no hard matter for those who thus understood it by rote, to learn to read it by the letters only, without the vowels; but when it became a dead language, the case was altered: (*p*) For then, instead of understanding it first, in order to read it, they were first to read it, in order to understand it; and therefore having not the previous knowledge of the language to direct them herein, they must necessarily have had some other helps in order to know with what vowel each syllable was to be pronounced; and to give them this help, the vowel-points seem certainly to have been invented; and therefore the time of this invention cannot be placed later than the time when they became necessary i. e. when the Hebrew became a dead language, and so was acquirable no other way than by study and instruction.

From this necessity of instruction, and probably not long after Ezra's edition of the Holy Scripture, there sprung up a set of men among the Jews, whose profession it was to write out copies of the Hebrew text, and to preserve and teach the true reading of it. What they did of this kind, is called by the Jews *the Masorah*, i. e. *the tradition*; because they pretend to have the true reading (as the Talmudists pretend to have the true interpretation) of the Scriptures handed down to them from generation to generation. However, as their whole business was to study the true reading of the Hebrew text, to preserve it from being corrupted, and to teach it to others, it is highly probable that they were the first inventors of vowel-points, because the whole use of those points was to be subservient to this purpose.

(*p*) Prideaux's Connection, anno 446.

A. M.
3475, &c.
Ant. Christ.
529, &c.
from Ezra
iv. 7. to the
end; all
Eth. Heb.
and part of
Hagg. Zech.
and Mal.

But though these points might be invented by the Hebrew grammarians, whom we call *Maforites*, much earlier than some will allow; yet, from their late appearance in the world, it seems very probable, that as at first they might invent them only for their private use, so, for some time, they might reserve them to themselves, and teach them only to their scholars. For the Jews, we must know, had anciently two sorts of schools, those of the *Maforites*, and those of the Rabbins: The former taught only the Hebrew language, and to read the Scriptures in it; but the other taught their pupils to understand the word of God, and all the interpretations of it. These were the great doctors of divinity among them, to whom the *Maforites* were as much inferior, as the teachers of grammar-schools among us are to the professors of divinity in our universities.

As long therefore as these vowel-points went no higher than the schools of the *Maforites*, they were not much regarded among their learned men; and this is the reason why we find no mention made of them either in the Talmud, or in the writings of some ancient fathers, from whom it might have been expected. But after the publication of the Talmud, the Jewish doctors thought it advisable, in order to preserve the right reading of the text (as the Mishna and Demara were supposed to preserve its right interpretation) to take this punctuation of the *Maforites* into their divinity-schools, and having reviewed and corrected it with great care, they added it to the text, and so gave it all the venerable aspect that it now bears.

But though these vowel-points were added to the text by such persons as understood the language perfectly, and having since undergone the review and correction of many ages, may be justly accounted a work, as complete in its kind, as can be done by human art; yet since it was only done by human art, it is no authentic part of the Scriptures: And therefore these points are not so unalterably fixed to the text, but that a change may be made in them, when the nature of the context, the analogy of grammar, or the style of the language, shall give a sufficient reason for it; especially considering, that notwithstanding their exact fixation at first, they are still liable to the mistakes of transcribers and printers, and by reason of their number, the smallness of their figures, and their position under the letters, are more liable to suffer by them than any other sort of writing whatever.

So that, upon the whole, it appears, that though these vowel-points were not affixed to the Hebrew text by Ezra himself; yet were they of early date after his edition of the Holy Scriptures: that, though they did not immediately appear in the world, nor are taken notice of by any writer of repute for many ages after; yet this was occasioned by their being confined to the schools of the Masorites, who in all probability were the first inventors of them: And tho', being of human invention only, they cannot be supposed of equal authority with the text itself; yet are they of excellent use for the preservation of its right reading, and for the prevention of innumerable perplexities and ambiguities, that would otherwise be incident to it.

A. M. 3475, etc.
Ant. Christ. 529, etc.
from Ezra iv. 7. to the end; all Esth. Neh. and part of Hagg. Zech. and Mal.
The result of the whole.

The learned are not a little divided concerning the rise and antiquity of the Jewish synagogues: For some contend, that they were in use under the tabernacle and first temple, whilst others assert, that they had no being until the times of the captivity. The former, in behalf of their opinion, urge, (q) that, as in the wilderness, the court of the tabernacle could not contain the hundredth part of the worshippers of the God of Israel, and, as in the promised land, the temple was too far distant for devout persons of every tribe to resort to it every Sabbath-day; there was a necessity for other places to be appointed for the service of God, that the sense of religion might not be extinguished and lost. To this purpose they observe, that the Levites were dispersed in several cities, and the prophets and sons of the prophets settled in their respective colleges, that they might be ready at hand, upon all occasions, to expound the law, and instruct the people in their duty, whenever they met together for that purpose. And therefore we find the Shunamite's husband thus expostulating with his wife; (r) *wherefore wilt thou go to the man of God to-day, seeing it is neither new-moon, nor the Sabbath*; which plainly implies, that at such stated seasons as these the custom was to resort to such teachers for instruction: And, if this was the custom, there is no question to be made, but that proper places were appointed for their reception. It is an unworthy imputation therefore to think, that so many temples should be built for idol-worship, and yet none should have zeal or piety enough to erect a synagogue for the God of heaven, or that the Pharisees should set up these useful inventions, and yet the elders and prophets, and holy men under the Old Testament, should want them.

The origin of synagogues.

(q) Mede's works, lib. iv. p. 1049. (r) 2 Kings iv. 23.

These

A. M. 3475, &c. Ant. Christ. 529, &c. from Ezra iv. 7. to the end; all Esth. Neh. and part of Hagg. Zech. and Mal.

These are the principal arguments on that side; but the silence of Scripture seems to be a strong confutation of them: For had these places of religious worship been in use among the Jews in the time we are now speaking of, we cannot conceive why there should not as frequent a mention have been made of them in the Old Testament, as there is in the New. The common therefore, and indeed the most probable opinion, is, (s) that there were no such things as synagogues built before the captivity of Babylon and the destruction of the temple; that the Jews seeing themselves carried away into a strange country, where they had no temple for divine service, came to a resolution of building such houses as were afterwards called *synagogues*, there to be instructed in the law, and to worship the God of their fathers, in the best manner they could, on every Sabbath-day; and that, upon their return, finding the great conveniency of such like buildings, they erected the same in their own country, as they had done before in the land of their captivity, and herein were followed by the Jews of the dispersion, in all parts of the world wherein they lived.

After Ezra had set forth a correct edition of the law, the prophets, and other sacred writings, that were extant in his time, his next care was to appoint proper persons, viz. the most learned of the Levites, and other scribes, that were well skilled in these writings, to read and expound them to his people. (t) This, no doubt, they did at first in the same manner that himself had done, i. e. by gathering the people together in some wide street, or open place of the city, that was of the fittest capacity to receive them. But, in the wet and winter seasons of the year, the inconvenience of this came to be felt; so that, in process of time they erected houses and tabernacles, wherein to meet for this purpose: And this was the true cause and original † of such edifices in Judea.

Synagogues

(s) Jurieu Histoire des dogmes, part i. c. 17. (t) Prideaux's Connection.

† Mr. Bafnage, in his history of the Jews, is of opinion, that the origin of synagogues was not until the reign of the Asmonæans, some few ages before Christ, and he imputes it to this occasion: — The zealots traditionists, who made long commentaries upon the law, thought it a crime to keep the people (whose applause they mightily desired) in ignorance of them; and instead of con-

fining

Synagogues were public edifices, situate either within or without their city, and generally in an elevated place. (u) They were usually raised above any private house, (except when there was an interdiction from the civil power), because the Jews have a notion, that it is a dishonour to God to have his house inferiour, nay, so much as equal, to those of men, and in whatever city this happens, they threaten it with a speedy destruction. They are always roofed, and covered over, and by this are distinguished from the *proseuchæ*, which were commonly in the fields, and open to the Heavens. In the midst of them there is a desk, or pulpit, made very probably in imitation of that which (as (x) we read) Ezra made use of, from whence the book or roll of the law is read very solemnly, and from whence both he that expounds it, or he that preaches to the congregation at any time, always delivers himself. At the upper end of the synagogue, and over against the door, which ever stands to the west, there is a chest, or press, wherein the book of the law is kept, wrapt in a fine embroidered cloth, and (what is uncommon in our churches) during the time of divine service the women are separated from the men, and seated in a gallery inclosed with lattices.

A. M. 3475, etc. Ant. Chris. 529, etc. from Ezra iv. 7. to the end; all Esth. Neh. and part of Hagg. Zech. and Mal.
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 A description of them.

Every town, wherein there were ten *Batelnim*, i. e. ten persons of full age and free condition, always at leisure

Where they were built,

fining their explications to Jerusalem, where they found themselves too much slighted and confined, they carried them into every city, where there were oratories, and public places of assembly. Before this, private persons made their prayers to God in their houses, where they had a place set a-part for that holy exercise. It was generally upon the top of the house (for their houses were flat-roofed) that the family and their friends met together, to read some portion of the law on the Sabbath-day; and, when there was any prophet in the city, the devout people assembled at his house. But after that the doctors had added their traditions and commentaries to the law, the business of interpreters became so much the more necessary, because those traditions were not written; so that the number of interpreters and interpretations increased daily. For this reason convenient places were made choice of, that the people might the better meet together to be instructed; and from hence, in all probability, it is that they derive their synagogues; lib. v. c. 4.

(u) Bainsage's History of the Jews. (x) Neh. viii. 4.



A. M.  
3475, etc.  
Ant. Cbrist.  
529, etc.  
from Ezra  
iv. 7. to the  
end; all  
Ezth. Neh.  
and part of  
Hagg. Zech.  
and Mal.

on week-days, as well as Sabbaths, to attend on divine service, was thought large enough to have a synagogue built in it : otherwise it was not ; because the Jewish notion is, that less than such a number could not make a congregation, and, without a congregation, no part of the synagogue-service could be performed. But as their notion was farther, that any person, Gentile as well as Jew, might be permitted to erect a synagogue, because the holiness of the place (as they thought) consisted not so much in the fabric, as in its being set a-part, and dedicated to holy uses ; it thence came to pass, that though there were but few at first, yet in process of time they became so numerous, that, in our Saviour's time, there was no town in Judea, but what had one or more in it ; that, in Tiberias, a city of Galilee, there were no less than twelve, and (if we may credit the Jews) four hundred and eighty in Jerusalem. The buildings were contrived much after the same manner as our parish churches ; had over their door or entrance this inscription written, " This is the gate of the Lord, the righteous shall enter into it ; " and upon the walls within, were these, or such like sentences, " Remember thy Creator : Keep thy foot when thou goest into the house of the Lord : Silence is commendable in the time of prayer : And, Prayers, without attention, are like a body without a soul," &c.

The service  
performed  
in them.

(y) 1. In the synagogue-service the first office was prayer. Their prayers at first were but very few, but have since increased to a very large bulk, which makes the synagogue-service very long and tedious. What they reckon the most solemn part of their prayers are those which they call *Shemoneh Esbreth*, i. e. the † *eighteen prayers*, which, according

(y) Prideaux's Connections.

† These prayers were originally no more than eighteen, but R. Gamaliel, a little before the destruction of Jerusalem, added the nineteenth (which is the twelfth in the subsequent order) against Christians, who are therein meant by the names of *apostates* and *heretics* ; and that we may judge of the merit of these prayers, a very learned hand has given us the following translation of them, in the same order as they are in the Jewish liturgies.

I. " Blessed be thou, O Lord, our God, the God of our fathers,  
" the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob,  
" the great God, powerful and tremendous ; the high God, bound-  
" tifully dispensing benefits ; the Creator and Possessor of the uni-  
" verse,

ing to them, were composed, and instituted by Ezra, and the great synagogue; and therefore they enjoin all that are

A. M.  
3475, etc.  
Anc. Chris.  
at 529, etc.  
from Ezra  
iv. 7 to the  
end; ail  
Eth. Neh.  
and part of  
Hagg. Zech.  
and Mal.

"verse, who rememberest the good deeds of our fathers, and in thy  
"love sendest a redeemer to those who are descended from them,  
"for thy name's sake, O King, our helper, our Saviour, and our  
"shield. Blessed art thou, our Lord, who art the shield of Abraham."

II. "Thou, O Lord, art powerful for ever. Thou raisest the dead  
"to life, and art mighty to save. Thou sendest down the dew,  
"stillest the winds, and makest the rain to come down upon the  
"earth, and sustaineest with thy beneficence all that live therein;  
"and of thy abundant mercy, makest the dead again to live. Thou  
"helpest up those that fall; thou curest the sick; thou loosest them  
"that are bound, and makest good thy word of truth to those that  
"sleep in the dust. Who is to be compared to thee, O thou Lord  
"of might? And who is like unto thee. O our King, who killest,  
"and makest alive, and makest salvation to spring up as the herb  
"out of the field? Thou art faithful, to make the dead rise again  
"to life. Blessed art thou, O God, who raisest the dead to life."

III. "Thou art holy, and thy name is Holy, and thy saints do  
"praise thee every day. Selah. For a great King, and an holy  
"one art thou, O God. Blessed art thou, O Lord, God most holy."

IV. "Thou, of thy mercy, givest knowledge to men, and teach-  
"est them understanding; give graciously unto us knowledge, wis-  
"dom, and understanding. Blessed art thou, O Lord, who graciously  
"givest knowledge unto men."

V. "Bring us back, O our Father, to the observance of thy law,  
"and make us to adhere to thy precepts; and do thou, O our King,  
"draw us near to thy worship, and convert us unto thee by perfect  
"repentance in thy presence. Blessed art thou, O Lord, who  
"vouchsafest to receive us by repentance."

VI. "Be thou merciful to us, O our Father, for we have sinned:  
"pardon us, O our King, for we have transgressed against thee,  
"for thou art a God, good and ready to pardon. Blessed art thou,  
"O Lord most gracious, who multipliest thy mercies in the forgive-  
"ness of sins."

VII. "Look, we beseech thee, upon our afflictions: Be thou on  
"our side, in all our contentions; and plead thou our cause in all  
"our litigations; and make haste to redeem us with a perfect re-  
"demption, for thy name's sake: For thou art our God, our king,  
"and a strong Redeemer. Blessed art thou, O Lord, the Redeemer  
"of Israel."

VIII. "Heal us, O Lord our God, and we shall be healed; save  
"us, and we shall be saved; for thou art our praise. Bring unto

A. M.  
3475, etc.  
Ant. Chriſt.  
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from Ezra  
iv. 7. to the  
end; all  
Eſth. Neh.  
and part of  
Hagg. Zech.  
and Mal.

at age, of what ſex or condition ſoever, either in private or public, to repeat them three times a day, and on every ſynagogue-day, they offer them up, with the greateſt ſolemnity, in their public aſſemblies. Theſe prayers however are but of the ſame nature that the Lord's prayer is in our public ſervice, *i. e.* the fundamental and principal part; for beſides theſe, they have ſome prayers going before, ſome following after, and others interſperſed between them, which make the liturgies very tedious, and juſtify our Saviour's finding fault with their long prayers.

2. In the ſynagogue-ſervice there are three things that are read, the *Shema*, the Law, and the Prophets. The *Shema* conſiſts of three portions of Scripture; the firſt is, from the beginning of the 4th verſe of the ſixth chapter of Deuteronomy, to the end of the 9th verſe: The ſecond, from the beginning of the 13th verſe of the 11th chapter of Deuteronomy, to the end of the 21ſt verſe: And the third, from the beginning of the 37th verſe of the 15th chapter of Numbers, to the end of the chapter: And becauſe the firſt of theſe portions, in the Hebrew Bible, begins with the word *Shema*, *i. e.* *Hear*, therefore the reading of the whole is called *the reading of the Shema*, which, next to their ſaying of the *Shemoneh Eſbreth*, or the famous *eighteen prayers*, is reckoned the moſt ſolemn part of their religious ſervice.

“ us found health, and a perfect remedy for all our infirmities, for  
“ all our griefs, and for all our wounds; for thou art a God, who  
“ healeſt, and art merciful. Bleſſed art thou, O Lord, our God,  
“ who cureſt the diſeaſes of thy people Iſrael.”

IX. “ Bleſs us, O Lord, our God, in every work of our hands,  
“ and bleſs unto us the ſeaſons of the year, and give us the dew  
“ and the rain to be a bleſſing unto us upon the face of all our  
“ land, and ſatiate the world with thy bleſſings, and ſend down  
“ moiſture upon every part of the earth that is habitable. Bleſſed  
“ art thou, O Lord, who givest thy bleſſing to the years.”

X. “ Convocate us together by the ſound of the great trumpet,  
“ to the enjoyment of our liberty; and liſt up thy enſigns to call to-  
“ gether all of the captivity, from the four quarters of the earth,  
“ to our own land. Bleſſed art thou, O Lord, who gatherest to-  
“ gether the exiles of the people of Iſrael.”

But this is enough for a ſpecimen. The reſt are much of the ſame ſtrain; but the reader that is deſirous to ſee them, will find them in Dr. Prideaux's *Connection of the Old and New Teſtament*, part 1. lib. 6.

The

The five books of the law were divided, as some say, by Moses himself, but not improbably by Ezra, into fifty-four sections, because in their intercalated years, (when a month was added to the year), there were fifty-four Sabbaths, and so a section, being read every Sabbath day, completed the whole in the space of a year; but when the year was not thus intercalated, those who had the direction of the synagogue-worship, reduced the sections to the number of Sabbaths, by joining two short ones several times into one, because they held themselves obliged to have the whole law, from the beginning of Genesis to the end of Deuteronomy, read over, in this manner, every year.

A. M.  
3475, etc.  
Ant. Chron.  
529, etc.  
from Ezra  
iv. 7. to the  
end; all  
Eith. Neh.  
and part of  
Hagg. Zech.  
and Mal.

In the persecution of Antiochus Epiphanes, when the reading of the law was prohibited, in the room of the fifty-four sections of it, the Jews substituted fifty-four sections of the prophets, which were ever after continued; inso-much that when the reading of the law was again restored by the Maccabees, the section which was read every Sabbath out of the law, served for the first lesson, and the section out of the prophets for the second; for that is the meaning of (2) St. Paul's *standing up to preach, after the reading of the law and the prophets*; i. e. after the reading of the first lesson out of the law and the second lesson out of the prophets.

3. The exposition of the law, and the prophets went along with the reading them: For after that the Hebrew language had ceased to be the mother-tongue of the Jews, and the Chaldee grew up into use instead of it, the custom of the synagogue was, that one should first read a paragraph of the Scriptures to the people in the Hebrew tongue, and then another interpreted it in the Chaldee, which they better understood. And this seems to suggest the reason why these sections of Scripture came to be divided into verses, viz. that by this means the reader might certainly know how much he was to read; and the interpreter how much he was to interpret at every interval.

4. After that the reading and expounding were over, any person of learning, and knowledge in the Scriptures, might address himself to the people, upon what moral or divine subject he thought proper; only we may observe, that this was a compliment usually paid to strangers; and therefore when St. Paul and his company came to Antioch in Pisidia, and went into the place of divine worship on the Sabbath-day, (a) *after the reading of the law and the*

(2) Acts xiii. 16.

(a) Ibid. 15.

A. M. prophets, the rulers of the synagogue sent unto them, saying, Ye men and brethren, if ye have any word of exhortation for the people, say on.

3475, etc.  
Ant. Chris.  
529, etc.  
from Ezra  
iv. 7. to the  
end; all  
Esth. Neh.  
and part of  
Hagg. Zech.  
and Mal.

The offi-  
cers belong-  
ing to them.

From what has been said it appears, that the ministration of the synagogue-service was not confined to the sacerdotal order; for the priests were consecrated only to the service of the temple, which was widely different from this, as consisting chiefly in the offering up of sacrifices and oblations; but to this in the synagogue, any one that by learning was qualified for it, was admitted. Only for the preservation of order, there were in every synagogue some fixed officers, whose business it was to take care that all religious duties were therein decently performed.

The first of this kind, are those whom the Scriptures of the New Testament call *ἄρχισυνάγωγοι* rulers of the synagogue: But how many of these belonged to each synagogue we cannot tell, only we may presume, there were more than one, because they are mentioned in the (b) plural number, in respect of the same synagogue. Next to them (and perhaps one of them) was the minister of the synagogue, whose business it was to offer up to God the public prayers of the congregation) and being for this purpose delegated (as it were) by them to God, is therefore, in the Hebrew language, called *Sheliach Zibber*, i. e. the angel of the church, or congregation; from whence the name of the Bishops of the seven churches, mentioned in the Revelations, is manifestly borrowed. Next to this angel of the church, were the deacons, and inferior ministers of the synagogue, called in Hebrew *Chazanim* or *overseers*, who, under the rulers of the synagogue, had the charge and oversight of all things in it, and kept the book of the Holy Scriptures, the liturgies, and utensils, which they brought forth, and carried away again, as there was occasion: And next to these overseers, was the interpreter, whose office it was to recite in Chaldee the lessons (as they were read in Hebrew) to the congregation; and because a good deal of skill in both languages was requisite for such an undertaking, whenever the rulers of the synagogue found a person fit for this purpose, they retained him by a salary, and so made him a standing minister among them.

Times of  
worship.

We have nothing more to add concerning this synagogue worship, but that the times appointed for it, were three days a week, besides their holidays, whether fasts or festivals, and thrice on every one of those days, i. e. in

(b) Mark v. 35. &c.; Luke viii. 41.—xiii. 14.

the morning, in the afternoon, and at night : and that, when at any of these times, the blessing was to be given, if there was a priest present in the congregation, he always did the office : but if there was none there, the Sheliach Zibber, who read the prayers, in a form of benediction made proper for him, dismissed the people.

Before we dismiss this subject, there is one common inquiry which, by this time, we may be able to satisfy, and that is——How it came to pass, that the Jews were so prone to idolatry before the Babylonish captivity, and so strongly bent against it (even to a degree of superstition) after that captivity was ended? which can hardly be imputed to any other cause, but that they had the law and the prophets every week read unto them, after that captivity, which they had not before. Before the captivity, they had no synagogues for public worship or instruction, nor any places to resort to for these purposes, but either the temple at Jerusalem, or the cities of the Levites; and from hence great ignorance grew among the people : God was little known among them, and his laws in a manner wholly forgotten : and therefore, as occasions offered, they were easily drawn into all the superstitious and idolatrous practices of the Heathen nations that lived about them. But now, when, after the Babylonish captivity, synagogues were erected in every city, to which they constantly resorted for public worship, and where, every week, they had the law at first, and, afterwards, both the law and the prophets read to them ; and where, by sermons and exhortations, they were, at least every Sabbath-day, instructed in their duty, and excited to the performance of it; this kept them in a thorough knowledge of God and his laws, as the commendations in the prophets, (when once they came to be read among them), deterred them from transgressing against them; for (c) *all Scripture* (as the Apostle speaks) *is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God, or every man who resolves to be godly, may be perfect, wise unto salvation, and thoroughly furnished unto all good works.*

One thing we may observe further :——That, since there was a public liturgy established in the Jewish church, and forms of prayer, though very empty and jejune in comparison of those that are in use among us ; our blessed Saviour, when upon earth, was contented to join with the

A. M.  
3475, etc.  
Ant. Chris.  
529, etc.  
from Ezra  
iv. 7. to the  
end; all  
Esth. Neh.  
and part of  
Hagg. Zech.  
and Mal.

Why the  
Jews were  
so prone be-  
fore, and so  
averse to  
idolatry af-  
ter, the cap-  
tivity.

Our Sa-  
viour's ex-  
ample a-  
gainst sepa-  
ration.

A. M.  
3475, etc.  
Ant. Christ.  
529, etc.  
from Ezra  
iv. 7. to the  
end; all  
Esth. Neh.  
and part of  
Hagg. Zech.  
and Mal.

public in these forms, and to frequent the Synagogue (d) every Sabbath-day. And this may inform us, that to break the union of a church, upon the account of better edification, or more ecstatic prayers, is a refinement, that the great teacher of all righteousness knew nothing of. In the course of his preaching, he spared not to tell the Jews freely of all the corruptions that, in his time, they had run in to; and therefore, had it been contrary to the will of God, to use set forms of prayer in his public service, or had it been displeasing to him, to be addressed in such mean forms, when much better might have been made, we may be sure he would have told them both, and joined with them in neither: but, since he never found fault with them for using set forms, but, on the contrary, taught his own disciples a set form to pray by; since he no where expressed a dislike of the forms then in use, upon account of their meanness, but, on the contrary, testified his approbation of them, by joining with them in their synagogues; this should convince our separatists, one would think, that neither our using set forms of prayer in our public worship, nor the using of such as they think not sufficiently edifying, can be objections sufficient to justify them in their refusal to join with us in them, because, in both these cases, they have the example of Christ directly against them.

The truth is, whether there be a form or no form, or whether the form be elegantly or meanly composed; nothing of this availeth to the recommending of our prayers unto God. It is the true and sincere devotion of the heart alone that can make them acceptable unto him: for it is this only that gives life and vigour, and a true acceptance, to all our religious addresses. Without this, how elegantly, how movingly soever the prayer may be composed, and how fervently, how zealously soever it may seem to be poured out, yet all this is dead matter, and of no validity in the presence of our God. But, on the contrary, the very Heathens can tell us, that, be our prayers and oblations never so mean, they will be a *sacrifice of a sweet smelling savour* unto him, if we bring but along with us to his worship,

*Compositum jus fasque animo. sanctosque recessus  
Mentis, et incoctum generoso pectus honesto :  
Hæc cedo, ut admoveam templis, et farre litabo.*

Perf. sat. 2

(d) Luke iv. 16.

T H E



*Engraved for W. Stackhouse's History of the Bible.*  
*Daniel cast into the Lion's Den. Dan. Ch. VI. v. 16.*





# T H E H I S T O R Y O F T H E B I B L E.

## B O O K VII.

### C H A P. III.

*From the Death of Nehemiah, to the Death of Antiochus Epiphanes.*

#### The H I S T O R Y.

**M**ANASSEH, as Josephus calls him, (for we have now left the sacred history, and have nothing but the books of the Maccabees, Philo Judæus, and Josephus, with some fragments of the Greek and Latin writers, to depend on), being expelled from Jerusalem, with several others who would not submit to Nehemiah's order for their parting with their idolatrous wives, went to Samaria, (as we said before), and there put himself under the protection of Sanballat, his father-in-law; who applying to Darius Nothus (the then king of Persia), did so far insinuate himself into his favour, as to obtain a grant for the building of a temple on Mount Gerizzim, near Samaria, and for making Manasseh, his son-in-law, the high-priest of it.

The Samaritans † were originally the Cutheans, and such other of the eastern nations, as Esarhaddon, after

† If we will believe their chronicle, (which they tell us is of great antiquity, though others, who have examined it, will not allow it to be as old as Constantine's days), they give us an account of their origin quite different from what we gather from sacred writ.

They

A. M.  
3596, etc.  
Ant. Chris.  
408, etc.  
from 1  
Macc. i. to  
vi. 7. 2  
Macc. iii. to  
x. and from  
Jof. Hist.  
lib. xi. c. 7.  
to lib. xii.  
c. 14.  
The building  
ing of the  
temple on  
mount Ger-  
izzim, and  
the enmity  
between the  
Jews and  
Samaritans.

A. M.  
3596, etc.  
Ant. Christ.  
408, etc.  
from 1  
Macc. i. to  
vi. 7; 2  
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c. 14.

the deportation of the Israelites, planted there; but after this temple was built, and Samaria became a common refuge for all refractory Jews, this mixture of inhabitants in a short time produced a change in religion. For whereas they had hitherto worshipped the God of Israel, in conjunction with the gods of the east. from whence they came, when once the Jewish worship came to be settled among them, and the book of the law of Moses to be read publicly, they conformed themselves wholly to the

They pretended to be descended from Joseph by Ephraim, in a direct line; and that when Joshua entered into the promised land, he caused a temple to be built upon mount Gerizzim, and appointed one Buz, of the seed of Aaron, to officiate as high-priest, from whom they have an exact genealogy, and uninterrupted succession ever since. They neither own Jeroboam's schism, nor the transmigration of the ten tribes, but give this account of their leaving their country, and their returning to it again: — That when the kings of Jerusalem and Syria had revolted against Bactnezzar, (so they call Nebuchadnezzar), he came with an army, and took Jerusalem, and thence marching to the Shechemites, (for that's the name they give themselves), ordered them to leave their country in seven days, upon pain of military execution, which they readily did: That when he sent Persians to inhabit the cities which they had left, they could not live there, because the fruits which seemed fair to the eye, were tainted with poison, and so destroyed them: That upon complaints of this, the king consulted some of the ancient inhabitants of these provinces, who informed him, that the only remedy was, to send the Hebrews back again into their own country, which when he consented to, a place was appointed for their general rendezvous: That when they came to this place, a dispute arose between them, whether they should go and rebuild the temple of Jerusalem, or that of Gerizzim, and when Zerubbabel was for the former, and Sanballat for the latter, each pleading the sanction of the Pentateuch, and each pretending that the copy of his opponent was corrupt, they resolved to end the controversy by a fiery trial: That Zerubbabel's copy being thrown into the fire, was immediately consumed, but then Sanballat's endured the flames three times together, and received no manner of harm; whereupon the king honoured the Shechemites with rich presents, and sent Sanballat at the head of the ten tribes, to take possession of mount Gerizzim. But who sees not that this whole history (full of falsities and absurdities as it is) was only invented to wipe off the shame and disgrace of the Samaritans, for being the offspring of proselytes, and a medley of foreign nations? *Basnage's History of the Jews, lib. ii. c. 1.; and Universal History lib. ii. c. 1.*

worship

worship of the true God, and in their performance of this, were as exact as the Jews themselves. The Jews however, looking on them as apostates, hated them to such a degree, as to avoid all manner of converse and communication with them. This hatred first began from the malice which the Samaritans expressed against them, both in the rebuilding of their temple, and in repairing the walls of their city. It was afterwards much encreased by the apostasy of Manasseh, and his setting up an altar and temple, in opposition to those at Jerusalem; and it was all along kept up, on account of some particular tenets wherein the two nations were known to disagree. For the Samaritans received no other Scriptures than the five books of Moses; they rejected all traditions, and adhered only to the written word itself; and they maintained, that mount Gerizzim †, whereon their temple was built, was the

A. M.  
3596, etc.  
Ant. Christ.  
408, etc.  
from 1  
Macc. i. to  
vi. vii.; 2  
Macc. iii. to  
x. and from  
Jof. Hist.  
lib. xi. c. 7.  
to lib. xii.  
c. 14.

† Josephus, in his Jewish Antiquities, (lib. xiii. c. 6.) relates a dispute which arose in Egypt, in the reign of Ptolemy Philopater, between the Jews and Samaritans, concerning their temples. The Samaritans maintained, that their temple upon mount Gerizzim was the only true temple of the Lord; and the Jews, on the contrary, affirmed that theirs at Jerusalem was the only true one. The dispute was brought before the king; advocates on both sides were named; and it was agreed, that they who did not make their allegations good, should be condemned to death. Both parties promised that they would produce all their testimonies from the law only. Andronicus, advocate for the Jews, spoke first, and proved so very evidently from the Scriptures, the antiquity of the temple of Jerusalem, the succession of the high-priests, and the value which the Asiatic princes always had for that holy place, while, at the same time, they never so much as thought of the temple at Gerizzim, that the king and his assessors declared he had carried his cause, and ordered Sabbæus and Theodosius, the advocates for the Samaritans, to be put to death. Whether there be any reality in this account of Josephus or no, it is certain that the Samaritans, in behalf of mount Gerizzim, have to plead, — That there Abraham (Gen. xii. 6. 7. and xiii. 4.), and there Jacob, (Gen. xxxiii. 20.), built altars unto God, and by their offering up sacrifices thereon, consecrated the place above all others to his worship; that, for this reason, God himself appointed it (Deut. xxvii. 12.) to be the hill of blessing, and that accordingly Joshua, on his entrance upon the land of Canaan, caused the blessings of God, to such as would observe his laws, from hence to be pronounced; and lastly, that when he passed the Jordan, he built here an altar of the twelve stones, which

A. M. 3596, etc. Ant. Christ. 408, etc. from 1 Macc. i. to vi. 7.; 2 Macc. iii. to x. and from Jos. Hist. lib. xi. c. 7. to lib. xii. c. 14.

the only proper place for the worship of God; and from this variety of causes did ensue all the hatred and virulence, which, in the course of this history, we shall have but too frequent occasion to take notice of.

After the death of Nehemiah, who was the last governor that the kings of Persia sent to Jerusalem, Judea being added to the prefecture of Syria, was from thence forward subjected to the rulers of that province; and under them the administration of all public affairs, both civil and ecclesiastical, was committed to the high-priest, which made that office much more covetous than it used to be, and many times tempted those who had no right to it, to invade it.

Upon the death of Darius Nothus, Artaxerxes, who, for his extraordinary memory, is by the Greeks called *Μνήμων*, or *the remembrancer*, succeeded his father in the throne of Persia; and towards the latter end of his reign, made Bagoses governor of Syria and Phœnicia, who took upon him to confer the pontificate, even while Johanan the high-priest (who had been several years invested with it) was alive, upon the high-priest's brother Joshua, and who accordingly came with this grant to Jerusalem, in order to take possession of the office. (a) But while the one endeavoured by force to get posses-

Johanan, the high-priest kills his brother Joshua in the temple, and is fined for it.

he took out of the river in his passage, Deut. xxvii. 2,—7. according to what God had commanded him by Moses. But herein the Samaritans are guilty of a great prevarication; for they have changed the words in the text of Deuteronomy, and instead of mount Ebal (as it is in the original) have put mount Gerizzim, the better to serve their cause. The truth of the matter is, since Manasseh was resolved to make a schism in the Jewish church, and Sanballat to build a temple for him, the reasons above mentioned might be inducement enough for them to make choice of that place, rather than any other; but from thence to pretend to vie with the temple at Jerusalem, is highly arrogant; because the Jews have authentic testimonies, that the public exercise of the true religion was settled among them, and solemnized at Jerusalem long before this temple at Gerizzim was thought of. In short, the religious observances of the Jewish worship did always attend the ark of the covenant, but the ark was never once at Gerizzim, nor indeed was it fixed in any settled place, until David took it to his palace at Jerusalem, and Solomon had built a temple for it in the same city; *Prideaux's Connection*, anno 409; and *Cabmet's Diction.* under the word *Gerizzim*.

(a) Jewish Antiq. lib. xi. c. 7.

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sion, and the other by force to keep him from it, it so happened, that Johanan slew Joshua in the inner court of the temple; which, when Bagozes heard, he came in great wrath to Jerusalem; went into the temple, notwithstanding the remonstrances that were made against it; and, having taken a thorough cognizance of the fact, imposed a mulct for the punishment of it, and obliged the priests to pay, out of the public treasury, for every lamb that they offered in the daily sacrifice \*, the sum of fifty drachms, which is about one pound eleven shillings and three pence of our money.

A. M.  
3596, etc.  
Ant. Christ.  
408, etc.  
from 1  
Macc. i. to  
vi. 7.; 2  
Macc. iii. to  
x. and from  
Jof. Hist.  
lib. xi. c. 7.  
to lib. xii.  
c. 14.

\* This, if extended only to the ordinary sacrifices which were offered every day, amounted to 365,000 drachms for the whole year, which is no more than one thousand one hundred and forty pounds twelve shillings and sixpence of our money: But, if it extended also to the extraordinary sacrifices, which, on solemn days, were added to the ordinary, it will come to about half as much more. For the ordinary sacrifices, which were offered every day, and therefore called *the daily sacrifices*, were a lamb in the morning, and another in the evening, which are called *the morning and evening sacrifices*; and these, in the whole year, came to seven hundred and thirty. But, besides these, there were added, on every Sabbath, two lambs more, Numb. xxviii. 9, 10.; on every new moon, seven, Numb. xxviii. 11.; on each of the seven days of the paschal solemnity, seven, Numb. xxviii. 16,—24.; besides one more on the second day, when the wave-sheaf was offered, Lev. xxiii. 12.; on the day of Pentecost, seven, ver. 17. 18.; on the feast of trumpets, seven, Numb. xxviii. 27.; on the great day of expiation, seven, chap. xxix. 8.; on each of the seven days of the feast of tabernacles, fourteen, chap. xxix. 13.; and on the eight day, seven, Numb. xxix. 36.; so that the additional lambs being three hundred seventy and one, these, if reckoned to the other, make the whole number annually offered at the morning and evening sacrifices, to be eleven hundred and one: And therefore, if the mulct of fifty drachms a lamb were paid for them all, it would make the whole of it to amount to 55,050 drachms, which comes to seventeen hundred and twenty pounds six shillings and three pence of our money. But even this sum being too small for a national mulct, it seems most probable, that all the lambs which were offered in the temple in any sacrifice, and upon any account whatever, were taken into the reckoning. We may observe, however, that whatever this mulct was, the payment of it lasted no longer than seven years; for, on the death of Artaxerxes, the changes and revolutions which then happened in the empire, made a change in the government of Syria, and he that succeeded Bagozes in that province no farther exacted it; *Prideaux's Connection*, anno 366.

A. M. 3596, &c. Ant. Christ. 408, &c. After the death of Artaxerxes *Μνημων*, Ochus succeeded his father, but obtained the crown \* by very wicked and indirect means. He reigned however for one and twenty years, after which (b) he was poisoned by his favourite eunuch \* Bagoas, who put the crown upon the head of Arses, his youngest son; but, in a short time, dispatched him likewise, and made Codomannus (c) (one of the same family, but at some distance, and who, upon his accession, took the name of *Darius*) king of Persia.

Upon the death of Artaxerxes *Μνημων*, Darius Codomannus is made king of Persia, and vanquished by Alexander the Great. In the third year of the reign of Ochus, about 356 years before the birth of Christ, Alexander the Great, who overthrew the Persian empire, was born at Pella in Macedonia. His father Philip had been chosen captain-general of all Greece, (which, at this time, made a very considerable figure in history), for carrying on the war against Persia; but when he was just ready to set forward upon that expedition \*, he was slain at home, while he was

\* Artaxerxes, when he died, left three sons, Ariaspes, Ochus, and Arfames; Ariaspes was an easy credulous prince; and therefore Ochus so terrified him with menaces, which he pretended came from his father, that, for fear of being put to death, he poisoned himself. Arfames he caused to be assassinated by Harpates; and this loss, added to the other, so overwhelmed the old king with grief, that he broke his heart and died; *Prideaux's Connection, anno 359.*

(b) Diodorus Siculus, lib. xvii.

\* This eunuch having poisoned both Ochus and his son Arses, set the crown upon Darius's head; but, finding that he would not answer his purpose, in permitting him to govern all in his name, (which was the thing he aimed at in his advancement), he was resolved to have removed him, in the same manner as he had done his predecessors; and accordingly had provided a poisonous potion for him. But Darius, being advised of the design, when the potion was brought to him, made him drink it all himself, and so got rid of the traitor by his own artifice; *Prideaux's Connection, anno 335.*

(c) Diodorus Siculus, lib. xvii.

\* The occasion of his death is said to be this:—Pausanias, a young noble Macedonian, and one of his guards, having had his body forced, and sodomitically abused by Attalus the chief of the king's confidents, had often complained to Philip of the injury; but, finding no redress, he turned his revenge from the author of the injury upon him who refused to do him justice for it, and slew him as he was passing in great state to the theatre, having the images of the twelve gods and goddesses, and his own in the same pompous habit,

was celebrating the marriage of Cleopatra his daughter, with Alexander king of Epirus. A. M. 3596, etc. Ant. Chris. 408, &c.

Upon his death, Alexander his son succeeded him in the kingdom of Macedon, when he was twenty years old; and, (d) having been chosen (as his father was) to command the Grecian forces against Persia, he took the field, and, in one campaign only, overrun almost all Asia Minor; vanquished Darius in two pitched battles; took his mother, wife, and children, prisoners; and, having subdued all Syria, came to Tyre; but there he met with a stop: For the Syrians\*, (in confidence of the strength of the place, and of assistance from their allies), when he would have entered the city, denied him admittance.

While his army was besieging Tyre, he sent out his commissioners, requiring the inhabitants of the neighbouring countries, viz. of Galilee, Samaria, and Judea, to submit to him, and to furnish him with what he wanted. Other provinces complied; but the Jews, pleading their oath to Darius, by which they thought themselves bound not to acknowledge any new master so long as he was alive, refused to obey his commands. This exasperated

Who marches against Jerusalem in great anger, but shews the high-priest and all the people much respect when he came thither.

habit, carried before him. Hereby he arrogated to himself the honour of a god; but being slain as soon as his image entered the theatre, he gave a signal proof that he was no more than a mere mortal man; *Justin, lib. 9.; Diodor. Sicul. lib. 16.*

(d) Justin, lib. xi. c. 2.

\* The city of Tyre is probably supposed to have been first built by a colony of the Sidonians, and therefore the prophet Isaiah, chap. xxxiii. 12. calls it *the daughter of Zidon*. It was at first situated on an high hill on the continent, whose ruins are still remaining under the name of *Palatyrus*, or *Old Tyre*; but, in process of time, it was removed into an adjacent rocky island, about half a mile from the main land, and became a place of so great trade and wealth, that, according to the fore-mentioned prophet, *her merchants were princes, and her traffickers the honourable of the earth*, ver. 8. It had once been taken and destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar; but when Alexander came before it, it had quite recovered itself, and was fortified with a strong wall (drawn round it on the brink of the sea) of an hundred and fifty feet in height; so that he had no way of approaching it, in order to make an assault, but by carrying a bank from the continent, through the sea, to the island on which the city stood, which in seven months time he accomplished, and at length took the place; *Prideaux's Connection,*

*anno 333.*

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A. M.  
3596, etc.  
Ant. Christ.  
408, etc.  
from 1  
Macc. i. to  
vi. 7.; 2  
Macc. iii. to  
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Jof. Hift.  
lib. xi. c. 7.  
to lib. xii.  
c. 14.

the conquerour not a little ; who, † in the flush of his many successes, could bear no contradiction ; and therefore, as soon as he had done with Tyre \*, he marched directly against Jerusalem.

Jaddua

† No sooner was he chosen general of all the Grecian cities confederated against the Persian empire, but he subdued the Tyrians and Triballians in Thrace ; and, upon his return, took Thebes, that had revolted from the confederacy, and razed it to the ground. After this, setting out upon the Persian expedition, he vanquished Darius near the Granicus ; and, after the action, took Sardis, Ephesus, Miletum, and Halicarnassus. The next year he made himself master of all Phrygia, Lycia, Pamphylia, Pisidia, Paphlagonia, and Cappadocia. The next year he gave Darius a second defeat (and a terrible one it was) at Issus ; took his mother, wife, two daughters, and a young son, prisoners ; seized Damascus, and, in it, immense riches ; subdued, in short, all Syria Cælo-Syria, and Phœnicia : For every place yielded to him, none pretending to make any resistance till he came to Tyre ; *Prideaux's Connection, anno 333.*

\* As soon as he had taken the town, he burnt it down to the ground, and destroyed and enslaved all the inhabitants. Eight thousand he slew in the sackage of the town, and two thousand of those whom he took prisoners he caused to be crucified ; a piece of cruelty this, highly unbecoming a generous conquerour. But, to palliate the matter, he gave out, that it was done by way of just revenge upon them, for their murdering their masters, and that, being originally but slaves, crucifixion was the proper punishment for them. But this depended upon an old story. Some ages before, the slaves of Tyre, having made a conspiracy against their masters, murdered them all in one night, (except only Strato, whom his slave secretly saved), and having married their mistresses, continued masters of the town, and from them the present Tyrians were descended. So that Alexander pretended, on this occasion, to revenge on them the murder that was committed by their progenitors so many ages before ; though, in reality, it was to gratify his rage, for being so long detained before the place, and there so valiantly resisted. Recovering, however, its beauty and riches again, it was invested with the privileges of a Roman city, for its fidelity, and, in the flourishing times of Christianity, was the metropolitan see of the province of Phœnicia : But now, that it is fallen into the hands of the Turks, there is not the least similitude of that glory for which it was once renowned. Its present inhabitants are only a few poor wretches, harbouring themselves in vaults, (for there is not one entire house left), subsisting chiefly upon fishing, and preserved in this place as it were by Providence, for a visible argument of God's having fulfilled his

(e) Jaddua the high-priest, who, at this time had the chief government of the Jews, under the king of Persia, was in dreadful apprehensions of what the event might prove: But having no protection to depend on but God's, he, and all Jerusalem with him, made their cries and supplications to him, imploring his mercy for their deliverance from the approaching storm; whereupon he was ordered, in a vision of the night, to go out, and meet Alexander (whenever he should come) in his pontifical robes, with the priests attending him in their proper habits, and all the people in white garments.

A. M.  
3596, etc.  
Ant. Christ.  
408, etc.  
Gen. i.  
Macc. i. to  
vi. 7. ; 2  
Macc. iii. to  
x. and from  
Jof. H. fl.  
lib. xi. c. 7.  
to lib. xii.  
c. 14.

Jaddua, next day, with the priests and people, habited in the manner directed, went out of the city to a certain eminence, which commanded the prospect of all the country round, and there waited the coming of Alexander. As soon as the high-priest saw him at some distance, he moved towards him in this solemn pomp; which struck the king with such an awe, that as he drew near, he bowed down to him, and saluted him with a religious veneration, to the great surprize of all that attended him.

While every one stood amazed at this behaviour, Parmenio, his first favourite, took the freedom to ask him, how it came to pass, that he, whom all mankind adored, paid such adoration to the Jewish high-priest? To which his reply was, "That he did not pay that adoration to him, but to the God whose high-priest he was; that while he was at Dio in Macedonia, and deliberating with himself how to carry on the war with Persia, that very person, and in that very habit, appeared to him in a dream, encouraging him to pass boldly over into Asia, and not to doubt of success, because God would be his Guide in the expedition, and give him the empire of the Persians; and that therefore, from hence he was assured, that he made the present war under the conduct of that God, to whom, in the person of this high-priest, he paid adoration." And hereupon, turning to Jaddua again, he embraced him very kindly: And so, going into the city with him, offered sacrifices to God in the temple, where the high-

his word concerning Tyre, viz. *That it should be as the top of a rock, a place for fishers to dry their nets on*, Ezek. xxvi. 14.; Justin. lib. xviii. c. 3.; Prideaux's Connection, anno 333; and Maundrell's Journey from Aleppo to Jerusalem.

(e) Joseph. lib. xi. c. 8.

priest

A. M.  
3596, etc.  
Ant. Christ.  
403, etc.  
from 1  
Macc. i. to  
vi. 7. ; 2  
Macc. iii. to  
x. and from  
Jof. Hist.  
lib. xi. c. 7.  
to lib. xii.  
c. 14.

priest shewed him the prophecies of Daniel \*, predicting the overthrow of the Persian empire by a Grecian king, which he applied to himself, and thereby confirmed his opinion, that God had chosen him to execute this great work.

When he left Jerusalem, he offered to grant the people whatever immunities the high-priest should desire; but he requested no more than a toleration to live according to their own laws and religion, and an exemption from the payment of tribute every seventh year, because on the sabbatical year, the Jews were forbidden to till their ground. This he readily consented to, and having signed his pleasure, that if any of them were minded to lift in his troops, he would readily receive them. great multitudes did hereupon offer their service, and followed him in his other expeditions.

(f) No sooner was he well got out of the city, but the Samaritans met him in great pomp and parade, desiring of him, that he would likewise honour their city and temple with his presence. “He was then hastening to Egypt, (he told them), but that when he returned, if his affairs would permit him, he would not fail to comply with their desires:” And when they requested of him an immunity from all taxes every seventh year, because they (as well as the Jews) did every seventh year suffer their land to lie fallow, he asked them if they were Jews, because to them only he had granted that privilege. Their answer was, that they were Hebrews, but that the Phœnicians called them *Sichemites*: Whereupon, having no leisure to make any farther enquiry into the matter, he referred this likewise to his return, when he promised to examine into their pretensions, and to do them justice; but before his return, they had done enough to incense him against them.

On his going from these parts into Egypt, he had made Andromachus, a special favourite of his, governour of Syria and Palestine; who (g) coming to Samaria, in order to settle some affairs, was burnt to death in his house,

\* *Viz.* What is written of the ram and the he-goat, chap. viii. where that he-goat is interpreted to be the king of Grecia, who should conquer the Medes and Persians, ver. 20. As likewise what is written by the same prophet, of the same Grecian king, chap. xi. 3; for both these prophecies foretold the destruction of the Persian king; *Prideaux's Connection, anno 333.*

(f) Joseph. lib. xi. c. 8. (g) Quint. Curt. lib. iv. c. 8.

which

which the people set on fire, out of rage and discontent, very probably, that the privileges, which were granted to their enemies the Jews, were denied to them. This barbarous action exasperated Alexander not a little; insomuch that having caused those who had acted any part in the murder of the governour to be put to death, he drove all the rest of the inhabitants out of Samaria, planted therein a colony of Macedonians, and gave the rest of their territories to the Jews.

After the death of Alexander \*, (who did not long survive

A. M.  
3596, &c.  
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408, &c.  
from 1  
Macc. i. to  
vi. 7. ; 2  
Macc. iii. to  
x. and from  
Jof. Hist.  
lib. xi. c. 7.  
to lib. xii.  
c. 14.

\* It is not well agreed among historians, how this great conqueror of the world died. Some of them are of opinion, that he was poisoned by the procurement of Antipater, whom he had left governour of all his dominions in his absence, and who, for his maladministration, had been lately dismissed: and therefore fearing to be called to an account, did, by the hands of his sons, who were about the person of the king, and one of them his cup-bearer, execute this treason upon his master's life, in order to save his own: But in the judgment of other historians, he died by nothing but excessive drinking; and thus they relate the story. "One day after he had been sacrificing to the gods (for the many victories which he had obtained,) he made an entertainment for his friends, wherein he drank very hard, and continued the debauch till late at night; when returning from the feast, he and his company were invited by a physician of Thessalia, to come and drink a little more at his house. Alexander accepted of the offer: And as there were twenty in company, he first drank to each of them in their order, and so pledged them again, and then called for the Herculean cup. There was in company one Prodeas, a Macedonian, but a terrible drinker, and to him the king drank this Herculean cup brim-full, (which they tell us held six of our quarts); and not long after, pledged him in the same; but immediately after the second cup, he dropped down upon the place, and then fell into a violent fever, of which he died, in the thirty third year of his age, after a reign of twelve years, six years as king of Macedon, and six more as monarch of Asia." He was a man of a bold enterprising spirit, but fuller of fire than discretion. His actions, though they were attended with success, were carried on with a furious and extravagant rashness; and the few virtues that he had were obscured with much greater vices. Vain-glory was the predominant passion of his soul; and the fables of the ancient Greek heroes, the only charts by which he steered his conduct. This was the reason that he dragged Betis round the walls of Gaza, in the same manner as Achilles had used Hector; that he undertook that hazardous expedition into India, as Hercules had done before him;

Upon Alexander's death, his commanders divide the empire among them.

A. M. survive the unfortunate Darius \*), the Grecian or Ma-  
 3596, etc. cedonian empire (for so it was now become) was divided  
 Ant. Chris. among the chief commanders of his army, who soon fell  
 408, etc. to leaguings and fighting against each other, till after some  
 from 1 years, they were all destroyed, except four, and these a-  
 Macc. i. to greed to make a partition of the whole among themselves,  
 vi. 7.; 2 and  
 Macc. iii. to  
 x. and from  
 Jos. Hist.  
 lib. xi. c. 7.  
 to lib. xii.  
 c. 14.

that he made a drunken procession through Caramania, because Bacchus is said to have done the like in the same place; and that he affected to be called the son of Jupiter, because most of the ancient heroes pretended, that they had for their fathers one god or other. The truth is, this young conqueror, having the Iliads of Homer in great admiration, always carried them with him, laid them under his pillow when he slept, and read in them on all leisure-opportunities: and therefore finding Achilles to be the great hero in that poem, he thought every thing said of him worthy of imitation, and the readiest way to become an hero himself, which was the main impulsive cause of all his undertakings: But in reality, were his actions to be duly estimated, he could deserve no other character than that of the great cut-throat of the age in which he lived. The folly of mankind however, and the error of historians is such, that they usually make the actions of war, bloodshed, and conquest, the subjects of their highest encomiums, and those their most celebrated heroes that most excel in these; whereas those only are the true Heroes, who most benefit the world, by promoting the peace and welfare of mankind. In a righteous cause indeed, and the just defence of a man's country, all actions of valour are just reasons of praise; but in all other cases, victory and conquest are no more than murder and rapine, and those who thus oppress the world with the slaughter of men, the desolation of countries, the burning of cities; and the other calamities which attend war, are the scourges of God, the Attilas of the age in which they live, and the greatest plagues and calamities that happen to it; and therefore to make these the subject of praise and panegyric, is to lay ill examples before princes, as if such oppressions of mankind were the truest ways to honour and glory; *Diod. Sic. lib. 17.; Arrian, lib. 7.; Justin, lib. 12.; Q. Curt. lib. 10.; Plutarch in Alexandro; and Prideaux's Connection, anno 328, and 332.*

\* After the battle of Arbela, wherein he was sore discomfited, he made his escape into Media, and having got some few forces together, thought to have tried his fate in one battle more; when Bessus, his governour of Bactria, and Nabazanes, another Persian nobleman, conspired together, and having seized the poor king, and made him their prisoner, put him in chains, and shut him up in a close cart, and so carried him with them towards Bactria, intending, if Alexander pursued them, to purchase their peace by delivering him up into his hands; but if he did not, to kill him, and seize his kingdom

and so cantoned it into four kingdoms, tho' all this while A. M. 3596, &c.  
Aredæus \*, a bastard brother of Alexander's, that took Ant. Chris. 408, &c.  
upon him the name of Philip, and after him Alexander Ægus, his own son by his wife Roxana, bore both of them the title of kings.

In this division, Ptolemy, the son of Lagus, whom the Greeks call *Soter*, having taken possession of Egypt, thought that the provinces of Syria, Phœnicia, and Judea, would be an excellent barrier for him; and therefore (b) he first of all attempted to bribe Laomedon, a Mitylenian captain of Alexander's, (who after the death of Andromachus very probably was made governour of Syria, and the adjacent countries), with a vast sum of money, to deliver them up into his hands: But not being able to prevail this way, he sent Nicanor, one of his captains, with an army into Syria, whilst himself, with a fleet, invaded Phœnicia; and so having vanquished Laomedon, and taken him prisoner, he made himself master of all these provinces.

(i) The Jews however, for some time, stood out against him, and upon account of the oath they had taken to the deposed governour, refused to submit to his authority. Hereupon he marched into Judea, and having got possession of most of the country, laid siege to Jeru-

kingdom, and so renew the war. Alexander having heard what these traitors had done, made all the haste he could to rescue Darius out of their hands; but when, after several days march, he came up with them, (because Darius refused to mount on horseback, for his more speedy flight with them), they gave him several mortal wounds, and left him dying in the cart. He was dead before Alexander came; but when he saw his corpse, he could not forbear shedding tears at so melancholy a spectacle: And having cast his cloak over it, he ordered that it should be wrapped up therein, and carried to his mother Sisygambis, at Shushan, (where he had left her with the other captive ladies), to be buried there with a royal funeral (for which himself allowed the expence) in the sepulchres of the king's of Persia; *Prideaux's Connection*, 330.

\* Aridæus, with his wife Euridice, was put to death by Olympias, the mother of Alexander the Great, after he had borne the title of king for six years and seven months; and Alexander Ægus, with his mother Roxana, after a long imprisonment in the castle of Amphipolis, was, in like manner, murdered by Cassander, to make way for himself to the crown of Macedon.

(b) Diod. Sic. lib. 18.; Plutarch, in Demetrio. (i) Jewish Antiq. l. xii. c. 1.

A. M. salem. The place was strong enough, both by nature and art, to have made a considerable defence against him; but the Jews had then such a superstitious notion for the observation of the Sabbath, that they thought it a breach of their law, even to defend themselves on it: Which when Ptolemy understood, he made choice of that day to storm the place, and in the assault took it, because there were none that would defend the walls against him. At first he dealt hardly with the inhabitants, and carried above an hundred thousand of them captives into Egypt; but afterwards considering how faithful they had been to their former governours, he employed them in his army and garisons, and granted them large immunities and privileges; whereupon the whole nation of the Jews became subject to the power and dominion of the kings of Egypt.

Simon the Just made high-priest, and completes the canon of Scripture.

In the fifth year of this Ptolemy's reign, Onias, the Jewish high-priest, died, and was succeeded by Simon his son, who from the holiness of his life, and the great righteousness which shone forth in all his actions, was called *Simon the Just*. He continued in his office for nine years, in which time he did many beneficial acts \* both for the church and state of the Jews; but what is chiefly commemorated of him, is his completing the canon of the Scriptures of the Old Testament. What Ezra (k), and the men of the great synagogue, who (as some say) assisted him, did in this work, we have taken sufficient notice of before. The books of Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, and Malachi, as well as the two Chronicles of the kings of Judah

\* The commendation which the author of Ecclesiasticus gives us of this high-priest, is thus expressed:—*He, in his lifetime, repaired the house again, and in his days fortified the temple. By him was built, from the foundation, the double height, the high fortrefs of the wall above the temple. In his days, the cistern to receive water, being in compass as the sea, was covered with plates of brass. He took care of the temple that it should not fall, and fortified the city against besieging. How was he honoured amidst the people, in his coming out of the sanctuary? He was as the morning-star in the midst of a cloud, and as the moon at the full, or the sun shining upon the temple of the Most High, and as a rainbow giving light in the bright clouds:—When he put on the robe of honour, and was clothed with the perfection of glory, and when he went up to the holy altar, he made the garments of holiness honourable; Ecclus. l. 1. 2. &c.*

(k) Prideaux's Connection, anno 292.

and Israel, could not possibly be inserted by Ezra himself, because some of these books claim him for their author, and in others there are some particulars which refer to times as low as Alexander the Great, and therefore a later time must be assigned for their reception into the canon. And if so, there seems to be none so proper as that when the men of the great synagogue, who, under the direction and presidency of Simon the Just, were employed in this work, ceased to be.

Simon was succeeded in the pontificate by his brother Eleazar, (for his son Onias was but a minor when he died); and, upon the death of Ptolemy Soter, his son Ptolemy Philadelphus succeeded in the throne of Egypt, and pursued his father's example in continuing the museum †, or college of learned men, which he had erected, and in augmenting the noble library † which he had left behind him at Alexandria. To this purpose, hearing that

A. M.  
3596, etc.  
Ant. Chris.  
408, etc.  
from 1  
Macc. i. to  
vi. 7; 2  
Macc. iii. to  
x. and from  
Jof. Hist.  
lib. xi. c. 7.  
to lib. xii.  
c. 14.

Ptolemy  
Philadelphus's Mu-  
seum and  
library at  
Alexandria.

† This was a large edifice in Alexandria, which stood in that quarter of the city called *Brachium*, and was designed for the habitation of such learned men as made it their study to improve philosophy, and all useful knowledge, like that of the Royal Society at London, and the Royal Academy of Sciences at Paris. This building, which was not far distant from the palace, was surrounded with a portico or piazza, where the philosophers walked and conversed, and had in it a common hall, where they used to eat together. The members of this society were under the government of a president, whose office was of that consideration and dignity, that, during the reign of the Ptolemies, he was always constituted by those kings, and afterwards by the Roman emperours. The revenues appointed for the maintenance of this college, from the first foundation of it, were large. From it did proceed men of very excellent literature; and to it was owing, that Alexandria, for a great many ages together, was the greatest school of learning in all those parts of the world; until, in the war which the Alexandrians had with Aurelian the Roman emperour, all that quarter of the city where the museum stood was destroyed, and with it this college of learned men dissolved; *Prideaux's Connection*, anno 285.

† This library was at first placed in the Museum: but, when it was filled with books to the number of four hundred thousand volumes, there was another library erected within the Serapeum, (or the famous temple where the image of Serapis was set up), which increased in time to the number of three hundred thousand volumes, and these two put together made up the number of seven hundred thousand volumes in the whole, of which the royal libraries of the Ptolemean kings at Alexandria are

said



A. M.  
3596, etc.  
Ant. Chris.  
408, etc.  
from 1  
Macc. i. to  
vi. 7. ; 2  
Macc. iii. to  
x. and from  
Jof. Hist.  
lib. xi. c. 7.  
to lib. xii.  
c. 14.

the Jews had among them a famous book, viz. the book of their law, which well deserved a place among his collection, he sent to Eleazar \* the high-priest, to desire an authentic copy of it : And, because it was wrote in a language that he did not understand, he desired him, at the same time, to send a competent number of learned said to consist. Their manner of collecting them was not so very honourable ; for whatever books were brought by any foreigner into Egypt, these they seized, and sending them to the Musæum, (where they maintained people for that purpose), they caused them to be transcribed, and then sent the copies to the owners, but laid up the originals in the library. When Julius Cæsar waged war with the Alexandrians, it so happened, that the library in the Brachium was burnt, and the four hundred thousand volumes that were laid up there were all consumed. But that of the Serapeum still remained, and soon grew to be larger, and of more eminent note than the former ; but at length, in the year of our Lord 642, when the Saracens made themselves masters of the city, they totally destroyed it. For when the general of the army wrote to Omar, who was then the caliph or emperor of the Saracens, to know his pleasure concerning it, his answer was, “ That if these books contained “ what was agreeing with the Alcoran, there was no need of “ them, because the Alcoran alone was sufficient for all truth ; “ but if they contained what was disagreeing with it, they were “ not to be endured ; ” And therefore he ordered, that whatsoever the contents of them were, they should all be destroyed ; *Prideaux's Connection, anno 285.*

\* Josephus hath given us both Ptolemy's letter to Eleazar, and Eleazar's answer at large ; but whether these pieces are genuine or no, is a matter of some dispute among the learned. They are too long, however, to be here inserted ; but the substance of the letter is, — “ That both Ptolemy and his father had “ been extremely kind to the Jews ; his father, in placing them “ in offices of trust ; and himself, in redeeming great numbers “ of them from slavery, and employing several of them both “ in his court and camp ; and that, as a farther testimony of “ his kindness to them, he proposed to make a translation of “ their law into the Greek language, for which he desired them “ to send a proper number of such men as he knew were qualified for the undertaking.” In answer to which, Eleazar acknowledges the receipt of his most gracious letter, and of the valuable presents which he had sent ; and, in return, promises, that the people should not fail to pray to God daily for the protection of his person, and the prosperity of his royal family ; and that, pursuant to his commands, he had sent an authentic copy of the law, and six men out of each tribe to assist in the translation of it ; *Jewish Hist. lib. xii. c. 2.*

men, well-versed in both the Hebrew and Greek tongues, who, out of the former, might translate it for him into the latter. This Eleazar failed not to do; and, from the joint labours of the LXX or rather LXXII translators, that were employed in the work, the version has ever since gone under the name of the *Septuagint*: But of this piece of history we have already had occasion to say what we thought sufficient, towards the conclusion of our † Apparatus.

A. M.  
3596, &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
408, &c.  
from 1  
Macc. i. to  
vi. 7.; 2  
Macc. iii. to  
x. and from  
Jof. Hist.  
lib. xi. c. 7.  
to lib. xii.  
c. 14.

After the death of Ptolemy Philadelphus, \* his son Euergetes came to the crown of Egypt, and Onias succeeded his uncle (though not immediately) in the pontificate. He was the son of Simon the Just; but, in many things, the very reverse to his father. At the best, he was but a weak and inconsiderate man; (1) but being now grown very

Onias the  
high-priest's  
great neg-  
lect of pub-  
lic affairs.

† Those who would see more at large what are the opinions of learned men concerning the Septuagint, and the account which Aristæus gives of the manner in which it was done, may consult the critics who have expressly handled this matter, such as Scaliger, Usher, Walton, Fraassen, Dupin, Valdal, Hody, Calmet, Whiston, and Prideaux in his *Connection*, anno 277.

\* After the death of his beloved wife Arsinoë, Ptolemy did not long survive her: For, being of a tender constitution himself, and having farther weakened it by a luxurious indulgence, he could not bear the approach of age, or the grief of mind which he fell under upon this occasion; but, sinking under these burdens, he died, in the sixty-third year of his life, after he had reigned in Egypt 38 years. As he was a learned prince himself, and a great patron of learning, many of those who were eminent for any part of literature resorted to him from all parts, and partook of his favour and bounty. Seven celebrated poets of that age are said to have lived at his court; four of which, viz. Theocritus, Callimachus, Lycophron, and Aratus, have their works still remaining; and, among these, the first of them has a whole Idyllium, and the second, part of two hymns, written in his praise. Manetho, the Egyptian historian, dedicated his history to him; and Zoilus the sneering critic, came also to his court. But how great soever his wit was, he could never recommend himself to king Ptolemy, who hated him for the bitterness and ill-nature of it: And, for the same reason, having drawn on himself the odium and aversion of all men, he at length died miserably; for some say, that he was stoned; others, that he was burnt to death; and others again, that he was crucified by King Ptolemy, for a crime that deserved that punishment; *Prideaux's Connection*, anno 249.

(1) Jewish Antiq. lib. xii. c. 3.

old,

A. M.  
3596, &c.  
Ant. Chris.  
408, &c.  
from 1  
Macc. i. to  
vi. 7.; 2  
Macc. iii. to  
x. and from  
Jof. Hist.  
lib. xi. c. 7.  
to lib. xii.  
c. 14.

Joseph his  
nephew  
sent to re-  
dress it at  
the Egyp-  
tian court.

old, and very covetous, he took no care to pay Ptolemy Euergetes the annual tribute of twenty talents, which his predecessors used to do; so that, when the arrears were swelled to a large sum, the king sent one Athenion, an officer of his court, to Jerusalem, to demand the full payment of the money, upon peril of having an army sent among them to dispossess them of their country.

(m) Onias had a nephew by his sister's side, whose name was *Joseph*, a young man of great reputation among the Jews, for prudence, justice, and sanctity of life. He, as soon as he heard of the message, which Athenion had brought, and of the peoples great consternation thereupon, went immediately to his uncle, and severely upbraided him with his ill-management of the public interest, who, for the lucre of a little money, had exposed the whole nation to such eminent danger, which now there was no way to avoid, (as he told him), but by his going immediately to the Egyptian court, and, by a timely application to the king there, endeavouring to pacify his wrath.

The bare mentioning of a journey to Alexandria \* so terrified the high-priest, that (upon his declaring, that he would

(m) Jewish Antiq. lib. xii. c. 4.

\* This city, which was built by Alexander the Great, A. M. 3673, was, after his death, made the capital of Egypt, by Ptolemy and his successors, for almost three hundred years. Dinocrates (who rebuilt the temple of Diana at Ephesus, after it had been burnt by Erostratus) was the architect who drew the plan of it, and had the chief direction of the work; but, to have it carried on with more expedition, Alexander appointed Cleomenes, one of his captains, to be the surveyor of it; and for this reason, Justin, lib. xiii. c. 4. calls him the founder of it. The happy situation of this city between the Mediterranean and the Red-sea, and upon the river Nile, drew thither the commerce of the east and west, and made it in a very little time one of the most flourishing cities in the world. It has still some small repute for merchandize; but what has occasioned the decay of its trade, is the discovery of the passage to the East-Indies by the Cape of Good Hope, or on the South of Afric. Before this discovery, the whole spice-trade was carried into this part of the world through this city; for the spices were brought from the East-Indies, up the Red-sea, to Egypt, and from thence were carried by land on camels to Alexandria. When Egypt became a province of the Roman empire, this city continued the metropolis of it: and when the Arabians took it, (which was about 640 years after Christ), there were

would quit his station both in church and state, rather than undertake it) Joseph offered, with his permission, and the peoples approbation, to go in his stead. In the mean time he took care to entertain Athenion at his own house, as long as he continued at Jerusalem, in a very splendid and magnificent manner: When he departed, he presented him with several very valuable gifts; and so sent him away in a good disposition, to make as favourable a representation to the king as the case would bear, until himself should come to the Egyptian court, in order to give him a full satisfaction.

A. M.  
3596, etc.  
Ant. Christ.  
408, etc.  
from 1  
Macc. i. to  
vi. vii.; 2  
Macc. iii. to  
x. and from  
Jof. Hist.  
lib. xi. c. 7.  
to lib. xii.  
c. 14.

Athenion was so taken with this prudent behaviour, and kind entertainment of Joseph, that when he came to give the king a report of his embassy, he could not but mention his name with pleasure; and when he told him of his intentions to come and wait upon him himself, he set forth his character with so much advantage, that the king expressed a desire to see him. In a short time, Joseph set out for Alexandria; and, falling in, upon the road, with several of the chief nobility of Cælo Syria and Phœnicia, whose business at court was to farm the royal revenues of these provinces, he joined company with them, and having learned from their discourse of what value these revenues were, he made use of that intelligence afterwards, both to his own and the king's advantage.

When they all arrived at Alexandria, the king was gone to Memphis\*; so that Joseph made haste thither, and had

were four thousand palaces still standing in it, four thousand bag-nios, forty thousand Jews paying tribute, four hundred squares, and twelve thousand persons, that sold herbs and fruit. Here, as we said, was the famous Serapeum, or temple of Serapis, for beauty of workmanship and magnificence of structure, inferior to nothing but the Roman capitol. Here was the musæum, or college of philosophers; and here that noble library, which was erected by Ptolemy Philadelphus, but unhappily burnt in the war between Cæsar and Pompey. But notwithstanding all its former splendour and magnificence, this city is now become a poor village, (by the Egyptians called *Rachot*), without any thing remarkable in it, except its ruins, and the remains of its former grandeur; only, without the city, Pompey's pillar (the shaft whereof is six fathoms high, all of one piece of curious granite) is justly admired as one of the finest columns that is any where to be seen; *Calmet's Dictionary*, under the word; and *Well's Geography of the New Testament*.

\* This was a very famous city, and, till the time of the Ptole-

A. M.  
3596, etc.  
Ant. Chriſt.  
408, etc.  
from 1  
Macc. i. to  
vi. 7.; 2  
Macc. lii. to  
x. and from  
Joſ. Hiſt.  
lib. xi. c. 7.  
to lib. xii.  
c. 14.

He farms  
the revenues  
of Syria,  
Phœnicia,  
Judea, and  
Samaria,  
and ſatisfies  
his uncle's  
arrears.

had the good fortune to meet him, the queen, and Athenion, all in the ſame chariot, returning to Alexandria. The king, upon Athenion's ſignifying who he was, called him into the chariot; and having mentioned his uncle's ill uſage, in not paying him his tribute, he was thereupon entertained with ſo handſome an apology for that neglect, which he chiefly imputed to his uncle's old age, and other infirmities, that he not only ſatisfied the king, but gave him withal ſo good an opinion of the advocate, that, when they came to Alexandria, he ordered him to be lodged in the palace, and entertained at his expence.

When the day of farming out the revenues to the beſt bidder was come, the Syrian and Phœnician noblemen, with whom Joſeph had travelled to Alexandria, beat down their price, and would give no more for all the duties of Coelo-Syria, Phœnicia, Judea, and Samaria, than eight thouſand talents: But Joſeph, having found fault with them for undervaluing the king's revenues, offered to give twice as much, even excluſive of the forfeitures, which uſed before to belong to the farmers; and was thereupon admitted to be the king's receiver-general of all theſe provinces.

Upon the credit of this employment, he borrowed at Alexandria five hundred talents, wherewith he ſatisfied

mies, who removed to Alexandria, the place of reſidence for the ancient kings of Egypt. It was ſituated above the parting of the river Nile, where the Delta begins. Towards the ſouth of this city ſtood the famous pyramids, two of which were eſteemed the wonders of the world; and, in this city, was fed the ox Apis, which Cambyſes ſlew in contempt of the Egyptians worſhipping it as a god. The kings of Egypt took great pleaſure in adorning this city; and in all its beauty it continued, till the Arabians made a conqueſt of Egypt under the Calif Omar. The general, who took it, built another city juſt by it, which was called *Fuſtat*, becauſe his tent had been a long time ſet up in that place, and the Caliph's Fatamites, when they became maſters of Egypt, added another to it, which is known to us at this day by the name of *Grand Cairo*. The Mameluck Sultans, of the dynaſty of the Carcaſſians, having afterwards built a ſtrong fort on the Eaſtern ſhore of the Nile, did, by degrees, annex a city to it, which came to be called the *New Cairo*, as what the Fatamites had built was called the *Old*; but it muſt be obſerved, that the ancient Memphis ſtood on the weſtern ſhore of the Nile, whereas whatever the Arabians have there built, from time to time, is on the eaſtern ſhore of that river; *Calmet's Dictionary*, under the word.

the

the king for his uncle's arrears; and having received a guard of two thousand men to support him in the collection of the duties, he left Alexandria, and immediately entered upon it. In some places he met with opposition, and very opprobrious language; but having ordered the chief ringleaders to be seized, and exemplary justice to be executed upon them, he thereby so terrified the rest, that they readily paid him his demands without any molestation. And in this office he continued for the space of two and twenty years, under Ptolemy Euergetes, and Philopater his son, until Ptolemy Epiphanes, the son of Philopater, lost these provinces to Antiochus the Great.

A. M.  
3596, etc.  
Ant. Chris.  
408, etc.  
from 1  
Macc. i. to  
vi. 7; 2  
Macc. iii. to  
x. and from  
Jof. Hist.  
lib. xi. c. 7.  
to lib. xii.  
c. 14.

On the death of Ptolemy Euergetes, his son Philopater (not without some suspicion of having poisoned his father) succeeded to the throne; and, in the fifth year of his reign, having, at Raphia, a town not far from Gaza, defeated the army of Antiochus the Great, he afterwards visited the cities which by this victory he had regained, among which Jerusalem was one. Here he took a view of the temple, gave valuable donatives to it, and offered up many sacrifices to the God of Israel; but, not being content with this view from the outer court, (beyond which no Gentile was allowed to pass), he was for going into the sanctuary, nay, even into the Holy of Holies itself, where no one but the high-priest (and that only on the great day of expiation) was allowed to enter. This made a great uproar all over the city. The high-priest informed him of the sacredness of the place, and of the law of God, which forbade his entrance. The priests and Levites were gathered together to hinder it. The people did earnestly deprecate it; and great lamentations were every where made, upon the apprehension of the approaching profanation of their holy temple. But all to no purpose. The king, the more he was opposed, the more resolute he was to have his will satisfied, and, accordingly pressed into the inner court; but as he was passing farther to go into the temple, he was seized with such a sudden terrour and consternation of mind, that he was carried out of the place, in a manner half dead, and, in a short time, departed from Jerusalem, highly incensed against the whole nation of the Jews, and venting many bitter threatenings against them.

Ptolemy  
Philopater  
endeavours  
to enter into  
the temple,  
but is pro-  
hibited.

Nor was he forgetful to put his threats in execution. For no sooner was he returned to Alexandria, but he published a decree, and caused it to be engraven on a pillar erected at the gate of his palace, excluding every one who would

His attempt  
to destroy all  
the Jews,  
but their  
wonderful  
escape.

A. M. would not sacrifice to the God whom he worshipped, from  
 3596, etc. having any access to him; degrading the Jews from the  
 Ant. Christ. rights and privileges they had in the city; and ordering  
 408, etc. them all to come, and (*p*) be stigmatized with the mark of  
 from 1. an ivy-leaf (the badge of his god Bacchus) by an hot iron  
 Macc. i. to an ivy-leaf (the badge of his god Bacchus) by an hot iron  
 vi. 7.; 2. impressed upon them, and, as many as refused to come,  
 Macc. iii. to commanding them to be put to death.  
 2. and from  
 Jos. Hist. Nor did his rage end here: For, being determined to  
 lib. xi. c. 7. extirpate the whole Jewish nation, as many at least as were  
 to lib. xii. in his dominions, he sent out orders to his officers, requir-  
 c. 14. ing them to bring all the Jews who lived any where in E-  
 gypt, bound in chains to Alexandria; and having shut  
 them up in the Hippodrome, (a large place without the  
 city, where the people used to assemble to see horse-races,  
 and other shows), he proposed the next day to make a  
 spectacle of them, by having them destroyed by his † ele-  
 phants. The elephants, to make them more furious,  
 were intoxicated with wine, mingled with frankincense:  
 But the king, the night before, having sat up late at a  
 drunken carousal, overslept himself, so that the show was  
 put off till the day following; and, the next night, having  
 done the same again, the show, for the same cause, was  
 put off till the third day. All this while the Jews, con-  
 tinuing shut up in the Hippodrome, ceased not, with lifted-  
 up hands and voices, to pray unto God for their deliver-  
 ance, which, accordingly, he vouchsafed them. For, on the  
 third day, when the king was present, and the elephants  
 were let loose, instead of falling upon the Jews, they turned

(*p*) 2 Maccab. vi. 7.

† In the books of the Maccabees, we find frequent mention made of elephants, because, after the reign of Alexander the Great, these animals were very much employed in the armies, which the kings of Syria and Egypt raised. They were naturally of a very quiet and gentle disposition, and never made use of their strength, but when they were irritated, or compelled to it; and for this reason, we find that the elephants, which were in the army of Antiochus Eupater, had the blood of grapes and mulberries shewn them, thereby to animate them to the combat, 1 Maccab. vi. 34. as those, which here Ptolemy Philopater kept, were intoxicated with incense dipped in wine, to make them more mad and furious. When they are thus irritate and inflamed, their strength is prodigious, and nothing can stand before them. Every creature that comes in their way, they trample under foot, overthrow whole squadrons, knock down trees, and demolish houses; *Calmet's Dictionary*, under the word,

all

all their rage upon those that came to see the show, and destroyed great numbers.

This wonderful interposal of providence, in the protection of these poor people, together with some strange appearances, at the same time seen in the air, so terrified the king, and all the spectators, that he ordered all the Jews to be set free; restored them to their former privileges; revoked every decree that had been made against them, and, among other favours, indulged them with this liberty, — Even to put to death all those Jews, who, in fear of persecution, had apostatised from their religion, which accordingly they put in rigorous execution.

Upon the death of \* Ptolemy Philopater, his son Ptolemy Epiphanes (a child of but five years old) succeeded him in the throne: But Antiochus the Great, taking the advantage of the young king's inability to oppose him, marched an army into Cælo-Syria and Palestine, and, in a very short time made himself master of them. The Egyptians however, under the command of Scapas their general, endeavoured to regain them, and had actually recovered Jerusalem into their possession; but, upon the approach of Antiochus in person, and the defeat which he gave them at Paneas, the Jews, who had been but badly used by Scapas, (a very covetous and rapacious man), submitted to him very chearfully; and, receiving him and his army into the city, assisted him in the reduction of the castle, where Scapas had left a garrison. In acknowledgement of which services, he, by a public edict, granted them many favours, and, among the rest, a liberty to live according to their own laws and religion, and a power to prohibit any stranger to enter within the sept of the temple, alluding to the attempt which Philopater had lately made that way.

\* This Ptolemy was a man entirely given up to his lusts and voluptuous delights. Drinking, gaming, and lasciviousness, were the whole employments of his life. Agathoclea his concubine, and Agathocles her brother, who was his catamite, governed him absolutely; and when Arsinoë (who was both his sister and wife) complained of the neglect, which, by means of these two favourites, was put upon her, this so offended the king and his catamite, that orders were given to have her put to death. But he did not long survive her; for, having worn out a strong constitution by his intemperance and debaucheries, he ended his life before he had lived out half the course of it; *Prideaux's Connection, anno 204.*

But

A. M.  
3596, etc.  
Ant. Christ.  
408, etc.  
from 1  
Macc. i. to  
vi. 7.; 2  
Macc. iii. to  
x. and from  
Jof. Hist.  
lib. xi. c. 7.  
to lib. xii.  
c. 14.

Palestine,  
and Cælo-  
Syria over-  
run by An-  
tiochus the  
Great, but  
afterwards  
returned to  
Ptolemy E-  
piphanes in  
dower with  
his daughter  
Cleopatra.



A. M. 3596, etc. But Antiochus had greater things in view, than the sub-  
 Ant. Chris. 408, &c. jection of a province or two; and therefore, to have his  
 from 1 armies at liberty to engage the Romans †, who, since the  
 Macc. i. to defeat of Hannibal, in the second Punic war, were become  
 vi. 7. ; 2 justly formidable, made a peace with Ptolemy, and, giving  
 Macc. iiii. to him his daughter Cleopatra in marriage, with her he re-  
 x. and from signed the provinces of Cælo Syria and Palestine, by way  
 Jos. Hist. of dower.

lib. xi. c. 7. By this means Judea reverted to the Egyptian crown,  
 to lib. xii. and Joseph, the nephew of Onias, the high-priest, was  
 c. 14. reinstated in the office of collecting the king's revenues, in  
 that and the neighbouring provinces. But, as Ptolemy,  
 in a short time, had a son by Cleopatra, upon which occa-  
 sion it was necessary for Joseph, among other great officers  
 of state, to congratulate the king and queen, and to make  
 them such presents as were usual, he, being now too old  
 to take such a journey, and his other sons refusing to go,  
 was obliged to send Hyrcanus, who was the youngest, but  
 the best qualified for such a negotiation, to make his com-  
 pliment in his stead. But the history of the young man's  
 birth is somewhat remarkable.

The birth of Hyrcanus, and his perfidy at Alexandria. (q) As Joseph's occasions, in his less-advanced years,  
 called him frequently to Alexandria; one night, while he  
 was at supper with the king, (r) he fell desperately in love  
 with a beautiful damsel, that danced before him; and, not  
 being able to master his inordinate passion, he communi-  
 cated it to his brother Salimius, (who had accompanied him  
 in his journey, and carried with him a daughter of his,  
 with an intent to marry her at Alexandria), and desired of  
 him, if possible, to procure him the enjoyment of her;  
 but, as secretly as he could, because of the sin and shame  
 that would attend such an act. Salimius promised that he  
 would: But instead of that, he conveyed his own daughter  
 into his bed, and, the next morning, as secretly conveyed  
 her away, so that his brother never discovered the deceit.  
 In this manner Joseph accompanied with her several nights;

† It was by Hannibal's instigation that he entered upon this war,  
 wherein he was far from having the success which he expected.  
 Two years he took up in making preparations for it; and had got  
 together an army consisting of seventy thousand foot, twelve thou-  
 sand horse, and fifty-four elephants; but the Romans, with less  
 than half the number, met him near Magnesia, under mount Sippi-  
 lus, and there gave him a total overthrow.

(q) Jewish Antiq. lib. xii. c. 4.

(r) Ibid.

till

till, every time growing more and more enamoured, he made his complaint one day to his brother, of his hard fate, who, by the laws of his religion, was forbidden to marry the woman that he loved, because she was an alien : Whereupon the other discovered the whole matter to him, and how, instead of the admired dancer, he had put his daughter to bed to him, as thinking it more eligible to wrong his own child, than to suffer him to join himself to a strange woman, which their law expressly forbade. The surprisingness of this discovery, and the singular instance of his brother's kindness, so wrought upon Joseph's heart, that he immediately made the young woman his wife †, and of her, the next year, was born this Hyrcanus.

A. M. 3596, &c.  
Ant. Christ. 408, &c.  
from 1  
Macc. i. to  
vi. 7.; 2  
Macc. iii. to  
x. and from  
Jof. Hist.  
lib. xi. c. 7.  
to lib. xii.  
c. 14.

Hyrcanus, when he undertook the journey to Alexandria, persuading his father not to send his presents from Judea, but to purchase them rather at Alexandria, obtained, by this means, an unlimited credit upon his agent in that city : And therefore, when he came thither, instead of ten talents, (as might be expected), he demanded a thousand, which in our money amounts to above two hundred thousand pounds.

With this money he bought an hundred beautiful boys for the king, and an hundred beautiful young maids for the queen, at the price of a talent a-head; and when he presented them, they carried each a talent in their hands, the boys for the king, and the young maids for the queen; so that this article alone cost him four hundred talents. The rest he expended all in valuable gifts to the courtiers, and great officers about the king, except what he kept for his own private use.

By these means growing highly in favour with the king, queen, and all the court, he made use of his interest to

He is hated,  
and banished  
by his brothers  
and  
country-  
men, and  
forced at last  
to kill him-  
self.

† According to the Jewish law, an uncle might marry his niece, though an aunt (Levit. xviii. 12, 13, and xx. 19.) might not marry her nephew, for which the Jewish writers assign this reason :—That the aunt being in respect of the nephew, in the same degree with the father or mother, in the line of descent, hath naturally a superiority above him; and therefore for him to make her his wife, and thereby to bring her down to be in a degree below him, (as all wives in respect of their husbands are), would be to disturb and invert the order of nature; but that there is no such thing done, when the uncle married the niece, in which case, both keep the same degree and order that they were in before, without the least mutation; *Prideaux's Connection, anno 187.*

supplant

A. M. 3596, etc. Ant. Christ. 408, etc. from 1 Macc. i. to vi. 7.; 2 Macc. iii. to x. and from Jos. Hist. lib. xi. c. 7. to lib. xiii. c. 14.

his father; and under pretence of his old age and imbecility, obtained of the king a commission to be the collector of the royal revenues in all the country beyond Jordan; which so enraged his brothers, that (with their father's connivance at least, if not direct approbation) they conspired to way-lay him, and cut him off, as he returned: But the guards who attended him, and were to assist him in the execution of his office, proved too strong in the assault, wherein two of his brothers fell.

When he came to Jerusalem, however, his father would not see him, and nobody would own him; so that he passed over Jordan, and entered upon the execution of his office: But upon his father's death (which happened soon after) a war commenced between him and his surviving brothers, about the paternal estate, which, for some time, disturbed the peace of the Jews at Jerusalem. But as the high-priest, and generality of the people, sided with the brothers, he was again forced to retreat beyond Jordan, where he lived in a strong castle; until Antiochus Epiphanes, succeeding to the throne of Syria, and threatening to punish him according to his deserts, made him, for fear of his threats, fall upon his sword, and slay himself.

Upon the unhappy death of Antiochus the Great \*, his son Seleucus Philopater succeeded him in the kingdom of Syria, to which was annexed Judea, and the other adjacent provinces. At his first accession, he favoured the Jews, and supplied them with all things for the service

Heliodorus sent by Seleucus to seize the riches of the temple, is severely used by an apparition of angels.

\* On his coming into the province of Elymais, hearing that in that country there was a great treasure in the temple of Jupiter Belus, and being in great difficulties how to raise money to pay the Romans, he seized the temple by night, and spoiled it of all its riches; which so enraged the people of the country, that, to revenge this sacrilege, they rose upon him, and slew him, and all that were with him. He was a prince of a laudable character for humanity, clemency, beneficence, and of great justice in the administration of his government, and till the fiftieth year of his life, managed all his affairs with that valour, prudence, and application, as made him prosper in all his undertakings, and deservedly gained him the title of *the Great*; but in the latter part of his life, declining in the wisdom of his conduct, as well as in the vigour of his application, every thing he did then lessened him as fast as all his actions had aggrandised him before; *Prideaux's Connection, anno 187.*

of the temple at his own expence ; but being, some time after, informed by one Simon a Benjamite, that there were great riches in the temple, he sent his treasurer Heliodorus, to make seizure of them, and bring them to Antioch. But Heliodorus, going into the temple for that purpose, and entering into the sacred treasury, was stopped in his attempt by an apparition of angels, armed, as it were, to defend the place against his sacrilegious hands ; for these are the words wherein the history of the Maccabees relates the matter : —(s) *There appeared unto him an horse, with a terrible rider upon him, and adorned with a very fair covering, and he ran fiercely, and smote at him, with his fore-feet ; and he that sat upon the horse, seemed to have a compleat harness of gold. Moreover, two other men appeared before him, notable in strength, excellent in beauty, and comely in apparel, who stood by him on either side, scourging him continually, and giving him many sore stripes, insomuch that he fell to the ground ; but being taken up by those that attended him, and carried off in a litter, he continued speechless, and without all hopes of life, for some time, till, at the intercession of his friends, the high-priest prayed to God for him, and so he recovered.*

A. M.  
3596. &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
408. &c.  
from 1  
Macc. i. to  
vi. 7. ;  
Macc. iii.  
to x. and  
from Jos.  
Hist. lib. xi.  
c. 7. to lib.  
xii. c. 14.

Not long after this, the same Heliodorus, aspiring at the crown, poisoned his master Seleucus, in hopes of succeeding him ; but Eumenes, king of Pergamus, and Attalus, his brother, obstructed his design, and placed Antiochus, surnamed *Epiphanes*, (another son of Antiochus the Great), upon the Syrian throne, who proved a very terrible enemy, and persecutor of the Jews. No sooner was he settled in the kingdom, but being destitute of money, and having an heavy tribute to pay to the Romans, (t) he deposed Onias, a man of singular piety and goodness, from the high-priesthood, and for three hundred and sixty talents (which he engaged to pay yearly) sold it to his brother Jason. But as Jason had supplanted Onias, so his brother Menelaus, being sent to Antioch with this tribute-money, for three hundred talents more than Jason had given, purchased the priesthood, and had him in like manner, deposed : Whereupon he withdrew to the country of the Ammonites, waiting for some revolution in his favour.

Great bribery and corruption among the Jewish high-priests.

(s) 2 Macc. iii. 25. &c.  
Macc. c. 4.

(t) Chap. iv. 7. Joseph. de

A. M.  
396, etc.  
Ant. Chris.  
408, etc.  
from 1  
Macc. i. to  
vi. 7. ; 2  
Macc. iii. to  
x. and from  
Jof. Hift.  
lib. xi. c. 7.  
to lib. xii.  
c. 14.

Thus Menelaus got the chief-priesthood by out-bidding his brother ; but being summoned to appear before the king at Antioch, for non-payment of the money, (u) he left Lyfimachus, another of his brothers, his deputy in his absence, and, by his means, got many gold-vessels out of the temple, which he selling at Tyre, and the cities round about, raised money enough, not only to pay the king his tribute, but to bribe Andronicus † likewise to murder his brother Onias ; because he supposed, that at one time or other, he might stand in his way, and because he had lately taken the freedom to reprove him sharply for this gross piece of sacrilege.

Andronicus did it to earn the money, but was soon overtaken with justice at Antioch †, and Lyfimachus † slain by the people of Jerusalem ; yet such was the power of

(u) Maccab. iv. 29.

† This Andronicus seems to have been left by Antiochus at Antioch, to govern in his absence, and without this governour's interposition, Menelaus could not compass his end, to murder his brother ; for Onias had fled to the asylum at Daphne, a small distance from the city, which always used to be a place of retreat, secure and inviolable: And therefore Menelaus was forced to give the governour a round sum, to engage him (by false promises of safety) to prevail with his brother to come out, and as soon as he had him in his power, to dispatch him ; *Calmet's Comment.*

† For Onias having, by his laudable carriage, while he lived at Antioch, gained much upon the esteem and affections of the people of the place, Greeks as well as Jews, they took his murder in such high indignation, that they both joined in a petition to the king against Andronicus for it. Hereupon, cognisance being taken of the crime, and the wicked murderer convicted of it, Antiochus caused him, with infamy, to be carried to the place where the murder was committed, and there put to death for it, in such a manner as he deserved. For Antiochus (as wicked a tyrant as he was) had sorrow and regret upon him for the death of so good a man ; and therefore, in the revenging it, he satisfied his own resentments, as well as those of the people who had petitioned him for it ; *Prideaux's Connect. anno 172.*

† When it came to be known that Lyfimachus had been the chief instrument in robbing the temple, the multitude, fired with indignation, gathered themselves together against him, and tho' he attempted to form a party, under the command of one Tyrannus, an old experienced officer, in order to resist their rage, and defend himself ; yet the mob fell on them with such fury, that wounding some, and killing others, they forced the rest to flee ; and

of bribery at the Syrian court, that by the strength of this, Menelaus, who was the contriver of all these mischiefs, found means to clear himself before Antiochus, and to get the three delegates from the Sanhedrim, who came from Jerusalem on purpose to accuse him, condemned and executed.

While Antiochus was engaged in war with Egypt, a false rumour was spread in Palestine that he was dead; and Jason thinking this a fine opportunity for him to recover his station in Jerusalem as high priest, marched thither with above a thousand men; and having, by the assistance of the party which he had there, taken the city, and driven Menelaus into the castle, he acted all manner of cruelties upon his fellow-citizens, and put to death, without mercy, all that he could light on, whom he took to be his adversaries.

A. M. 3596, &c.  
Ant. Christ. 428, etc.  
from 1 Macc. i. to vi. 7; 2 Macc. iii. to x. and from Jos. Hist. lib. xii. c. 7. to lib. xii. c. 14.

Antiochus Epiphanes's cruelty to the Jews, and profanation and plundering of the temple.

Antiochus, hearing of this, and supposing that the whole Jewish nation had revolted from him, marched with all haste out of Egypt into Judea; and (x) being informed, on his march, that the people of Jerusalem, on the news which came of his death, had made great rejoicings; the sense of this so provoked him against them, that laying siege to the city, and taking it by storm ‡, he slew of the inhabitants, in three days time, forty thousand persons, and having taken as many more captives, sold them to the neighbouring nations.

and then seizing on Lyfimachus, him they slew beside the treasury within the temple, and thereby, for that time, put an end to this sacrilege; *Prideaux's Connection*, anno 172.

(x) 1 Maccab. i. 20. &c.; 2 Maccab. v. 6.; Joseph. Antiq. lib. xii. c. 8.

‡ Both the author of the second book of the Maccabees, chap. v. 11. and Diodorus Siculus, lib. xvi. tells us, that Antiochus took Jerusalem by force; and yet Josephus (in his 12th book of Antiquities, c. 7.) affirms, that he made himself master of it without any manner of difficulty, because the gates were set open to him by the treachery of a party he had made in the town: But herein he is contrary to himself. For in his history of the Jewish war, lib. i. c. 1, he says, that Antiochus took it *κατὰ Κεῖρας*, i. e. by force; and there represents him as enraged by what he had suffered in the siege; and in the same history, (lib. vi. c. 11.), he speaks of those who were slain at the siege, fighting in defence of the place. But the history of the Jewish wars, and that of his Antiquities, he wrote at different times, which might make him, in some places, not so consistent; *Prideaux's Connection*.

A. M.  
3596, &c.  
Ant. Christ  
403, &c.  
from 1  
Macc. i. to  
vi. 7.; 2  
Macc. i. i.  
to x. and  
from Jos.  
Hist. lib.  
xi. c. 7. to  
lib. xii. c.  
14.

Nor did all this satisfy his rage: For, notwithstanding his father's edict, he forced himself into the temple \*, and polluted. by his presence, both the holy place, and the holy of holies. He sacrificed a great sow upon the altar of burnt-offerings, and caused the broth (which was made of some part of the flesh) to be sprinkled all over the temple, that he might defile it as much as possible. He took away the altar of incense, the shew-bread table, the candlestick of seven branches, and several other golden vessels, utensils, and donatives of former kings, to the value of eight hundred talents of gold; and making the like plunder in the city, he returned to Antioch, (y) leaving behind him Philip a Phrygian, a man of a cruel and barbarous temper, to be governour of Judea; Andronicus, another of the like disposition, to be governour of Samaria; and Menelaus, who was worse than all the rest, to continue still over them in the office of high-priest.

\* Several Heathen authors, in their accounts of their king Antiochus, make mention of his taking a city, that was at peace and in alliance with him. (meaning thereby Jerusalem), committing many cruelties there, and plundering the temple, wherein he found great riches; but Diodorus Siculus, in his relation of this matter. lib. xxxiv. is more particular and express.—“ That this prince, having intruded into the most sacred place of the temple, (which none but the high-priest was permitted to enter), found there a stone-statue of a man, with a long beard, and a book in his hand, mounted upon an ass. This he took for Moses, the author of the law, and founder of the nation of the Jews, and of the city of Jerusalem; and therefore, to remove the cause of that universal hatred which all nations bore to the Jews, he went about abolishing of their law; and, to this purpose, caused a large sow to be sacrificed to this image of their legislator, on an altar which he found there; and, having sprinkled the blood and the broth that he made of the victim, and there-with polluted the sacred volume of their law, he made the high-priest, and other Jews, eat of its flesh, and put out the lamp, which used to be kept perpetually burning.” But several of these circumstances, (more especially that of a man mounted on an ass), are no where to be found in any other history; and may therefore, not improperly, be placed among those fables, which the Heathens invented and published, on purpose to give some colour for their inveterate hatred against the Jews; *Calmer's Commentary* on 1 Maccab. i. 23.

(y) 2 Maccab. v. 22, 23.

Not

Not long after this, (z) there were seen at Jerusalem, for forty days together, strange fights in the air of horsemen and footmen, armed with shields, spears, and swords, and in great companies fighting against, and charging each other, as in battle-array; which foreboded those calamities of war and desolation that soon after happened in that city and nation. For Antiochus, still breathing out rage against the poor Jews, sent Appolonius, one of his generals, with an army of two and twenty thousand men, and an express order to kill all the men that remained in Jerusalem, and to sell the women and children for slaves. (a) On his first arrival, Apollonius carried himself peaceably, concealing his intent, and forbearing all hostilities, till the return of the Sabbath, when he put his bloody commission in execution. (b) For, falling upon the city while the people were at their devotion, he massacred many of the inhabitants, plundered the place, led away the women and children captives, and forced the few that escaped to betake themselves to deserts and caves for shelter. Nor was this all: For in a short time after Antiochus made a decree, commanding all nations to leave their ancient rites and usages, and to conform to the religion of the king; which (however expressed in general terms) was chiefly designed against the Jews.

(c) The officer who was sent to see this decree put in execution, was one Athenæus, a man well-versed in all the ceremonies of the Grecian idolatry, and therefore thought a proper person to initiate the people into the observance of them. On his coming to Jerusalem, (d) all sacrifices to the God of Israel were superseded, and the rites of the Jewish religion suppressed. The temple itself was dedicated to Jupiter Olympius †, (whose image was set

(z) Ibid. ver. 2, 3. (a) 1 Mac. i. 29, 30. (b) 2 Mac. v. 24. &c. (c) Chap. vi. 1. (d) 1 Maccab. i. 44. &c. Jewish Antiq. lib. xii. c. 7.

† This profanation of the temple, and the erecting of this idol in it, had long before been foretold by the prophet Daniel, under the name of *abomination of desolation*, chap. xi. 31. For this is the description which he gives of the reign of Antiochus, and the bitter persecutions which he raised: *He shall return with indignation against the holy covenant, and have intelligence with them that forsake it. Armies shall stand on his side, and he shall pollute the sanctuary of strength, and shall take away the daily sacrifice, and there place the abomination (or abominable thing) that*

A. M.  
3596, etc.  
Ant. Christ.  
418, etc.  
from 1  
Mac. i. to  
vi. 7.; 2  
Mac. iii. to  
x. and from  
Jes. Hist.  
1 b. xi. c. 7.  
to 1 b. xii.  
c. 14.  
His massa-  
cring the  
people, and  
compelling  
them to i-  
dolatry.



A. M. 3596, etc. Ant. Christ. 408, etc. from 1 Mac. i. to vi. 7; 2 Mac. iii. to x. and from Jos. Hist. lib. xi. c. 7. to lib. xii. c. 14.

set up on the altar of burnt-offerings), and all the people, upon pain of death, were obliged to sacrifice to it. Those who met in caves to keep the Sabbath, if they happened to be discovered, were burnt. The book of the law was torn and cast into the fire; the circumcising of infants was forbidden; and women, accused of having circumcised their children, were led about the streets with those children hanging about their necks, and then both cast headlong over the steepest part of the walls.

No less severity was used to enforce upon the people the Heathen worship, which the decree enjoined, than there was to deter them from their own. In every city, altars, groves, and chapels, for idols, were set up, and officers sent to compel them, once every month, to offer victims to the Grecian gods, and to eat of the flesh of swine, and of other unclean beasts, that were at that time sacrificed. In short, no manner of cruelty was omitted to force the Jews to abandon their religion, and turn idolaters; but though, in this terrible persecution, some of these wretched people yielded to violence, many of them chose rather to die, than to forsake the law of their God.

The brave and heroic death of Eleazar, and Solomon, and her seven sons.

Among the latter sort, (e) those of the most memorable note were † Eleazar, a chief doctor of the law, and that

*maketh desolate, or (as in the margin) quite astonisheth. Such as do wickedly against the covenant, shall be corrupt by flatteries, but the people that know their God, shall do great exploits; and they that have understanding, shall instruct many; yet they shall fall by the sword, by famine, by captivity, and by spoil:—And the king shall do according to his will, and shall exalt and magnify himself above every God. He shall speak wonderful things against the God of gods, and shall prosper, till the indignation be accomplished; for that which is determined shall be done, ver. 30.*

(e) 2 Maccab. vi. Joseph de Maccabæis.

† Some interpreters are of opinion, that this was the same Eleazar, who, at the head of the seventy-two interpreters, that were to translate the Sacred Scriptures, was sent into Egypt, and that he suffered at Jerusalem, in the presence of the governor, named *Felix*; but Ruffinus (in his Latin paraphrase on the book of Josephus, concerning the Maccabees) will needs have it, that not only Eleazar, but the mother, and her seven sons, viz. Maccabæus, Aber, Machir, Judas, Ahas, Areth, and Jacob, (for these are the names which he gives them), were all carried from Judea to Antioch, and there suffered martyrdom. The reason of the thing, however, as well

that heroine Solomona, and her seven sons. Eleazar was a very aged man ; yet, when his persecutors would have compelled him to eat swine's flesh, (which they forced into his mouth) he spit it out ; and even when some, in pity to his age, would have given him leave to elude the sentence, by taking a piece of any other flesh, and eating it as swine's flesh, he scorned to purchase his life at so sordid a rate, desiring them to dispatch him, rather than suffer him to be guilty of dissimulation, and stain the honour of his gray hairs with so mean an act. Nor were the seven brothers and their mother inferior to him in religious courage and magnanimity : For when the king, pretending pity to their youth, and respect to their family, (which was noble), persuaded them to renounce their religion, and embrace that of the Gentiles, promising them great rewards and promotions, if they would comply ; and when, finding that this would have no effect, he ordered the great variety of torments, which he had provided, to be shown them, thinking thereby to affright them with the sad prospect of what they were to suffer ; the instruments of death did no more terrify, than the

A. M.  
3596, etc.  
Ant. Christ.  
408, etc.  
from 1  
Mac. i. to  
vi. 7. ; 2  
Mac. iii. to  
x. and from  
Jof. Hist.  
lib. xi. c. 7.  
to lib. xii.  
c. 14.

as the tenor of the history, which is given us by the author of the second book of Maccabees, chap. 6. and 7. and by Josephus in the above-mentioned book, make it much more likely, that Jerusalem, and not Antioch, was made the scene of this cruelty ; especially since it being designed for an example of terror to the Jews in Judea, it would have lost its force, had it been executed in any other country. But, wherever this happened, it is certain that Eleazar deserved all the commendation which the fathers have given him : For, whether we consider the purity of his sentiments, or the sublimity of his doctrine, or the delicacy of his conscience, we must acknowledge, that there are few saints in the Old Testament that have given us a more exact pattern of charity, sincerity, and magnanimity. *It becometh not our age, saith he, in any wise to dissemble, whereby many young persons might think, that Eleazar, being fourscore years old and ten, were now gone to a strange religion, and so they, thro' my hypocrisy, and desire to live a little time, and a moment longer, should be deceived by me, and I get a stain in my old age, and make it abominable. For though, for the present time, I should be delivered from the punishment of men, yet should I not escape the hand of the Almighty, neither alive nor dead ; wherefore now, manfully changing this life, I will shew myself such a one, as my age requireth,* 2 Maccab. vi. 24. &c. ; Calmet's Commentary, and Prie-  
deaux's Connection, anno 167.

allurements

A. M. 3596, etc. Ant. Chris. 408, etc. from 1 Mac. i. to vi. 7. ; 2 Mac. iii. to x. and from Jos. Hist. lib. xi. c. 7. to lib. xii. c. 14.

allurements of the tyrant did persuade them ; but, inspired with a truly holy zeal, and celestial bravery, “ they unanimously declared their obedience to the law of God, and the precepts which he had delivered by Moses ; assuring him, that all his cruelty could not hurt them ; that the only effect their tortures could have, would be to secure to them the glorious rewards of unshaken patience, and injured virtue ; but, at the same time, admonishing him, that, by the murder of so many innocent men, he would arm the divine vengeance against him, and for the momentary pains which he inflicted on them, would become himself obnoxious to everlasting torments.”

This is the main purport of most of their speeches ; but the variety of their tortures was almost innumerable, and, from the horror of them, inexpressible. All this while their mother stood by, beholding their sufferings, and exhorting every one, as it came to his turn, to behave gallantly. At length, when herself was only left, and the soldiers were approaching to carry her to execution, she prevented their rage, and all attempts upon her person, by throwing herself voluntarily into the fire †. Thus ended this doleful, but glorious day, with the death of the victorious Solomona, who triumphed in the sharpest agonies of her sons, and her own sufferings, and, through a sea of the most exquisite pains, waded to the port of eternal rest !

Mattathias slays an apostate Jew, and the King's commissioner, and then takes up arms in defence of his religion.

While this persecution raged at Jerusalem, (f) Mattathias, the son of John, the son of Simeon, the son of Asmonæus, (from whom the family had the name of *Asmonæans*), a priest of the course of Joarib †, with his five sons,

† The Latin version says, that she was dragged on the ground to execution, where, having cut off her breasts, and scourged her naked body, they flung her into a boiling cauldron : But the Arabic version, on the contrary, affirms. that, having lived to see her seven sons martyred, and lying dead on the ground before her, she flung herself into the midst of them, and praying to God, to take her out of the world, immediately expired ; *Universal History*, lib. ii. c. 11.

(f) 1 Maccab. ii. 1. &c. Jewish Antiq. lib. xii. c. 8.

† This was the first of the twenty-four courses of the priests that served in the temple, 1 Chron. xxiv. 7. and, because Mattathias undertook to determine for the necessity of fighting on the Sabbath, in case they were assaulted by the enemy, some have from

sons, John, Simeon, Judas, Eleazar, and Jonathan, retired to Modin, a little place in the tribe of Dan, and there bemoaned the hard fate of their religion and country. But they had not been long in this retreat, before Antiochus sent one of his military officers, named *Apelles*, to put his decree in execution.

Apelles, having called the people together, and told them the intent of his coming, addressed himself more particularly to Mattathias; persuading him to comply with the king's commands, that, by his example, he might influence others; and promising him withal, that, in case he would do so, he should be taken into the number of the king's friends, and promoted to great honour and riches. But to this Mattathias made answer, with a loud voice, and in the audience of all the people, that no consideration whatever should ever induce him, or any of his family, to forsake the law of their God; that the examples of those, who had apostatized, were no rule to him, nor the commandments of the greatest monarch of any validity, when they were sent to oblige him to embrace idolatry; and with these words, seeing a Jew of the place presenting himself at the Heathen altar, in order to offer sacrifice according to the king's injunctions, he ran up to the apostate, and, with a zeal like that of Phineas, slew him with his own hand; and then turning upon the king's commissioner, by the assistance of his sons, and those that were with them, dispatched him likewise, and all that attended him.

After this, Mattathias overturned the altars, and pulled down the idols that were in the place; and, having got together his own family, and invited all that were zealous for the law, to follow him, he retired to the mountains, in order to make there the best defence he could: But

from hence inferred, that the people had made choice of him for their high-priest: But, besides that this decision is not sufficient to prove this, and that it no where appears, that he ever performed the office of high-priest, but only put himself at the head of a poor distressed people, as being a person of the greatest power and authority among them, it is certain, that both Menelaus and Alcimus were then alive; and tho' they were wicked men, and intruders into the office, yet they were nominated by King Antiochus, (who then assumed the right of nomination) and so were looked upon as high-priests; *Calmet's Dictionary*, under the word *Mattathias*.

A. M. 3596, &c.  
Ant. Chris. 408, &c.  
from 1 Macc. i. to vi. 7; 2. Macc. iii. to x. and from Jos. Hist. lib. xi. c. 7. to lib. xii. c. 14.

A. M.  
3596, etc.  
Ant. Chriſt.  
403, etc.  
from 1.  
Macc. i. to  
vi. 7.; 2.  
Macc. iii. to  
x. and from  
Joſ. Hiſt.  
lib. xi. c. 7.  
to lib. xii.  
c. 14.

the Jews † had one principle, which, in the beginning of this reſiſtance, had like to have ruined them quite, and that was the ſcrupulous obſervation of the Sabbath, even to ſuch a degree, as not to defend themſelves on that day; whereof their enemies taking the advantage, deſtroyed great numbers of them, without their making the leaſt oppoſition. Mattathias however and his followers, finding the fatality of their miſtake in this particular, (g) made a decree, (which was confirmed by the unanimous conſent of all the prieſts and elders among them), that, when-

† By the law of Moſes, the Jews were commanded to *do no manner of work on the Sabbath-day*; but this was a precept which would admit of ſome exceptions, and what ſome people took in a more rigorous ſenſe, than others. The Samaritans, for inſtance, thought themſelves obliged to obſerve it to ſuch a degree of ſtrictneſs, as not to ſtir out of their places on that day, becauſe the law is literally ſo expreſſed, Exod. xvi. 29.; but the Jews were of opinion, that they were permitted to make their eſcape from danger, or to walk ſuch a compaſs of ground, (which they called a *Sabbath-day's journey*), if it were for any neceſſary occaſion, on that day. In our Saviour's time, it was allowable, they thought, to pull any animal out of a pit, or a ditch, on that day, Matth. xii. 11.; but the Talmudical doctors were for revoking that permiſſion, and found fault with him for even healing the ſick and the lame, on the Sabbath. Mattathias, and his company, by ſundry experiences, were convinced, that too ſcrupulous an obſervance of the Sabbath had brought ſeveral calamities upon their nation; that Ptolemy, the ſon of Lagus, the firſt king of Egypt of that name, by aſſaulting Jeruſalem on the Sabbath-day, (wherein the Jews would do nothing to defend themſelves), became maſter of it without oppoſition; and that (but juſt lately) a great number of their brethren had been paſſively ſlain, becauſe they would not ſo much as handle their arms on that day; and thereupon they came to a reſolution to defend themſelves, whenever they were attacked, be the day what it would; but we do not find, that they came to any deciſion, whether they themſelves were to attack the enemy on the Sabbath. On the contrary, it ſeems, as if they had determined, that they were only permitted to repel force by force; and therefore we read, that, when Pompey beſieged the temple, obſerving that the Jews did barely defend themſelves on the ſeventh day, he ordered his men to offer no hoſtilities, but only to raiſe the batteries, plant their engines, and make their approaches on that day, being well aſſured, that in doing of this, he ſhould meet with no moleſtation from them; and, by this means, he carried the place much ſooner, than he otherwiſe would have done; *Jewiſh Antiq. lib. 14. c. 8.*; *Jewiſh Wars, lib. 1. c. 5.*; and *Calmet's Commentary on 1 Maccab. ii. 14.*  
(g) 1 Maccab. ii. 40. 41.; *Jewiſh Antiq. lib. xi. c. 8.*

ever

ever they were attacked on the Sabbath-day, is was lawful for them to fight for their lives, and to defend themselves in the best manner they could, which afterwards became a general rule in all their wars.

While Mattathias abode in the mountains, great multitudes of Jews, who had any true concern for their holy religion, came, and joined him; and, among these, there was a good company of Assideans, † men mighty in valour, and extremely zealous for the law; so that, when he had got together such a number, as made the appearance of a small army, (b) he came out of his fastnesses, and, going round the cities of Judah, pulled down the Heathen altars; re-established the true worship; caused the children to be circumcised; cut off all apostates, that fell in his way; and destroyed all persecutors, wherever he came. Having thus acted the part of a brave and prudent

A. M.  
3596, &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
408, &c.  
from 1  
Macc. i. to  
vi. 7.; 2  
Macc. iii. to  
x. and from  
Jof. Hist.  
lib. xi. c. 7.  
to lib. xii.  
c. 14.  
He destroys  
all idolatrous  
worship, and,  
having acted  
the part  
of a brave  
general,  
appoints  
his son Ju-  
das his suc-  
cessor.

† When the Jewish church came to be settled again in Judea, after the return of the Babylonish captivity, there were two sorts of men among the members of it; the one, who contented themselves with that only, which was written in the law of Moses, and these were called *Zadikim*, i. e. the *righteous*; and the other, who, over and above the law, added the constitutions and traditions of the elders, and, by way of supererogation, devoted themselves to many rigorous observances; and these, being reckoned in a degree of holiness above the others, were called *Chasidim*, i. e. the *Pious*. From the former of these were derived the sects of the Samaritans, Sadducees, and Karaites, and from the latter the Pharisees, the Essenes, and Assideans. These Assideans, or Chasideans rather, (as they should be written), were a kind of religious society, whose chief and distinguishing character was, to maintain the honour of the temple; and therefore they were not only content to pay the usual tribute for the reparation of it, but charged themselves with farther expences upon that account; for every day (except that of the great expiation) they sacrificed a lamb, besides those of daily oblation, which was called the *sin-offering of the Assideans*. They practised greater hardships and mortifications than the rest, and their common oath was *by the temple*, for which our Saviour reproves the Pharisees, Matth. xxiii. 16. who had learned that oath of them. Mattathias however, being joined by men of this principle, who made it one of the main points of their piety to fight zealously for the defence of the temple, (which was then fallen into the hands of the Heathen), was not a little strengthened in his party, and in some measure able to take the field; Scaliger, in *Elench. Tribereſii*, &c.; Prideaux's *Connection*, anno 197; and Calmer's *Commentary*.

(b) 1 Macc. ii. 44. &c.: Jewish Antiq. lib. xii. c. 8.

A. M.  
3596, &c  
Ant. Chris.  
408, &c.  
from 1  
Macc. i. to  
vi. 7; 2  
Macc. iii. to  
x. and from  
Jof. Hist.  
lib. xi. c. 7.  
to lib. xii.  
c. 14.  
Judas, be-  
ing made  
general, o-  
vercomes  
Antiochus's  
armies in  
fix several  
engage-  
ments,

general, for the small time he had the command of his little army, Mattathias was forced at last to submit to the weight of an hundred and forty-six years; but, before his death, (i) he called his five sons together, and, having exhorted \* them to stand up valiantly for the law of God, and, with a steady courage and constancy, to fight the battles of Israel against the present persecutors, he appointed Judas to be their captain in his stead, and Simeon to be their counsellor; and so, giving up the ghost, he was buried at Modin, in the sepulchres of his forefathers, and all the faithful in Israel made great lamentation for him.

Judas † (who is surnamed *Maccabæus*) as he had taken upon him the command, went round the cities of Judea, in

(i) 1 Macc. ii. 49, &c. Jewish Antiq. lib. xii. c. 8.

\* The speech which Josephus puts in the mouth of old Mattathias upon this occasion, is widely different from what we find in 1 Macc. ii. 49. &c. but not undeserving of our observation. “ — — My “ dear sons,” says he, “ my life is drawing to an end; but I am to “ charge you, upon my blessing, before I leave you, that you stand “ firm to the cause that your father has asserted before you, with- “ out any staggering or shrinking. Remember what I have told “ you, and do as I have advised you. Do your utmost to support “ the rights and laws of your country, and to restore the order of “ a nation that wants but very little of being swallowed up in con- “ fusion. Have nothing to do with those that, either for fear or “ for interest, have betrayed it. Shew yourselves to be sons worthy “ of such a father; and, in contempt of all force and extremity, “ carry your lives in your hands, and deliver them up with com- “ fort, if any occasion should require it, in defence of your country; “ computing with yourselves, that this is the way to preserve your- “ selves in God’s favour, and that, in consideration of so unshaken “ a virtue, he will in time restore you to the liberty of your former “ life and manners. Our bodies, it is true, are mortal; but great “ and generous actions will make us immortal in our memory; and “ that is the glory I would have you aspire to, that is to say, the “ glory of making the history of your lives famous to after-ages by “ your illustrious actions.” The rest of his speech agrees with what we find in the book of Mattathias, wherein he distributes to each son the office that he knew him best qualified for; and then concludes, “ Do but mind your business, and depend upon it, that “ all men of honour and piety will join with you;” *Jewish Antiq. lib. xii. c. 8.*

† The reason why Judas had the name of *Maccabæus* given him, according to the most general opinion, is, that he had the initial

in the same manner as his father had done, destroying every where all utensils and implements of idolatry ; slaying all idolaters and apostate Jews ; rescuing the true worshippers of God from the hands of their oppressors ; and, for their better security for the future, fortifying their towns, rebuilding their fortresses, and placing strong garrisons in them. These proceedings gave the Syrian court some umbrage ; and therefore Antiochus (*k*) ordered Apollonius †, his governour in Samaria, to raise forces, and go against him ; but Judas, having defeated and slain him, made a great havock among his troops, and, finding the governour's sword among the spoils, he took it for his own use, and generally fought with it all his life after. Seron, the deputy-governour of some part of Cælo-Syria, hearing of Apollonius's defeat, got together all the forces that were under his command, and, in hopes of gaining himself honour, (*l*) came in pursuit of Judas ; but, instead of that he met with the same fate, being vanquished and slain in the manner that Apollonius was.

Enraged at these two defeats, Antiochus sent three eminent commanders, Ptolemy-Macron, Nicanor, and

tial letters of *Mi Camo-ka Baelim Jehovah*, i. e. *Who is like unto thee among the gods, O Jehovah?* (Exod. xv. 11.) for the motto upon his standard ; which letters, being put together, made the artificial word *Maccabi* ; that from thence all that fought under that standard were called *Maccabees*, or *Maccabæans* ; and that he, in a more especial manner, as being the captain of them, had that name by way of eminence. It cannot be denied, indeed, but that abbreviations of this and several other kinds, were very frequent among the Jews, and that the Romans bore upon their ensigns the letters S. P. Q. R. *Senatus Populusque Romanus* : but still it must be owned, that Judas was called by this name, 1 Macc. ii. 4,—66. before ever he set up this standard ; and therefore others chuse rather to derive it from the Hebrew words *Mak-ke baiab*, i. e. *a conqueror in the Lord*, which explication both the double *c* which occurs in the word *Maccabee*, and his father's account of Judas, viz. that he had been mighty and strong even from his youth, seem to favour ; *Prideaux's Connection*, anno 167 ; and *Calmet's Commentary* on 1 Macc. ii. 4.

(*k*) 1 Macc. iii. 10. Jewish Antiq. lib. xi. c. 10.

† This, in all probability, was the same Apollonius whom Antiochus sent at first to plunder Jerusalem, and afterwards to set up the statue of Jupiter Olympius, and to compel the Jews to relinquish their religion ; *Calmet's Commentary*.

(*l*) 1 Macc. iii. 13. &c. Joseph. Antiq. lib. xii. c. 10.

Gorgias,



A. M.  
3596, etc.  
Ant. Christ.  
408, etc.  
from 1  
Macc. i. to  
vi. 7.; 2  
Macc. iii. to  
x. and from  
Jof. Hist.  
lib. xi. c. 7.  
to lib. xii.  
c. 14.

Gorgias, to manage the war against the Jews; who, with an army of forty thousand foot, and seven thousand horse, together with a great number of auxiliaries from neighbouring nations, and renegado Jews, (*m*) came, and encamped at Emmaus \*, not far from Jerusalem. Judas, on the other hand, marched with his men to Mizpeh, † where, having implored God's merciful assistance in this time of distress, and \* encouraged them in words proper



(*m*) Ver. 39, &c. and Josephus, *ibid.*

\* This was a village lying to the west of Jerusalem, and between seven and eight miles from it. It was honoured with our Saviour's presence after his resurrection, and therein were hot baths, (for Emmaus comes from the Hebrew *Chamath*, which signifies *baths of hot water*) that were very beneficial to those that used them; *Calmet's Dictionary*, under the word.

† At this time Jerusalem was in the hands of the Heathens, and the sanctuary trodden under foot; so that Judas could not assemble his men there, to implore the assistance of God in this time of imminent danger; and therefore he repaired to Mizpeh, a place where the people oftentimes used to assemble to prayer, (Jud. xx. 1. 1 Kings xv. 22. 2 Chron. xvi. 6.) Here he and all his army addressed themselves to God, in solemn fasting and prayer, for his assistance and protection: And herein he acted the part of a wife and religious commander, as knowing that the battle was the Lord's, and that therefore it would be impious to begin any such enterprize, without first imploring the divine aid; *Prideaux's Connection*, anno 166.

\* The speech which Judas makes to his men upon this occasion, as we have it in Josephus, is a very excellent one:——“ We shall never have,” says he, “ my fellow soldiers and companions, such an opportunity again of showing our bravery in the defence of our country, and the contempt of all dangers, as we have now before us; for, upon the issue of to-morrow's combat depends not only our liberty, but all the comforts and advantages that attend it; and, over and above the blessing of such a freedom, our very religion lies at stake with it too, and we cannot secure the one, but by preserving the other. Bethink yourselves well, therefore, what it is you are to contend for, and you will find it to be no less than the sum and substance of the greatest happiness that you have ever enjoyed, that is to say, in the peaceable possession of your ancient laws, rites, and discipline. Now, whether you will rather chuse to perish with infamy, and to involve the miserable remainder of all your countrymen in the same ruin, or to venture one generous push for the redemption of yourselves and your friends, that is the single question. Death is the same thing to the coward that it is to the valiant man, and as certain

“ to

per on such an occasion to fight for their religion, laws, and liberties, with a courage undaunted, and (as the cause was God's) with a firm assurance of success, he led them forth to the engagement. But, having first caused proclamation (n) to be made, that all such as had that year built houses, planted vineyards, betrothed wives, or were in any degree fearful, should depart, his six thousand men, which he had at first, were reduced to three thousand.

(o) With this handful of men, however, he was resolved to give the enemy battle. But hearing, that Gorgias was detached from them with five thousand foot, and a thousand horse, to surprise his camp by night, he countermined his plot by another of the same kind: For, quitting his own camp, and marching towards the enemy, he fell upon them, (while Gorgias with the best of his forces was absent), and put them into such a surprise, and confusion, that they took their heels, and fled, leaving him master of their camp, and three thousand of their men dead upon the spot.

Gorgias, coming to the Jewish camp, found it empty; and concluding from thence, that Judas had fled into the mountains for fear, he pursued him thither; but, when he found him not, and was returning to his own camp, he understood that it had been entered and burnt; that the main army was broken and fled; and that Judas was ready in the plains to give him a warm reception. Hereupon he could no longer keep his men together; for, seized with a panic fear, they flung down their arms, and fled: When Judas, putting himself in pursuit of them, slew great numbers more, so that the whole amounted to nine thousand, and of those that escaped from the battle, most were sore wounded and maimed. Judas, (p) with

"to the one as the other; but there is great difference in point of honour, and everlasting fame, between a gallant man, that falls in vindication of his religion, liberties, laws, and country, and a scoundrel that abandons all for fear of losing a life which he cannot save at last. Take these things into your thoughts, and make this use of the meditation. You have nothing to trust to but God's providence, and your own concurring resolutions, and, at the worst, while we contend for victory, we can never fail of glory;" *Jewish Antiq. lib. xii. c. 11.*

(n) Deut. xx. 7, 8. (o) 1 Macc. iv. 1. &c.  
(p) 1 Macc. iv. 23. &c. *Jewish Antiq. lib. xi. c. 10.*

his

A. M. his victorious army, returning from the chase, entered the  
 3596, &c. enemies camp, where he found plenty of rich plunder ;  
 Ant. Christ. and so proceeding in triumph to Jerusalem, celebrated the  
 408, &c. next day (which was the Sabbath) with great devotion, re-  
 from 1 joicing and praising God for this signal and merciful deli-  
 Macc. i. to verance.

x. and from Judas, after this, having intelligence, that Timotheus,  
 Jos. Hist. (q) governour of the country beyond Jordan, and Bacchi-  
 lib. xi. c. 7. des, another lieutenant in those parts, were drawing for-  
 to lib. xii. ces together, in order to invade him, marched directly a-  
 c. 14. gainst them ; and having overthrown them in a great bat-  
 tle, slew above twenty thousand of their men, enriched his  
 army with their spoils, and, out of them, provided him-  
 self with arms, and other things necessary for the future  
 carrying on of the war.

(r) Lyfias, whom the king, when he went upon his  
 expedition into Persia, had constituted chief governour of  
 all the country from Euphrates to Egypt, being vexed and  
 ashamed at all these defeats, put himself at the head of  
 an army of sixty thousand foot, and five thousand horse ;  
 and marching into Judea, with a full intent to destroy the  
 country, and all its inhabitants, he pitched his camp at  
 Bethzura, † a strong place lying to the south of Jerusalem,  
 near the confines of Idumea †. There Judas met him  
 with

(q) 2 Maccab. viii. 30, 31.  
 Jewish Antiq. ibid.

(r) 1 Maccab. iv. 26, &c.;

† It had been fortified by King Rehoboam, (2 Chron. xi. 7.)  
 and was, at this time, a very important fortress, as being one of  
 the keys of Judea on the south side of Idumea ; *Universal History*,  
*lib. ii. c. 11.*

† Wherever the name of Idumea, or the land of Edom, occurs  
 in any of the writings of the Old Testament, it is to be understood  
 of that Idumea, or land of Edom, which lay between the lake of  
 Sodom and the Red sea, and was afterwards called *Arabia Petraa*.  
 But the inhabitants of this country, being driven out by the Naba-  
 thæans, while the Jews were in the Babylonish captivity, and their  
 land laid desolate, they then took possession of as much of the south-  
 ern part of it as contained what had formerly been the whole inhe-  
 ritage of the tribe of Simeon, and half of the tribe of Judah,  
 where, at this time, they dwelt, but had not as yet embraced the  
 Jewish religion. And this is the only Idumea, and the inhabitants  
 of it the only Idumæans, or Edomites, which are any where spo-  
 ken of after the Babylonish captivity. After their coming into this  
 country, Hebron, which had formerly been the metropolis of the  
 tribe

with ten thousand men only; and having engaged his numerous army, and slain five thousand of them, the rest he put to flight, and sent Lyfias back again with his baffled forces to Antioch, but with a purpose to come again with a greater strength another year.

By this retreat of his, Judas having made himself master of all Judea, thought it his duty to purge the house of the Lord, and to remove those profanations, which, for three years last past, it had been forced to submit to. To this purpose, he appointed a certain number of priests to cleanse the sanctuary, to pull down the altar which the Heathens had set up, and to build another of (s) unhewn stones, to consecrate the courts anew, and to make all things again fit and commodious for the service of God.

Antiochus, in his sacrilegious pillage of the temple, (which we have related), had taken away the altar of incense, the table of the shew-bread, the golden candlestick, and several other vessels, and utensils, without which the service could not regularly be performed; but out of the spoils (t) which Judas had taken from the enemy, he was able to have all these things made anew, of the same metal, and in the same manner as they were before; and having thus put all things in their proper order, he had the temple dedicated again, with as much solemnity as the present state of affairs would permit, and in commemoration hereof, appointed a festival † of eight days continuance (which began on the fifth of the month Chisleu, much about the twentieth of our November) to be annually observed.

But

tribe of Judah, became the capital of Idumea, and between that and Jerusalem, lay Bethzura, a strong fortress, which the author of the second book of Maccabees, chap. xi. 5. places at no more than five furlongs distance from Jerusalem; but this is a visible mistake; for Eusebius makes it, at least, twenty miles distant from it; *Prideaux's Connection, anno. 165.*

(r) Exod. xx. 25.; Deut. xxviii. 5.; Josh. viii. 31.

(t) Maccab. iv. 49.

† This festival is commemorated in the gospel, John ii. 23. and our blessed Saviour, we are told, came up to Jerusalem on purpose to bear a part in the solemnising of it. Some indeed are of opinion, that it was another dedication-feast, which Christ thus honoured with his presence; but besides that the dedications both of Solomon's and Zerubbabel's temples (though they were very solemnly celebrated at the first erection of these temples) had never any anniversary feast afterwards kept in com-

A. M.  
3596, &c;  
Ant. Christ.  
408, &c.  
from 1  
Macc. i. to  
vi. 7.; 2  
Macc. iij. to  
x. and from  
Jof. Hist.  
lib. xi. c. 9.  
to lib. xii.  
c. 14.

He purifies  
the temple  
and blocks  
up the fort  
of Acra.

A. M.  
3596, etc.  
Ant. Chris.  
408, etc.  
from 1  
Macc. i. to  
vi. 7.; 2  
Macc. iii. to  
x. and from  
Jof. Hift.  
lib. xi. c. 7.  
to lib. xii.  
c. 14.

But though the temple was recovered and restored to its former use. yet Apollonius, at his taking Jerusalem, had erected a fortress on mount Acra †, which commanding the mountain of the temple, and being still in the hands of the enemy, gave him the advantage of annoying all those who went up to the temple to worship. To remedy this inconvenience, Judas, at first, blocked up the fortress; but finding that he could not conveniently spare such a number of men as were necessary for that purpose, (u) he caused the mountain of the temple to be fortified with strong walls and high towers, and placed therein a sufficient garrison, both to defend it, and protect those who went up to worship.

When the neighbouring nations came to understand that the Jews had recovered the city and temple of Jerusalem, and again restored the worship of God in that place, (x) they were moved with such envy and hatred against memoration of them, the very history of the gospel (which tells us, that it was kept in winter) confines us to this dedication of Judas only. That of Solomon was on the seventh month, which fell about the time of the autumnal equinox; and that of Zerubbabel was on the twelfth month, which fell in the beginning of the Spring; but that of Judas Maccabeus was on the twenty-fifth day of the ninth month, which fell in the middle of winter. So that the feast of the dedication which Christ was present at in Jerusalem, was no other than that which was instituted by Judas, in commemoration of his dedication of the temple anew, after that it had been cleansed from idolatrous pollutions; and from hence Grotius (in his commentary on the gospel of St. John, chap. x. 22.) very justly observes, that festival days, in memory of public blessings, may be piously instituted by persons in authority, without a divine command; *Prideaux's Connection*, anno 166.

† The word *Acra*, which is of Greek original, signifies in general *a citadel*, in which sense the Syrians and Chaldeans used it: But when Antiochus gave orders for building of a citadel on the north side of the temple, upon an eminence that commanded it, the hill itself was called by the name of *Acra*; which, according to Josephus, lib. xii. c. 7, 14. was in the form of a semicircle. John Maccabeus took it out of the hands of the Syrians, who there kept a garrison, and pulled down its fortifications, and in their room, were afterwards built the palace of Helena, and that of Agrippa, a place where the public records were kept, and another where the magistrates of Jerusalem assembled; *Calmet's Dictionary*, under the word.

(u) 1 Macc. iv. 60.; Jewish Antiq. lib. xii. c. 11.  
(x) 1 Macc. v. 1, &c.

them,

them, that they proposed to join with Antiochus in the extirpation of the whole nation; and accordingly had put all to death whom they found sojourning among them: But Judas having first fortified Bethzura, to be a barrier against the Idumæans, who, at this time, were bitter enemies to the Jews, made war against them, and all the other nations that had confederated against him, in such a manner, and with such success, as shall hereafter be related.

Antiochus, in his expedition into Persia, was not so successful as he expected: For (y) being informed that Elymais, a city in that country, was an opulent place, wherein stood the temple of Diana \*, where immense riches were to be found, he marched his army thither, with an intent to plunder both it and the temple: But the country round about, taking the alarm, joined with the inhabitants in defence of the city and temple, and having beat him off, they obliged him to return to Ecbatana in Media, where, with shame and confusion, having

A. M.  
3596, etc.  
Ant. Chris.  
408, etc.  
from 1  
Macc. i. to  
vi. 7; 2  
Macc. iiii. to  
x. and from  
Jof. Hist.  
lib. xi. c. 7.  
to lib. xii.  
c. 14.

Antiochus's  
defeat, dis-  
appoint-  
ment, and  
miserable  
end at last.

(y) Chap. vi. 1, &c.

\* Other authors agree with the account in the first book of Maccabees, that the temple of Elymais was prodigiously rich; and both Polybius and Diodorus Siculus (as they are cited by St. Jerom, on Dan. xi.) mention this attempt of the king of Syria to plunder it. But the manner in which he came to be disappointed, is related quite differently in the second book of Maccabees. For therein we are told, that when Antiochus, pretending that he would marry the goddess of the temple (whose name was Nanea), that thereby he might have the better title to the riches of it, by way of dowry, was let into the temple, to take possession of them, the priests opened a secret door that was in the ceiling, and from thence threw upon him and his attendants such a shower of stones, as quite overwhelmed them, and so cut off their heads, and cast them out, 2 Maccab. i. 13, &c.; but who the goddess Nanea, who had this temple at Elymais, was, the conjectures of the learned are various, since some will have her to be Venus, and others Cybele the mother of the gods, because the word in the Persian language signifies *mother*, though the most common opinion is, that she was Diana, or the Moon, the same that Strabo calls *Anais*, or *Anaitis*: For that she was held to be a virgin-goddess is plain, because Antiochus pretended to espouse her; and that she was a chaste goddess, Plutarch (De Artaxerxe) seems to intimate, when he tells us, that Artaxerxes took the beautiful Aspasia (whom himself was in love with) from his son Darius, and devoted her to a perpetual virginity, in the service of Anais, the goddess of Ecbatana; *Calmet's Commentary* on 1 Maccab. vi. 1.

A. M. 3596, e. c. Ant. Christ. 408, etc. from 1 Macc. i. to vi. 7. ; 2 Macc. iii. to x. and from Jos. Hist. lib. xii. c. 7. to lib. xii. c. 14.

received news of the ill success of his arms in Judea, and how the Jews had pulled down the images and altars that he had erected, recovered their temple at Jerusalem, and restored that place to its former worship, he made all the haste home he possibly could, threatening; as he went along, utterly to destroy the whole nation, and make Jerusalem the common place of sepulture to all the Jews. But (z) while these proud words were in his mouth, the judgments of God overtook him; for he was instantly seized with a pain in his bowels, and a grievous torment in his inward parts, which no remedy could assuage. Being resolute however in his revenge, he ordered his charioteer to double his speed; but, in the rapid motion, the chariot was overturned, and he thrown to the ground with such violence, as sorely bruised his whole body, and mashed (as it were) his limbs with the fall; so that being able to travel no farther, he was forced to put in at Tabæ, a little town in the confines of Persia and Babylonia, where he suffered most exquisite torments both of body and mind. In his body, a filthy ulcer broke out in his privy parts, wherein were bred an innumerable quantity of vermin, continually flowing from it, and such a stench proceeding from thence, as neither those that attended him, nor even he himself, could well bear: And in this condition he lay, languishing and rotting, till he died. In his mind, his torments were no less, by reason of the several spectres and apparitions of evil spirits, which he imagined were continually about him, reproaching and stinging his conscience with accusations of the evil deeds which he had been guilty of. Being made sensible at length by his afflictions, that all his sufferings were from the hand of God, for his plundering and profanation of his temple at Jerusalem, and for his hatred and cruelties to his servants, who worshipped there, (a) he made an ample acknowledgment of this before he died, and many vows and solemn promises of a full reparation, in case he recovered. But his repentance † came too

(z) 2 Maccab. ix. 5, &c. (a) 1 Maccab. vi. 12, 13.; 2 Maccab. ix. 11, 18.; Joseph. Antiq. lib. xii. c. 13.

† This wicked king is an example of all hardened sinners, and false penitents, whose only motive of turning to God, is their fear, or feeling of punishment. The Maccabean martyrs had threatened, or rather foretold, that *through the judgment of God, he should receive a just punishment for his pride*, 2 Maccab.

too late: And therefore, after having languished out a while in this miserable condition, and under these horrid torments of body and mind, at length, being half consumed with the rottenness of his ulcer, he gave up the ghost, and died, after he had reigned eleven years.

A. M.  
3596, etc.  
Ant. Chris.  
408, etc.  
from 1  
Macc. i. to  
vi. 7. ; 2  
Macc. iii. to  
x. and from  
Jof. Hist.  
lib. xi. c. 7.  
to lib. xii.  
c. 14.

The O B J E C T I O N.

“ **A** Ntiochus Epiphanes, we allow, was a very wicked man, and a great persecutor of the Jewish church and nation; but it does not appear from any other historian, (b) that he died in the miserable manner that is here related; that he had any remorse of conscience for having slain the Jews, and pillaged the temple; or was frightened, upon that account, with spectres and apparitions, before he died. On the contrary, we find, even by the confession of Josephus (c) himself, that he was a man of a frank and generous temper, and had therefore the character (d) of the magnanimous and munificent; that he had conferred several benefits (e) upon the Jews, as this author of the book of Maccabees makes him speak; that what severities he inflicted upon them, were with a good intent (as Tacitus \* reports) to cure them of their superstition, and to establish an uniformity of religion throughout his kingdom; and that, upon this account therefore, there was no reason for any remorse or recantation in him, or for any judgment from God in the singularity of his death.

“ It might be thought fit, however, in a book designed on purpose to aggrandize the Jewish nation, (as the history of the Maccabees seems to be), to have every thing turn upon the marvellous. For is it not unaccountable, that Judas Maccabeus, with such a handful of men, as the history gives him, should rout and destroy such multitudes of veteran troops, and that (f) without any

vii. 36. and therefore, when he called, God would not answer; but (as the Royal Penman expressed) laughed at his calamity, and mocked when his distress and anguish came upon him, Prov. i. 26, 27.

(b) 2 Maccab. ix. (c) Lib. xii. c. 11. (d) Μεγαλόθυρος καὶ φιλόδοτος. (e) 1 Maccab. iv. 26.

\* His words are these, — Rex Antiochus, demere superstitionem, et mores Græcorum dare adnexus; quo minus teterrimam gentem in melius mutaret, Partharum bello prohibitus est; lib. v.

(f) 1 Maccab. iv. 6.

“ swords



A. M. 3596, &c. Ant. Christ. 408, &c. from 1 Macc. i. to vi. 7; 2 Macc. iii. to x. and from Jos. Hist. lib. xi. c. 7. to lib. xii. c. 14.

“ swords or armour; and in one expedition, fight battles. “ disperse armies, relieve some towns, take others by storm, and all this (g) without the loss of one man? “ Is it not very wonderful, that the Jewish people (a-bove all others) should be forewarned of an approaching war, or any other national (h) calamity, by apparitions in the air; or that, at this time (above all others) they should have their temple secured from all profane and sacrilegious hands by a celestial guard of angels? Pto-lemy Philopater might possibly be struck with the aw-fulness of the place, and so retire; but the adventure of (k) Heliodorus, and the angel mounted on horseback to guard the sacred treasures, while two others, on foot, were cutting and scourging him without mercy, seems to go beyond the extravagance of a romance, and makes the conduct of the elephants (l), in sparing the poor Jews, and falling upon the spectators, less surprising.”

Answered, by shewing that Epi-phanes is thus repre-sented by Polybius.

Of what weight and authority both the history of the Maccabees, and that of the Jews by Josephus ought to be accounted, we shall have occasion to enquire in the two following chapters, and need only here observe, that what the Maccabæan history has recorded of Antiochus Epi-phanes is, in a great measure, confirmed by the testimony of Polybius, an exact historian, who was contemporary with him, and could not therefore be at a loss for proper instructions in what he wrote. Epiphane (according to (m) him) was a man of great expence, and squandered a-way vast sums in the gratification of his lusts and amours, in the gifts he bestowed upon his favourites, and the en-tertainments he made for the people: But then Athenæus (n) informs us, “ That all these expences were made partly “ out of the gifts which his friends sent him, partly out “ of the prey which he took from Ptolemy king of E-gypt, when he was a minor; but chiefly out of the spoils “ of the many temples which he sacrilegiously robbed.”

(o) *I was bountiful, and beloved in my power; and (p) I have done great benefits, both public and private, to the Jews.* These were the vain boasts of the dying tyrant:

(g) Chap. v. 54. (h) 2 Maccab. v. 2, 3. (k) Chap. iii. 24, &c. (l) Chap. xi. 11. (m) Deipnosoph. lib. vi. (n) Apud Athenæum, lib. v. (o) 1 Maccab. vi. 11. (p) 2 Maccab. ix. 26.

But

But since the same Polybius (*q*) tells us, that his distemper so far grew upon him, as to come to a constant delirium, or state of madness, these expressions, we may suppose, came from him, (*r*) when he was in that condition. For we know no instances of his kindness, but many of his cruelty, to the people of God ; and, as to his bounty, (as he calls it), this he usually committed in his drunken frolics, (*s*) in which he spent a great part of his revenues, and used often to go out into the streets, and to scatter his money in handfuls, among the rabble. We may therefore reasonably suppose, that such a wild, crack-brained creature as this, had seldom any serious thought of establishing an uniformity in religion (though that religion, by the bye, was impious) in his dominions ; but that to justify the depredations that he had made upon the Jews, and to revenge the defeats which they had so frequently given to his armies, these were the true reasons of his exasperation against them ; because it is not conceivable, how he could have any sober sense of religion, who, to satisfy his greedy avarice, was not afraid to rob the temple of Diana.

A. M.  
3596, etc.  
Ant. Christ.  
4c8, etc.  
from 1  
Macc. i. to  
vi. 7. ; 2  
Macc. iii. to  
x. and from  
Jof. Hist.  
lib. xi. c. 7.  
to lib. xii.  
c. 14.

This robbing of temples, in the opinion of all sober Heathens, was accounted a crime of that heinous nature as justly deserved the vengeance of heaven ; and therefore Polybius (*t*), as well as the author of the Maccabees, informs us, that Antiochus, before he died, was scared with visions, and apparitions of evil spirits ; but then he supposes, that it was the goddess Diana, that thus haunted him, for his attempting to pillage her temple at Elymais ; whereas he himself, in the presence of all his friends, openly declares, that these troubles were come upon him, because (*u*) *he had taken all the vessels of gold and silver that were in Jerusalem, and had destroyed the inhabitants of Judea without a cause.*

The sacrilege at Elymais was only intended, not executed : But that at Jerusalem was committed, with horrid impiety against God, and as horrid cruelty against all those that served him there. But even if the former had been committed, it was only against a false deity ; whereas the latter was against the true God, the great and almighty Creator of heaven and earth : And therefore we need less wonder, that the marks of a divine infliction were so vi-

(*q*) In excerptis Valefii.

(*r*) Calmet's Commentary.

(*s*) Athenæus, lib. x. (*t*) In excerptis Valefii.

(*u*) 1 Maccab. vi. 12, 13.

A. M. 3596, etc. Ant. Christ. 408, &c. from 1 Macc. i. to vi. 7; 2 Macc. iii. to x. and from Jos. Hist. lib. xi c. 7. to lib. xii. c. 14.

fible in the nature of his disease. Appian (x) and Polybius (y), as well as Josephus, and the author of the books of Maccabees, have informed us, that he died with ulcers, and putrifying sores in his secret parts; and, upon this occasion, we cannot forbear remarking, that most of the great persecutors of the church of God have been smitten in the like manner; that thus died Herod, the great persecutor of Christ, and the infants at Bethlehem; thus Galerius Maximianus, the author of the tenth, and greatest persecution against the Christians; and thus Philip the Second, king of Spain, who was as infamous for the cruelty of his persecution, and the numbers destroyed by it, as any of the other three. (z) It is no small confirmation therefore of what the Jewish writers relate concerning the judgments of God upon Antiochus, that these Heathen authors (whose credit is thought indubitable) do agree with them as to the matter of fact, though they differ from them, in assigning a wrong cause for it.

That Judas Maccabæus might do all the gallant actions recorded of him.

(a) *If you will walk in my statutes, and keep my commandments, and do them, ye shall chase your enemies, and they shall fall before you: Five of you shall chase an hundred, and an hundred of you shall put ten thousand to flight; and your enemies shall fall before you by the sword.*

This is the promise which God made to the children of Israel, upon their entrance into the land of Canaan; and, in virtue of this promise, we find that their leader Joshua was so very successful, that, after he had relieved the city of Gibeon, destroyed twelve kings, and made himself master of their dominions, in one campaign only, it is said of him, (b) *that he returned, and ALL Israel with him, unto the camp to Gilgal: And therefore we need less wonder, that the Jews, who at this time were under the conditions of God's promise, nay, under a state of persecution upon the account of their religion, and were consequently the proper objects of his more immediate care and compassion, should come off victorious, even though they were but poorly armed, and sometimes without the loss of one man, having the Lord of Hosts on their side, both to inject terror into their enemies, and to cover their heads in the day of battle: But, even without this*

(x) In Syriacis. (y) In excerptis Valesii. (z) Pri-deaux's Connection, anno 164. (a) Levit. xxvi. 3, &c. (b) Josh. x. 43.

supposition of a divine interposal, might there not be some remarkable difference in the soldiers and generals themselves?

Judas Maccabæus, an excellent commander, bold and enterprising, with a small body of men, but all determined to conquer or die, attacks one of no capacity, with a much larger army indeed, but made up chiefly of raw men, and forces levied in haste. He attacks him, I say, and defeats him; and are not miracles of this kind very common? Do not both ancient and modern history furnish us with victories in great abundance of this sort, and much more surprising than any obtained by the Maccabees? (c) The contempt of a weak enemy, whose forces are so disproportionate to the numerous army which comes against them, is one of the greatest errors, as well as dangers, that can happen in war; because, in this case people are less upon their guard, not thinking the enemy capable of daring to undertake any thing against them, until they are surprised in their security; and an army surprised in their camp, we know, is an army half conquered.

Though therefore the Jews, under the command of the gallant Judas, were always fewest in number, yet, considering the boldness of their undertakings, and the prudence of their conduct, their skill in the military art \*, and the providence of God, which attended and prospered their arms, the wonder is not much, that they were, in a manner, always superiour to their enemies.

*There shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars, i. e. in the heavens, where they move, and upon the earth distresses of nations, with perplexity:* These were the presages, which our Saviour foretold; and, accordingly Josephus (d) informs us, that, before the last siege of Jerusalem, there were seen in the air, a little before sun-set,

(c) Calmet's Dictionary, under the word *Bethzur*.

\* It is indeed surprising, that Polybius, an historian, in other things so punctual, and so well acquainted with the affairs of Asia, should make no mention of the Maccabees, nor of the wars which they maintained with so much glory against Antiochus, and his successors, especially since he describes the wars of the same Antiochus, in other respects, with all the care and exactness that can be desired; Calmet's Dictionary, under the word *Modin*.

(d) De Bello Jud. lib. vii. c. 12.

A. M. 3596, &c. for some days together, chariots and armed men, passing  
 Ant. Chris. 408, &c. along the clouds, round about the city; "which I would  
 from 1 "hardly venture to report," says he, "but that I can  
 Macc. i. to "produce sundry eye-witnesses, that are still alive, to con-  
 vi. 7; 2 "firm the truth of it." Several accounts of this kind we  
 Macc. iii. to have in Livy, and Suetonius: And though it must be  
 x. and from owned, that too great a credulity in some historians may  
 Jos. Hist. lib. xi. c. 7. possibly have enlarged, or multiplied these prodigies, yet  
 to lib. xii. we must not therefore imagine, that there never were any  
 c. 14. such things, because very good reasons may be given why  
 God should exhibit them: And, as to the *phenomena* that  
 (e) are now under consideration, they certainly have all  
 the marks of credibility in them that we can well desire.  
 For they are related by an author that was cotemporary,  
 or very near cotemporary, with them. They were seen,  
 not transiently, and by a few weak superstitious people;  
 but, for forty days together, they appeared to the view of  
 a whole city, wherein were above an hundred thousand in-  
 habitants, most of sound intellects, and some of them of  
 so little superstition, as to abandon the laws and customs  
 of their country for fear of persecution.

Why Ptole- The Jews have a tradition, founded upon what we read  
 my might in the 2d book of the Maccabees (f), viz. that, some  
 be smitten in time before the Babylonish captivity, the prophet Jeremiah  
 by God up- received instructions from God to hide the ark of the co-  
 on his enter- venant in a cave in mount Nebo, which accordingly he  
 ing the Holy did, and at the same time declared, that the place should  
 of Holies. not be discovered, until the people's return from their cap-  
 tivity; that, after the people's return, in the time of Ne-  
 hemiah, this ark was found out, and replaced in the sanc-  
 tuary of the temple; that when Pompey (g) entered the  
 sanctuary, he saw an ark and cherubims, like those which  
 Moses had made; and that, some time after, the same ark  
 was carried before Vespasian, when, from the Jewish wars,  
 he returned to Rome in triumph.

Now, upon the supposition that there is any truth in  
 this tradition, and the ark of the covenant was in fact re-  
 placed in the second temple, the history of Uzzah will in-  
 form us of what sacred account, in the esteem of God,  
 this repository of the divine covenant was, and how severe-  
 ly God, in this case, was pleased to avenge the least viola-  
 tion of it. For, if the *anger of the Lord was kindled against*

(e) Calmet's Commentary. (f) Chap. ii. 4,—9.

(g) Calmet's Diff. sur l'Arche d'alliance.

Uzzah, so that he smote him dead upon the spot *for his rashness in taking hold of the ark*, even because he was no priest, no descendent of the house of Aaron; why should it be thought a strange thing, that God should show some tokens of his displeasure against an Heathen prince, intruding into the place which he had consecrated for his own presence and inhabitation? Or, if we suppose, that the Shekinah, or presence of God, was not resident in the second temple; yet still the Holy of Holies was reserved for the entrance of none but the high-priest; and therefore it is no more than what might be expected, that he, who, in contempt of the divine command, and the remonstrances of all about him, would intrude into it, should meet with some severe rebuke, that thereby he might be convinced of the power of the God of Israel, and of the divine institution of their religion. And, though it be acknowledged that Pompey met with no remarkable judgment, in the instant when he was guilty of the like profanation, yet (*b*) our learned Connector of the sacred and profane history has observed, that after this act he never prospered; that this put an end to all his successes; insomuch, that this, over the Jews, was the last of his victories. So mindful has God all along been, not to suffer the profaners of his sanctuary to go unpunished!

The intended destruction of all the Egyptian Jews at Alexandria, in the barbarous manner wherein the author of the second book of the Maccabees has related it, can hardly be thought an incredible thing to those who have read in Philo (*i*) the like, if not worse, cruelties, which the same people underwent in the same town, in the reign of Caligula, and under the administration of Flaccus.—That they were not only driven from their habitations, plundered of their goods, and cooped up in a narrow corner of the city in order to be starved; but that, if any attempting to make their escape were apprehended, they were either knocked on the head, torn limb from limb, or tortured to death, and their dead bodies dragged through the streets; and, if any pretended to lament them, they were immediately seized, whipped without mercy, and having suffered all the torments that cruelty could invent, were condemned at last to be crucified:—That, without any regard to sex or condition; without any respect to the aged, or compassion to the young,

A. M.  
3596, etc.  
Ant. Christ.  
408, etc.  
from 1  
Macc. i. to  
vi. 7; 2  
Macc. iii. to  
x. and from  
Jof. Hist.  
lib. xi. c. 7.  
to lib. xii.  
c. 14.

(b) Anno 64. (i) Vol. ii. p. 525, &c. ex edit. Mangeana.

A. M.  
3566, &c.  
Ant. Chris.  
408, &c.  
from 1  
Macc. i. to  
vi. 7.; 2  
Macc. iii. to  
x. and from  
Jof. Hist.  
lib. xi. c. 7.  
to lib. xii.  
c. 14.



not only whole families were burnt together, but some, being tied to stakes, had fires of green wood kindled round them, in order to prolong their torments, and that the spectators might have the horrid pleasure of seeing the poor creatures suffocated in the smoke.—That, on the very festival of the emperor's birth-day, (which generally lasted for some time), thirty-eight of their council, persons of the most distinguished note among them, were bound like criminals, some with cords and some with chains, and so dragged through the great market-place to the theatre, and there whipped so unmercifully, that some of them did not long survive it.—Nay, that, at this time more especially, it was an usual thing with the people, when they came to the theatre, first to entertain themselves with scourging, racking, and torturing the poor Jews at their pleasure, and then, to call for their dancers and players, and other diversions in use among the Romans: Whoever has read, I say, the account of these cruelties, as Philo has related them, need not much wonder to find an exasperated prince (as Ptolemy was) intending the total destruction of a people, he imagined had offended him; when a bare Roman Prefect, (as Flaccus was no more), without any provocation, that we hear of, was not afraid to treat the same people in this inhuman manner.

Why the elephants might turn upon the spectators.

But then, as to the former case, if we will allow the providence of God, and its interposition in the occurrences of this world, we need not want a reason, why he should turn the elephants, which were designed to destroy the innocent, upon the spectators, who could not be so; because both his justice and mercy seem to plead for the deliverance of those, whose only crime was their profession of his true religion, and for the punishment of such as came to glut their eyes with the hellish pleasure of seeing their fellow-creatures trampled to pieces. In this sense, there seems to be a necessary call for a divine interposition; but, abstracted from this consideration, the wonder is not great, that creatures intoxicated (as these elephants are said to have been) should mistake their objects, and fall foul upon those that they were least of all intended to destroy.

Angels appearing in armour, a common tradition.

There is something, we confess, more wonderful, in the appearances of angels mounted, as it were, on horseback, (*k*) heading the Jewish army, (*l*) protecting the

(*k*) 2 Maccab. xi. 8. (*l*) Ibid. ver 10.

Jewish general, and (m) defending the sacred treasures of the temple; but as we esteem these books of the Maccabees no part of divine writ, we leave the proper defence of them to those who have received them as canonical, and shall only add, (n) with the learned Huetius, upon this subject, — That, how improbable soever these accounts may be thought by some, they are not destitute of examples of the like nature in several Heathen histories; that, in the battle which the Romans had with the Latins, at the lake Regillus, Castor and Pollux were seen mounted on horseback in the Roman army, and, when the victory was wavering, they restored the fight, gained the field, and carried the news thereof to Rome that very evening; that, when the Romans invaded the Lucani and Brutii, Mars, the great founder of their nation, led their forces to the onset, and assisted them not a little in taking and destroying great numbers of their enemies; and (to name no more) that, at the battle of Marathon, Pan appeared on the side of the Athenians, made great slaughter among the enemy's army, and injected such a terroure into them, as from that time has obtained the name of a *panic fear*.

Now, though there might be a good deal of fiction in these instances, yet, since we find some of the best Roman historians relating them, and so grave an author as Tully (even (o) in some of his most serious pieces) making mention of the first of these as a matter of just credibility, we cannot but suppose, that the common tradition at this time was, that, to the victorious army (especially when it was much inferiour in numbers) some celestial and superior beings were always assistant; and, consequently, that the author of the book of the Maccabees, in this respect, wrote nothing but what at that time was the common sense of mankind; nothing, indeed, but what the sense of the Royal Psalmist, in military matters, authorised him to write: For (p) *let them be turned back, says he, and brought to confusion, that imagine mischief against me: let them be as the dust before the wind, and the angel of the Lord scattering them.*

(m) Chap. iii. 25, &c. (n) Quæst. Alnetanæ, lib. ii. c. 12.  
(o) Tuscul. Quæst. lib. 1. & De Nat. Deor. lib. 2. (p) Psal.  
xxxv. 4, 5.



A. M.

3596, &amp;c.

Ant. Chris.

408, &amp;c.

from 1

Macc. i. to

vi. 7; 2

Macc. iii. to

x. and from

Jos. Hist.

lib. xi. c. 7.

to lib. xii.

c. 14.

An 'histori-

cal account

of the va-

rious forms

of the Jew-

ish admini-

stration.

## DISSERTATION III.

*Of the Jewish Sanhedrim.*

**B**EFORE we proceed to examine into this great national council among the Jews, (which we suppose might have its rise much about this period of time), it may not be improper to take a short view of the fundry forms of civil administration that were previous to it.

The government of the Jewish republic was originally divine: For, (a) if we call a state where the people govern a *democracy*, and that where the nobles govern an *aristocracy*; there is the same reason why this should be stiled a *theocracy*; because God was not only the deity they were bound to worship and adore, but the sovereign, likewise, to whom they were to pay all the honours and rights that were due to supreme Majesty. Their republic, however, was not completely settled until God had given them the law from mount Sinai, when the noise and thundrings in which it was delivered were so very terrible, that (b) the people requested of him not to speak any more to them of himself, but to make use of the ministry of Moses as his interpreter.

Thus Moses, by the people's own election, was appointed to the administration of all public affairs; and, in this important office, (as the author of the Hebrews (c) testifies of him), acquitted himself with much faithfulness: But, in a short time, he found, that he had undertaken a work of too much labour and fatigue for any single person to sustain; and therefore, in pursuance of his father-in-law's advice, he made choice of some of the most prudent and understanding men in every tribe, divided them into several classes, and gave them names according to the authority wherewith he invested them, or the number of the persons over whom they were to preside; (d) *He made them captains over thousands, and captains over hundreds, and captains over fifties, and captains over tens, and officers among the tribes.*

But this establishment lasted not long, or at least received some change or addition to it. For, as soon as

(a) Lamy's Introduction, lib. i. c. 11.

(b) Exod. xx. 19.

(c) Chap. iii. 2.

(d) Deut. i. 15.

the Israelites were arrived at Kibroth Hattaavah, or the *graves of lust*, (as the place is called), but three days journey from mount Sinai, (e) God appointed a body of seventy elders, (to whom he communicated his spirit), to assist Moses in bearing the burthen of the people; and from hence it is, that the defenders of the antiquity of the Sanhedrim date the first institution of that great council. But however this be, it is certain, that this council continued among them all the while that they sojourned in the wilderness; and was, indeed, (f) an institution proper enough for a people in their circumstances, who, being all of one community, could assemble together with ease, and, having no great matters in possession, could have but few processes, and, consequently, might dispense with a lesser number of judges.

Moses, however, foreseeing that this institution would not be sufficient, when once the people were settled in the land of promise, (g) left it as an injunction behind him, that, whoever had the government of the nation should appoint judges and magistrates in every city, to determine the controversies that came before them; but that, when any thing of great moment, or of difficult discussion, should happen, the contending parties should carry their cause (h) to the place which the Lord had chosen, propose it to the priests, and to the judge, that should be in their days; and, upon pain of death, acquiesce in their decision.

Moses was succeeded by Joshua: But his time was spent in making a conquest of the land of Canaan, and, till he had done that, he could not put the order which his predecessor had left him in execution. However, at his first accession to the government, we find that (i) all the people promised the same obedience to him that they had paid to Moses; and that, when himself grew old, (k) he called for the elders of Israel, and for their heads, and for their judges, and for their officers; i. e. all the judges and magistrates, which Moses had enjoined him to establish in the country, for the security of the state and administration of justice.

On this footing Joshua left the civil administration; and thus it stood, till the people revolted from the service of

(e) Numb. xi. 16.  
des Hebreux.

(f) Calmet's Comment. sur la police  
(g) Deut. xvi. 18.

(i) Joshua i. 16, 17.

(k) Chap. xxiv. 1.

(h) Deut. xvii. 9.

A. M.  
3596, etc.  
Ant. Christ.  
408, etc.  
from 1  
Macc. i. to  
vi. 7.; 2  
Macc. iii. to  
x. and from  
Jos. Hist.  
lib. xi. c. 7.  
to lib. xii.  
c. 14.

A. M. 3596, &c. Ant. Christ. 408, &c. from 1 Macc. i. to vi. 7. ; 2 Macc. iii. to x. and from Jos. Hist. lib. xi. c. 7. to lib. xii. c. 14.

God, and then all things ran to confusion. In what manner the state was governed, and justice dispensed, during the long succession of judges, it is difficult to determine : But, towards the conclusion of that form of government, we find Samuel (*l*) going, *from year to year, in a circuit round the country, to judge Israel*, and when himself grew impotent and unable to travel, (*m*) making his sons judges in his stead ; but their mal-administration occasioned an alteration in the government.

The institution of regal power dissolved that polity which Moses had settled : But though he both foreknew and foretold this change in the constitution, yet we nowhere find him giving any particular directions how kings were to conduct themselves in the administration of the state, and the dispensation of justice ; (*n*) whether it was, that God did not vouchsafe to communicate any fresh discovery to him upon that subject, or whether he might think that the rules which he had already prescribed were not incompatible with the authority and government of kings.

Saul seems to have concerned himself with nothing but military affairs, leaving the priests and judges the same jurisdiction that they had before ; but David, when he came into a peaceable possession of the kingdom, (*o*) did himself (in causes of great consequence at least), administer justice to the people. The famous decision between the two mothers, (*p*) who both laid their claim to the living child, is a plain proof, that, in perplexed and intricate cases, Solomon himself did sometimes the office of a judge ; and when we read of this prince, that he came to (*q*) Gibeon, *with the captains of thousands and of hundreds, with the judges, and the chief of the fathers*, we may learn from hence, that magistrates of the same kind that Moses had ordained were at this time existing in the kingdom of Israel.

By the revolt of the ten tribes from the house of David to that of Jeroboam, the civil constitution of the Jews suffered very much ; because the avowed purpose of that prince was, to change the religion, and reverse the orders which Moses had instituted : And therefore, from henceforward, we must look only into the kingdom of Judah

(*l*) 1 Sam. vii. 15, 16. (*m*) Chap. vii. 1. (*n*) Calmet's Dissert. sur la Police des Hebreux. (*o*) 2 Sam. xv. 2. (*p*) 1 Kings iii. 16, &c. (*q*) 2 Chron. i. 2.

for the succession of the true discipline and form of ancient government of the Jews.

When Jehoshaphat formed a design of introducing a reformation both in church and state, he pursued the rule which Moses had given him; for (r) *he set judges in the land, through all the fenced cities*, and in Jerusalem the capital, erected two tribunals; (s) one composed of priests and Levites, to hear appeals from lesser courts, relating to religious matter; and the other, composed of the *chief of the fathers of Israel*, to hear such as related to civil. Nor is their conjecture much amiss, who suppose, that the seventy men, whom (t) Ezekiel saw in a vision, *burning incense to idols*, and the *five and twenty*, who (u) *between the porch and the altar, were worshipping the sun in the east*, are the rather mentioned, because they were men of eminence, and, very probably, the judges of civil and ecclesiastical matters.

What kind of judicature prevailed in the time of the captivity, it is difficult to say. From the story of Susannah we may learn, that in these circumstances, the Jews were allowed their own courts and judges, even in Babylon itself; but of what number, order, or authority these judges were, none can tell. It is plain, however, that upon the restoration, Ezra returned with full power from Artaxerxes, (x) *to set magistrates and judges in all the land*, who might punish criminals according to their demerit, either with death, or banishment, imprisonment, or confiscation of goods: And in this condition the Jewish state continued, viz. in the form of an aristocracy, with the high-priest at the head of it, sometimes under the king of Egypt, and sometimes under the king of Syria, for a considerable time after the return from the captivity.

The persecution which Antiochus Epiphanes raised among the Jews, ruined all the œconomy of their government: But Mattathias, and his sons, endeavoured to restore (y) *the decayed state of the people* (as it is called) as far as those troublesome times would permit them. Judas Maccabæus, in a general assembly held at Maspha, revived the ancient order, and appointed rulers (z) *over the people, even captains over thousands, over hundreds, over fifties, and*

(r) Chap. xix. 5. (s) Ibid. ver. 8. (t) Ezek. viii. 11.

(u) Ibid. ver. 16. (x) Ezra vii. 25, 26. (y) 1-Maccab.

iii. 43. (z) Ibid. ver. 55.

A. M.  
3596, &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
408, &c.  
from 1  
Mac. i. to  
vi. 7. ; 2  
Mac. iii. to  
x. and from  
Jof. Hist.  
lib. xi. c. 7.  
to lib. xii.  
c. 14.

A. M. 3596, etc. Ant. Christ. 408, etc. from 1 Mac. i. to vi. 7. ; 2 Mac. iii. to x. and from Jos. Hist. lib. xi. c. 7. to lib. xii. c. 14.

*over tens* : And when Jonathan, his brother and successor, took upon him both the sovereign and sacerdotal authority, he, nevertheless, governed by the advice of a senate, not excluding the people from some share in their deliberations, as appears by the letters (a) which the Jews, at this time, sent to the Lacedemonians.

Aristobolus, who was the first of the Asmonæan race that took upon him the diadem and title of a king, continued the senate in great authority, but excluded the common people from having any part in the administration; as the kings who succeeded him, endeavoured to confirm their own power, by curtailing that of the senate, till Pompey came, and quite overturned the Jewish state, by subjecting it to the empire, and making Judea a Roman province.

From this short review of the Jewish republic, we may perceive, that its form of government, at different times, has been various; that Moses (with the concurrence of seventy chief magistrates) as God's vicegerent, governed the people in an absolute manner; that under the judges, the state had been sometimes without any ruler at all, independent sometimes, and, at other times, under the jurisdiction of its enemies; that the ancient kings of Judah vouchsafed to administer justice to their subjects, but that towards the decline of the kingdom, its princes affected state, and a despotic power; that from the captivity to the time of the Asmonæans, the government, under the high-priest, was partly aristocratical, and partly popular; and that the Asmonæan kings made it monarchical, till the Romans destroyed it: And so we proceed to consider, in which of these periods the famous council of the Jews, which is usually called their *Sanhedrim*, might have its rise, with some other particulars relating to its authority and proceedings.

Of the origin of the Sanhedrim.

When Moses, in conducting the children of Israel through the wilderness, was teized and wearied out (as we say) with the perpetual complaints and murmurings of that people, in the impatience of his soul, he addressed himself to God in these words: (b) *Wherefore hast thou afflicted thy servant, that thou layest the burthen of all this people upon me? — I am not able to bear all this people alone, because it is too heavy for me; &c.* Whereupon the Lord

(a) Ibid. xiv. 19. (b) Numb. xi. 11, &c.

said

said unto him, *Gather unto me seventy men of the elders of Israel, whom thou knowest to be the elders of the people, and officers over them, and bring them unto the tabernacle of the congregation, that they may stand there with thee; and I will come down and talk with thee there; and I will take of the spirit, which is upon thee, and will put it upon them, and they shall bear the burthen with thee, that thou bear it not thyself alone.* This command Moses took care to put in execution: The elders, accordingly, met at the tabernacle of the congregation; and when the Spirit of the Lord rested upon them, they prophesied, and did not cease. These words (as we said before) are held by the generality of the Rabbins, as well as by some Christian writers, to be the true origin of that great Sanhedrim, "which, from its first institution here under Moses, subsisted all along in the Jewish nation, even to the time of their utter dispersion under Vespasian, and had the cognizance of all matters of the greatest moment, both civil and ecclesiastical."

A. M. 3596, etc.  
Ant. Christ. 408, etc.  
from 1 Mac. i. to vi. 7; 2 Mac. iii. to x. and from Jos. Hist. lib. xi. c. 7. to lib. xii. c. 14.

But for the better understanding of the sense and design of them, we may observe, 1st, That Moses does not here speak of the difficulty or multiplicity of business that was laid upon him, but of the perverse temper of the people, always addicted to mutiny and sedition, which he himself alone was not able to withstand. To ease himself of the labour of judging the people in all civil and capital causes, he had, by the advice of his father-in-law, (c) appointed certain number of judges; and it seems not unlikely, that some of these seventy were of the number of these judges, because they are called by God himself, *the elders and officers of the people*. Moses wanted no assistance therefore in the administration of affairs of this nature; but what he wanted, was a sufficient number of persons, of such power and authority among the people, as might restrain them from seditious practices, and awe them into obedience; and for this reason it was, that God, when he made choice of them, gave them the spirit of prophecy, as an evident sign of his having appointed them coadjutors to Moses, in the exercise of his supreme authority, and as a means to procure them the greater reverence and esteem among the people.

That it was only of temporary duration.

2ly, We may observe farther, that it does not appear from the foregoing passage, that this assembly of seventy

(c) Exod. xviii. 24.

A. M. persons was to be perpetuated in the Jewish state, and when  
 3596, etc. any died, others substituted in their room: On the contrary,  
 Ant. Chris. it rather seems to have been an occasional institution, or  
 408, etc. present expedient for the relief of Moses, that by the addi-  
 from 1 tion of other rulers, (all endued with gifts extraordinary,  
 Mac. i. to as well as he), the murmurs and complaints of the people  
 vi. 7. ; 2 might not fall all upon him, but he diverted (some of them  
 Mac. iii. to at least) upon others; and that, by the joint influence of  
 Jos. Hist. so many persons, all possessed with the spirit of government,  
 lib. xi. c. 7. they might either hinder or appease them. And as this was  
 to lib. xii. an institution only for that purpose, there is no reason to  
 c. 14. believe that it continued any longer than Moses lived; be-  
 cause, if we take a view of the history of succeeding ages,  
 we shall find no footsteps of it.

Was not in  
 the times of  
 Joshua or  
 the judges,

After the death of Moses, we find Joshua ruling the  
 people with an absolute authority; settling the portions of  
 the several tribes in the land of Canaan; dismissing those  
 who had assisted their brethren in the conquest of it; re-  
 ceiving all appeals, redressing all grievances, and acting,  
 in short, as the only governour in the nation, without one  
 word mentionod of any supreme council to controul him.  
 After the death of Joshua, God raised up judges, men of  
 extraordinary courage and wisdom, to deliver his people  
 from the oppressions of their enemies, and to attend to the  
 administration of justice among them; and yet we read of  
 no act or decree of this pretended Sanhedrim all this  
 while, (d) which could no more have been omitted in the  
 account of these times, had it been then existing, than  
 the mention of the Roman senate is in any of their histo-  
 rians.

(e) *In those days, as the Sacred History informs us, there was no king in Israel, but every man did what was right in his own eyes;* and (f) where then was this venerable assembly, whose authority (according to the Rab-  
 bins) was superior to that of princes, to interpose in this  
 time of need? The Jews certainly could never have de-  
 generated into such a state of licentiousness, had there  
 been a court of seventy, or seventy-two elders, chosen out  
 of every tribe, and invested with a supreme authority to  
 punish criminals, and reform abuses; nor can we see what

(d) Le Clerc's Dissert. de Synedrio. (e) Judg. xxi. 25.  
 (f) Sentimens de quelques theologiens sur l'Hist. critique,  
 let. x.

reason the Levite had to cut in pieces the body of his concubine, abused by the Gibeonites, and to send it to the several tribes, in demand of justice, if there had been such a constant tribunal, as this is represented, to resort to.

The kings who succeeded the judges, acted in such a manner, as to make us believe, that there was no such thing as a Sanhedrim then in being. (g) They displaced high-priests without opposition; they waged war without advising with any; they made and deposed judges, as they pleased; and in short did every thing that other princes are wont to do, without the Sanhedrim's interposing its authority, that we read of, to stop the course of their extravagancies, or curb their exorbitant power. Some of these kings, we know, were for extinguishing the true worship of God, and establishing idolatry in its stead: Here then was a proper opportunity for this venerable body to step in, by condemning idolatry in some public act of theirs, and opposing the innovations of the court. But of this we hear not one word; neither do we find, that (h) the prophets, who so severely inveighed against the wickedness of the people, ever referred them to the Sanhedrim, or complained, that that court was too remiss or negligent in the punishment of crimes.

If ever mention were to be made of this great council, it would be, one would think, in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah, which were written after the Babylonish captivity, when there was no king in the land, and consequently a fit opportunity for this Sanhedrim to appear; and yet, even here, we find several matters of great moment transacted, such as the reformation of the people's manners, the dissolution of illegal marriages, a stop put to the profanation of the Sabbath, and a covenant of obedience to God, made and signed by the deputies of the priests, Levites, and common people; but not one word of the great Sanhedrim all this while.

In short, not only the sacred writers, but even Josephus, Philo, Origen, Eusebius, and St. Jerom, who were all well versed in the ancient government of the Jews, make no manner of mention of any such body of men in the times that we are now upon; and therefore we cannot but think, that this universal silence, in writers of all kinds, is a very good argument, that this supreme

(g) Calmet's Differt. sur la police des Hebreux.  
nage's Hist. lib. v. c. 1.

(h) Bas-  
national

A. M.  
356, etc.  
Ant. Christ.  
408, etc.  
from 1  
Mac. i. to  
vi. 7.; 2  
Mac. iii. to  
x. and from  
Jof. Hist.  
lib. xi. c. 7.  
to lib. xii.  
c. 14.  
nor of the  
kings;

nor in the  
times of Ez-  
ra and Ne-  
hemiah;

but of later  
institution;



A. M. national council did not then subsist. Its name is confessedly of Greek derivation; to which purpose Livy (i) observes, that those senators, whom the Macedonians intrusted with the administration of their government, were called *Synedri*: And therefore it seems somewhat incongruous, to look into the first centuries of the Jewish church for the original of a council, whose very name is of later extract.

Before the times of the gospel, wherein frequent mention is made of this council, we find it in so great authority, as even to call Herod (k), though then governour of Galilee, upon his trial for some misdemeanour: And therefore it is no improbable conjecture, that in the time of the Maccabees, either Judas or Jonathan was the first institutor of it; and the reason they might have for this institution, might be the change which they had made in the nature of the government, for which they wanted the consent of the people, or at least of a body that represented them, that thereby they might act with more authority: And though, as yet, they did not assume the title of kings, yet they thought it a matter of prudence to have their resolutions ratified by a council.

The Maccabees, who, in all probability, were the first institutors of this council, would hardly exclude themselves from it; and therefore, we may presume, that the high-priest was the settled president, who, for that reason, was called *Nasi*, or *prince of the Sanhedrim*, and, in his absence, had a deputy called *Abbeth-din*, or *father of the house of judgment*, and a sub-deputy called *Chacam*, i. e. *the wise*; but all the rest had the common name of *elders* or *senators*.

These senators (which were usually taken from other inferior courts) were to be some priests, and some laymen, but all persons of untainted birth, good learning, and profound knowledge in the law, both written and traditional. All eunuchs, usurers, gamesters, those that brought up pigeons to decoy others to their dove-houses, or made any gain of their fruits in the Sabbatical year, all old men, deformed persons, and such as had no children, (because they were suspected of being cruel and hard-hearted), were

(i) Pronunciatum quod ad statum Macedoniae pertinebat, senatores, quos *Synedros* vocant, legandos esse, quorum consilio respublica admittatur; lib. 45. c. 32. (k) Jewish Antiq. lib. xiv. c. 17.

excluded

excluded from this council; and those only who were of <sup>A. M.</sup> mature age, competent fortunes, and comely personages, <sup>3596, etc.</sup> were admitted to it. <sup>Ant. Christ.</sup>

The room in which this council met, was a rotunda, <sup>408, etc.</sup> half of which was built without the temple, and half within. <sup>from 1</sup> The Nasi, or prince of the council, sat upon a throne <sup>Mac. i. to</sup> elevated above the rest, at the upper end of the room, <sup>vi. 7; 72</sup> having his deputy on his right-hand, and his sub-deputy <sup>Mac. iii. to</sup> on his left. <sup>x. and from</sup> The senators were ranged in order on each <sup>Jos. Hist.</sup> side; and the secretaries who were to record the matters <sup>lib. xi. c. 7.</sup> that came before them, were three; whereof one wrote <sup>to lib. xii.</sup> the sentences of those that were absolved, the other had <sup>c. 14.</sup> the condemnations under his care, and the third entered into their books the several pleadings of all contending parties.

The vanity and ridiculous pride of the Rabbins appear <sup>Its authori-</sup> in nothing more, than in the excessive power which they <sup>ty;</sup> give to this high-court of judicature. For, according to them, it not only decided such causes as were brought before it, by way of appeal from other inferiour courts, but had under its jurisdiction likewise † the king, the high-priest, and prophets. (l) The king, for instance, if he offended against the law, if he married above eighteen wives, if he kept too many horses, if he hoarded up too much gold or silver, the Sanhedrim had him stripped and whipped in their presence. But whipping, seems, among the Jews (m) was not so ignominious a thing, but that the king bore it by way of penance, with great patience, and himself made choice of the person that was to exercise this discipline upon him. However this be, it is certain, that all private controversies of difficult discussion, all matters relating to religion, and all important affairs of state, were submitted to the determination

† This is directly the opinion of Maimonides, (in Sanhed. per. 2, 3.) but that learned Rabbi was strangely prejudiced in favour of this great council; and though Josephus is of the same opinion, yet to allow such an extent of jurisdiction to this court, so as to inflict corporal punishment upon the persons of their kings, is contrary to the general notions of sovereignty, and the laws of all kingdoms and nations; besides that the Holy Scriptures are absolutely silent in this particular, and nothing can be inferred from them, to countenance such a coercive power; *Lewis's Hebrew Antiq. vol. i. c. 6.*

(l) Calmet's Dissert. sur la police des Hebreux. (m) Calmet's Dictionary, under the word *Sanhedrim*.

A. Mc  
3596, etc.  
Ant. Chris.  
408, etc.  
from 1  
Mac. i. to  
vi. 7. ; 2  
Mac. iii. to  
x. and from  
Jof. Hift.  
lib. xi. c. 7.  
to lib. xii.  
c. 14.

which, in  
some cafes,  
extended to  
life and  
death ;

of this august assembly, from whose sentence no appeal could be made, because a demurring to the jurisdiction of their court was punished by death, *i. e.* while the power of life and death was in their hands ; but how long this lasted, after that Judea became a Roman province, has been a matter of some dispute among the learned.

Josephus (*n*) tells us expressly, that the senate and emperours of Rome took no ancient rights from the nations whom they conquered ; and by the words of Pilate concerning our Saviour Christ, (*o*) *Take ye him, and judge him according to your law*, it seems, as though they still retained their power, though perhaps it might be under some limitations.

Upon St. Peter's (*p*) speech before the great council, we find them so exasperated against the apostles, that they began to think of putting them all to death, and might, very probably, have proceeded in their design, had they not been dissuaded from it by the wise advice of Gamaliel. The stoning of St. Stephen was not the effect of any hasty judgment of some zealots, but of the regular proceedings of this court. He (*q*) *was brought before the council*, we read ; *false witnesses* accusing him of blasphemy were produced against him ; in his own defence, he made a long discourse ; but his own defence was not admitted, nor his innocence acknowledged ; and therefore they sentenced him to be stoned (*r*) according to the law.

St. Paul himself declares before this very court, that before his conversion to Christianity, (*s*) *he persecuted those of that way unto death, and received letters from the estates of the elders, or the Sanhedrim, to bring Christians from Damascus to Jerusalem in bonds, in order to be punished.* Tertullus, who in the trial of this apostle, was council for the Sanhedrim, (*t*) tells Felix, the governour of Judea, that having apprehended the criminal at the bar, they thought to have proceeded against him *according to their law* ; but *that the chief captain, Lyfias, came upon them, and took him out of their hands.*

The true reason why Lyfias exerted his power upon this occasion, and took him out of their hands, was, because

(*n*) Contra Apion. Jewish Antiq. lib. ii. 17.

xviii. 31.

(*p*) Acts v. 29. &c.

(*o*) John

(*q*) Acts vi. 12, &c.

(*r*) Deut. xvii. 7.

(*s*) Acts xxii. 4. &c.

(*t*) Chap.

xvi. 6, 7.

they had accused him, not only of blasphemy, and profanation of their temple, but of sedition likewise, which was a crime falling more properly under the cognizance of the civil government, and for which Paul was therefore brought before Felix, Festus, and Agrippa. (u) So that from an examination of these particulars, wherein the power of the Sanhedrim was concerned, we may conclude, that even after the subjection of the Jewish state to the Roman empire, this Sanhedrim had the power of life and death in crimes committed against their own law; but that, in matters of sedition, and crimes committed against the civil administration, the Roman governours interposed their authority, and in cases of this nature, took the dispensation of justice out of their hands.

A. M.  
3596, etc.  
Ant. Chris.  
408, etc.  
from 1  
Macc. i. to  
vi. 7. 2  
Macc. iii. to  
x. and from  
Jof. Hist.  
lib. xi. c. 7.  
to lib. xii.  
c. 14

(x) What formality was observed in bringing a law-suit before the Sanhedrim, Maimonides has in this manner described:—"The business, (says he), was first to be examined in the inferiour courts; but if it could not be decided there, the judges sent to Jerusalem to consult the judgment-chamber, that sat upon the mount of the temple. From this first tribunal they proceeded to that which sat at the temple-gate; and if the matter was not determined there, they came at last to the great council-chamber, which was held in one of the apartments belonging to the temple; and this last council determined with so much justice and authority, that there were no division seen during all the time that the second temple lasted." And what caution was taken in passing the sentence of death upon criminals, by the same tribunal, the Jewish doctors (if we will believe them) have thus informed us.—"After the witnesses were heard, and the matter in question decided, the judge put off the sentence till next morning. Hereupon the Sanhedrim went home, eat but little, drank no wine, and then met again, two by two, in order to weigh all the particulars of the trial. The next morning, he that had given his opinion for condemning of the criminal, had power to revoke it; but he who had once given it for absolving him, could not alter his mind. As soon as the judge had pronounced sentence, the malefactor was conducted to the place of execution,

and method  
of proceed-  
ing.

(u) Vid. Beaufobre et Lenfant's Preface Generale sur le Nov. Test.

(x) Basnage's History of the Jews, lib. v. c. 2.

A. M. 3590, etc. " while an herald, on horseback, proclaimed as he went  
 Ant. Christ. 408, etc. " along, ' Such an one is condemned for such a crime ;  
 from 1 " but if any body can alledge any thing in his behalf, let  
 Macc. i. to " him speak.' If it happened that any one came to the  
 vi. 7. ; 2 " gate of the court, the door-keeper made a sign to the  
 Macc. iii. to " herald to bring back the malefactor, while two judges  
 x. and from " were appointed to receive what his friend had to say in  
 Jos. H. st. " his favour, and to consider whether there was any thing  
 1 b. xi. c. 7. " material in it."  
 to 1 b. xii.  
 c. 14.

These formalities are indeed related in the Mishnah ; but it is much to be questioned, whether they were not invented since, on purpose to recommend the justice and equity of the ancient Jewish tribunals. For, besides that no other nation did ever yet observe such favourable proceedings, in relation to those that were found guilty, there is not the least mention of any thing of this kind in the sacred history ; and in the Talmud itself we meet with maxims and matter of fact quite contrary to it. For (y) therein we are told, that though a prisoner declare upon oath, at the place of execution, that he was innocent, and in confirmation of this the false witnesses recanted ; yet the judges took no notice of their retraction, but only said, " Let the false witnesses perish ; but a judge cannot recall his sentence when once it is pronounced."

Inference  
 from the  
 whole.

Upon the whole therefore we may observe, that what the Jewish doctors tell us of the origin and succession, the authority and proceedings of their Sanhedrim, is in a great measure fabulous ; that the council of seventy men, which God instituted in the wilderness, was designed only to serve a particular purpose, and was therefore of short continuance in the Jewish state ; that from the time of Joshua, till after the return from the Babylonish captivity, there are no footsteps to be found, either in sacred or profane history, of such an assembly, as the Rabbins represent their Sanhedrim to have been ; but that, in the times of the Maccabees, we read of the senate of the nation, which, under the Asmonæum princes, grew into great power, and in the days of our Saviour's ministry, had matters of the highest consequence committed to their determination ; till, in the final destruction of Jerusalem, and the dispersion of the Jewish nation, the very name and authority of that senate was entirely lost.

(y) Ex Gemera, tit. Sanhed. c. vi. f. 4.

C H A P. IV.

*From the death of Antiochus Epiphanes, to that of John Hyrcanus.*

THE HISTORY.

**A**FTER the death of Antiochus Epiphanes (a), his son Antiochus Eupator, a minor, nine years old, succeeded in the throne of Syria. His father, upon his death-bed, had constituted Philip, one of his chief favourites, regent of the kingdom, during the minority of his son, and had delivered to him his crown, his signet, and other ensigns of royalty, giving him strict charge to educate him in such a manner as would qualify him to reign well; but Philip, when he came to Antioch, found his office usurped by another. For Lysias, who in the king's absence was left governour in chief, hearing of the death of Epiphanes, took Antiochus his son, who was then under his care, and, having placed him on the throne, assumed to himself the tuition of his person, and the government of his kingdom, without any manner of regard to the will and appointment of the late king: And Philip, finding himself too weak at present to contest it with him, fled into Egypt, in hopes of procuring some assistance there, which would enable him at one time or other to make good his claim.

(b) Not long after the death of Epiphanes, Judas Mac- cabæus, hearing of the confederacy which the neighbouring nations were engaged in, viz. to destroy and extirpate the whole race of Israel, and that they had already begun to cut off as many as were within their power, (c) marched first against the Idumæans, who were the forwardest in the conspiracy, and having fallen into that part of their country which was called *Acrabatene* †, he there slew twenty thousand of them. He next fell upon (d) the

A. M.  
3841, &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
163, &c.  
from 1  
Macc. v. 1.  
2 Macc. x.  
11. and Jos.  
lib. xii. c. 14.  
to the end of  
1 and 2  
Macc. and  
of Jos. lib.  
xiii. c. 19.  
Upon the  
death of E.  
piphane,  
Antiochus  
Eupator, a  
minor, suc-  
ceeds him,  
and is kept  
under the  
tuition of  
Lysias.

(a) 1 Macc. vi. 17. 2 Macc. x. 10. 11. Joseph. Antiq. lib. xii. c. 14. (b) 1 Macc. v. 1, etc. (c) 2 Macc. x. 14. 15.

† It is a canton of Judea, upon the frontiers of Idumæa, towards the southern extremity of the Dead-sea.

(d) 1 Macc. v. 4, 5.

A. M.  
3841, etc.  
Ant. Christ.  
163, &c.  
from 1  
Macc. v. i.  
2 Macc. x.  
11. and Jos.  
lib. xii. c. 14.  
to the end of  
1 and 2  
Macc. and  
of Jos. lib.  
xiii. c. 19.

children of Bean †, another tribe of these Idumæans, and having vanquished them in the field, pursued them to their fortresses, which he besieged, took, and therein slew twenty thousand more. He then passed over the Jordan into the land of the Ammonites, wherein he defeated them in several engagements; slew great numbers of them; took Jahazah †, and its appendent villages; and after his return to Judea, when Timotheus, the governor in those parts, pretended to follow him with a numerous army, he fell upon him, and overthrew him with a great slaughter, so that himself was forced to fly to Gazara, a city in the tribe of Ephraim, where his brother Chereas was governor: But Judas, pursuing him thither, beset the place, took it in five days, and there slew Chereas, Timotheus, and Apollophanes, another great captain of the Syrian forces.

In the mean time, the Heathen nations about Galaad (e) had fallen upon the Jews that dwelt in the land of Tob, which lay on the east of Gilead; had slain to the number of a thousand men; taken their goods for a spoil; and carried away their wives and children into captivity: Whereupon most of the other Jews inhabiting those parts betook themselves to a strong fortress in Gilead, called *Dathema*, with a resolution to defend themselves. This when the Heathens understood, they drew together, in a great body, under the command of Timotheus, the successour, and (very probably) the son, of the late Timotheus, who was slain at Gazara, in order to besiege them; while the inhabitants of Tyre, Sidon, Ptolemais, and other parts thereabout, were laying their schemes to cut off all the Jews that were in Galilee: so that Judas was sent

† Who these children of Bean were, it is difficult to say. Some think that this Bean was the name of an ancient king, whose descendents lived in hostility with the children of Israel; but others (with more probability) account it the name of a place; and if in the confines of the Dead-sea there was (as some affirm) a city of this name, without all controversy this was it; *Calmet's Commentary* on 1 Maccab. v. 4.

† This city, which lay beyond the Jordan, was first of all given to the tribe of Gad, and afterwards to the Levites, Joshua xxi. 36. It was situated at the foot of the mountains of Gilead, near the brook Jazah, which forms a rivulet or torrent, that falls into the Jordan.

(e) 1 Maccab. v. 9,—13.

to, both from Gilead and Galilee, to come to the succour and assistance of his poor distressed countrymen.

(f) In this critical juncture of affairs he consulted the Sanhedrim, or general council of the nation; and, by their advice, divided his army into three parts. With the first, which consisted of eight thousand men, he, and Jonathan his brother, marched for the relief of the Gileadites: With the second, consisting of three thousand, Simon, another of his brothers, was sent into Galilee; and the rest were left at Jerusalem, under the command of Joseph, for the defence of the place, and the country adjacent, but with a strict charge from Judas, not to enterprize any thing against the enemy, but to stand wholly upon the defensive, until he and Simon should return again.

(g) Judas and Jonathan passing the Jordan, and marching into Gilead, had intelligence, that, at Bassora, a town of the Edomites, a great number of Jews were imprisoned, in order to be destroyed, as soon as Dathema was taken: Whereupon, by hasty marches, they came upon the city sooner than was expected, and, having slain all the males, taken their spoils, and freed their brethren, they set it on fire, and so proceeded in their way to Dathema. On the morning, when they arrived, (for they marched all night), Timotheus and his men had begun to storm the place; but Judas, coming upon them when they little expected so sudden and violent an assault, put them all to the rout, and, in the pursuit, slew eight thousand of them. He thence marched his army from place to place, where he understood that any Jews were oppressed or imprisoned; and having treated them in the same manner as he did Bassora, slain all the males, taken their spoils, and set their cities on fire, he returned to Jerusalem.

While Judas and his brother Jonathan were thus successful in Gilead, the other brother Simon was not idle in Galilee. For he defeated the enemy (h) in several encounters, drove them out of the country, and pursued them, with a great slaughter, to the very gates of Ptolemais: and, being now ready to return, he took along with him all the Jews, men, women, and children, that he could find in those parts, because he thought them too far distant from Jerusalem to be under the eye and protection of their brethren; and, having brought them safe into Judea,

(f) Ibid. ver. 16, 17. (g) Ibid. ver. 21, etc. (h) Ibid. ver. 21, &c.

A. M  
3841, etc.  
Ant. Chris.  
163, etc.  
from 1  
Macc. v. 1.  
2 Macc. x.  
11. and Jos.  
lib. xii. c. 14.  
to the end of  
1 and 2  
Macc. and  
of Jos. lib.  
xiii. c. 19.



A. M. with them he repeopled these places which had been deso-  
 3841, etc. lated by the enemy, during the persecution of Antiochus  
 Ant. Chisf. Epiphanes.  
 163, etc.

(i) Joseph, who, with the remainder of the army, was  
 from 1 left in Jerusalem, hearing of these great successes in Gilead  
 Macc. v. 1. and Galilee, would needs be doing something; and there-  
 2 Macc. x. fore, contrary to the orders that had been given him, led  
 11. and Jos. forth the forces on an ill-projected expedition against Jam-  
 lib. xii. c. 14. nia, a sea-port on the Mediterranean, thinking to take the  
 to the end of place: but Gorgias, who commanded in those parts for  
 1 and 2 the King of Syria, fell upon Joseph's army, put them to  
 Macc. and flight, and, in the pursuit, slew about two thousand of  
 of Jos. lib. them; which rash attempt ended in the confusion of those  
 xiii. c. 19. that undertook it; for Judas had given contrary orders,  
 Their bro- and by his wise conduct, and undaunted bravery, was e-  
 ther Jo- very where attended with success.  
 seph's defeat  
 before Jam-  
 nia.  
 Judas makes  
 a peace with  
 Antiochus  
 Eupator.

Enraged at these successes, Lyfias (k), who was com-  
 mander in chief of the Syrian forces, having raised an ar-  
 my of eighty thousand men, marched against Judas, with  
 all the horse of the kingdom, and eighty elephants; and  
 coming to Bethzura, thought it necessary to take that place  
 in his way; but while he was besieging it, Judas came up-  
 on him, and, having slain eleven thousand foot, and six-  
 teen hundred horse, put the rest of his army to flight:  
 So that Lyfias, who with much ado escaped to Antioch,  
 growing weary of so unprosperous a war, and not know-  
 ing where to raise fresh recruits, made a peace with Judas  
 and his people, whereby the decree of Antiochus Epipha-  
 nes, obliging them to conform to the religion of the Greeks,  
 was rescinded, and a liberty granted them to live according  
 to their own laws.

Burns Joppa  
 and Jamnia.

This peace was ratified by Antiochus Eupator, but it did  
 not last long, (l) because the governours of the several  
 neighbouring places did not like it. The people of Joppa  
 were the first that broke it, by drowning in the sea two  
 hundred of the Jews, who lived among them in that city;  
 but Judas severely revenged their cruelty: For, falling up-  
 on them by night, he burnt their shipping, put all to the  
 sword that had escaped the fire, and then hearing, that  
 the people of Jamnia had but badly treated the Jews, he  
 set fire to that haven likewise, and burnt all the ships in it.

(i) 1 Maccab. v. 55, etc.  
 (l) Chap. xii. 2, etc.

(k) 2 Maccab. xi. 1, etc.

Timotheus was one of the governours that was dissatisfied with the peace; and therefore, when Judas understood that he had drawn all his forces together, (*m*) to the number of an hundred and twenty thousand foot, and two thousand five hundred horse; and that he was going to give the Jews in Gilead fresh vexations, he marched against him; and, having defeated a strong body of wandering Arabs † in his way, and made peace with them, he first took the city of Caspis †, slew the inhabitants, and destroyed the place; then attacked Caraca, which was garrisoned with ten thousand men, whom he put to the sword; and, at last, coming up with Timotheus, near a place called *Raphon*, on the river Jobboc, he there gave him battle, slew of his army thirty thousand men, and (*n*) took him prisoner; but, upon condition that he should release all the Jews that were captives in any places under his command, he gave him both his life and his liberty. Understanding, however, that a great part of the vanquished army had fled to Carnion, a city in Arabia, he pursued them thither, and having taken the place, slew twenty-five thousand more of Timotheus's forces, that had there taken refuge.

In his return to Jerusalem, he took along with him all the Jews, that were in the land of Gilead, for the same reason that Simon had carried them out of the land of Galilee the year before, *viz.* to inhabit and fortify the cities of Judea, which were not sufficiently peopled: (*o*) But being in his way to pass through Ephron †, a strong city,

(*m*) 1 Maccab. v. 37, etc. 2 Macc. xii. 20,—23.

† These people lived in tents, and stayed in a place no longer than it afforded them provision for themselves and their cattle. They were the descendents of Ishmael, and according to the angel's prediction of them, Gen. xvi. 12. *Their hand was against every man, and every man's hand against them*: For they lived chiefly upon plunder; but as they were a stout and warlike people, and well acquainted with the course of those countries, it was no bad policy in the Jewish general, after he had forced them to sue for peace, and had obliged them to furnish him with a certain quantity of cattle and provisions, to secure their friendship and future services; 2 Maccab. xii. 11.; *Universal History*, lib. ii. 11.

† This is the same as Hesbon, in the tribe of Reuben.

(*n*) 2 Maccab. xi. 24, 25.  
2 Maccab. xii. 27, 28.

(*o*) 1 Maccab. v. 46, etc.

† The Scripture makes mention of this city of Ephron, as standing upon the Jordan, only in this place; and therefore it is hard to define its particular situation.

and

A. M.  
3841, etc.  
Ant. Chris.  
13, etc.  
from 1  
Macc. v. 1.  
2 Macc. x.  
11. and Jos.  
lib. xii. c. 14.  
to the end of  
1 and 2  
Macc. and  
Jos. lib.  
xii. c. 19.  
Vanquishes  
Timotheus,  
and returns  
to Jerusalem  
in triumph.

A. M. 3841, etc.  
 Ant. Chris. 163, etc.  
 from 1 Macc. v. 1.  
 2 Macc. x. 11. and Jos. lib. xiii. c. 14.  
 to the end of 1 and 2 Macc. and of Jos. lib. xiii. c. 19.

and well garrisoned by Lyfias, the people refused to open their gates; whereupon he assaulted the place, and, having taken it by storm, put all the males (to the number of twenty-five thousand persons) to the sword, took their spoils, and razed the city to the ground. After this, re-  
 passing Jordan, and returning to Jerusalem, (p) he and his company went up to the temple, to give God thanks for the great success wherewith he had been pleased to prosper this expedition, and for his singular and wonderful protection of them, in that, notwithstanding all the hazardous enterprises they had been engaged in, they had not so much as lost one man.

This continued series of success gave Judas (q) encouragement to carry the war into the southern parts of Idumæa, where he took and dismantled Hebron, the metropolis thereof: And thence passing into the land of the Philistines, took Azotus, formerly called *Asbdod*; pulled down their heathen altars, burnt their carved images, and spoiled the place; and having done the like to all the other cities of that country, where he prevailed, he led his victorious army, laden with the spoils of their enemies, back again to Judea.

Besieges the  
 fortress of  
 Acra, foils  
 Antiochus's  
 army, and  
 his brother  
 Eleazar kills  
 the royal e-  
 lephant.

But, notwithstanding all these successes, the Jews could not call themselves entirely masters of Jerusalem. The fortress of Acra (r) still held out for the King of Syria, and the garrison, consisting of Macedonians and renegade Jews, was very troublesome to such as resorted to the temple. Judas therefore thought it highly necessary to attempt the reduction of the place; and, having got engines † and machines for that purpose, he soon straitened the garrison. The besieged, however, found means to acquaint King Antiochus with their distress, who promised to relieve them, and, for that end, gathered an army of an hundred and ten thousand foot, twenty thousand horse, thirty-two elephants, with castles on their backs full of archers, and three hundred armed chariots of war. With all

(p) 1 Maccab. v. 54. (q) Ibid. ver. 65, — 68.

(r) Chap. vi. 19, etc.

† These (in Jeremiah vi. 6.) are rendered in the margin, *engines of shot*, and, without doubt, resembled in some measure, the *balistæ* and *catapultæ* among the Romans, which were used for throwing stones and arrows, and were to them of old instead of mortars and carcases; *Lewis's Jewish Antiq. lib. vi. c. 46.*

this

this force, Antiochus, marching to the relief of the fortress of Jerusalem, passed through Idumæa, where, in his way, he laid siege to Bethzura, which made a brave defence; for the inhabitants, by bold sallies, so burnt and disordered his engines, that he spent much time about it to no purpose. Judas, all this while, pressed the fortress of Acra with all his might; but fearing lest the Bethzurians should be forced to submit to the superiour strength of the enemy, he left the siege of it, and went to the relief of them.

(s) His intent was to surprise the king's forces; and therefore marching in the night, he fell upon one quarter of the army in the dark; killed four thousand of them; and having put the whole army into confusion, retreated on break of day, without suffering any loss. In the morning, when both sides prepared for an open battle, Judas and his men, with great fierceness, began the onset, and did wonders: For Eleazar (t), a brother of Judas, observing one particular elephant, which was higher than the rest, \* armed with royal harness, and supposing thereby that the king was upon it, (at once both to deliver his country, and gain himself immortal honour), he made at it with all his might; and having slain every one that stood in his way, got under its belly, and thrust his spear into it, so that the creature fell down dead, but unhappily crushed him to death by its weight in the fall.

At length, after having slain about six hundred of the king's forces, perceiving that they must be overpowered by so great a number, (u) they withdrew from the fight, and made a safe retreat to Jerusalem. Antiochus followed after with one part of his army, but left the other to carry on the siege of Bethzura, which the inhabitants seeing

A. M.  
3841, etc. f.  
Ant. Chr.  
163, etc.  
from 1  
Macc. v. 1.  
2 Macc. x.  
11, and Jos.  
lib. x. i. c. xiv.  
to the end  
of 1 and  
2 Macc.  
and of Jos.  
lib. xiii.  
c. 19.

Judas is besieged in Jerusalem, and by a lucky incident relieved.

(s) 1 Maccab. vi. 32.

(t) 2 Maccab. xiii. 15, &c.

\* Though elephants have an hide impenetrable almost in every part, except their belly, yet, for their greater safety, those that are appointed for the wars, are usually armed and covered all over, as it were with a coat of mail. The kings of India, (according to Q. Curtius, lib. 2.), when they took the field, were drawn by elephants all covered over with gold; and Florus has described the elephants made use of in battles, *auro, argento, purpura, et suo ebore fulgentes*, lib. 2. c. 8. harnessed, and set out, much after the fashion of the war-horse in Virgil:

Spumantemque agitabat equum, quem pellis ahenis

In plumam squamis auro, concerta tegebat.

(u) 1 Maccab. vi. 47.

Virg. Æn. 11.

A. M.  
3841, etc.  
Ant. Chrif.  
163, etc.  
from 1  
Macc. v. 1.  
2. Macc. x.  
11. and Jos.  
lib. xii. c. 14.  
to the end  
of 1 and 2  
Macc  
and of Jos.  
lib. xiii.  
c. 19.

Menelaus  
the high-  
priest's un-  
happy end.

no prospect of relief from their friends, were forced to surrender. From Bethzura the king's forces (x) marched to Jerusalem, where Judas had shut himself up, and his friends, in the temple. They defended the place with great resolution, but must inevitably have been compelled to surrender, had they not been relieved by this lucky and unexpected accident.

In the absence of the king, and the Regent Lyfias, that Philip, whom (as we said before) Antiochus Epiphanes, at his death, constituted guardian of his son, had made himself master of Antioch, and taken upon him the government of the Syrian empire. (y) Upon the receipt of this news, Lyfias found it necessary to make peace with the Jews, that he might be at liberty to return, and expel the intruder. Accordingly a peace was granted them upon honourable and advantageous terms, and ratified by oath; but when Antiochus came to see the strength of the fortifications belonging to the temple, he caused them, (contrary to the articles he had sworn), to be all pulled down and demolished, and then returned towards Syria, where he found that Philip had seized on the imperial city; but by one easy battle, wherein Philip was worsted and slain, he soon recovered the possession of it.

(z) In this expedition against Judea, Menelaus, the high-priest, accompanied Antiochus, and was as busy in offering him his service against his own people as any: But falling by some means under the displeasure of Lyfias, he was accused, and condemned, as the author and fomentor of this Jewish war, and accordingly was carried to Berhæa †, a town in Syria, and there cast headlong into a tower of

(x) Ibid. ver. 48, &c. (y) Ibid. ver. 55, 56. 2 Maccab. xiii. 23. (z) Ibid. ver. 3,—8.

† This was one of the punishments of the Persians, whereby great criminals among them were put to death. The manner of it is described, in the 13th chapter of the second book of the Maccabees, to be thus:—An high tower was filled a great way up with ashes; the criminal being from the top thrown down headlong into them, there had the ashes by a wheel continually stirred up, and raised about him, till he was suffocated and died. *Such was the death of that wicked man.* (says the author of the book above cited), *that he had not a burial in the earth, and that very justly.* But then the reason which he gives for this providential judgment upon him is very light and trifling: *Forasmuch as he had committed many sins about the altar, whose fire and ashes were holy, he received his death in ashes,* ver. 7, 8.; Prideaux's Connection, anno 424.

ashes;

ashes; but after his death, (a) Antiochus conferred the office of high priest upon one Alcimus, a man altogether as wicked as the other.

All this while Antiochus Eupator held the crown of Syria by an unjust title: For Demetrius, the son of Seleucus Philopater, elder brother to Antiochus Epiphanes, was the legal heir thereof. He, in exchange for his uncle Antiochus, had been sent an hostage to Rome, the very year that his father died; and Antiochus, returning at the very nick of time, was unanimously declared king, in the absence and minority of the rightful heir. But Demetrius being now in the twenty-third year of his age, when his uncle died, and his son Eupator was appointed king in his room, \* thought it high time to put in his claim; and accordingly moved the senate of Rome for their assistance in the recovery of his father's kingdom; and as an inducement thereunto, he alledged, that having been bred up in that city from his childhood, "He should always look on Rome as his country, the senators as his fathers, and their sons as his brothers." But the senate having more regard to their own interest, than the right of Demetrius, and judging it more to their advantage to have a boy reign in Syria, (as Eupator then was), than a man of mature understanding, (as they knew Demetrius to be), instead

A. M.  
3441, &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
163, &c.  
from 1  
Macc. v. 1.  
2 Macc. x.  
xi. and Jos.  
lib. xii. c. 14.  
to the end  
of 1 and  
2 Macc.  
and of Jos.  
lib. x. ii.  
c. 19.  
Demetrius  
Soter reco-  
vers the  
kingdom of  
Syria, and  
puts Eupa-  
tor to death.

(a) 2 Maccab. xiv. 3.; Jewish Antiq. lib. 12. c. 15.

\* What excited him the rather to do it at this time, was the murder of Cn. Octavius: For the Roman senate having sent three ambassadors into Syria, whereof Octavius was chief, to administer the affairs of the nation, during the minority of the king, these ambassadors, finding that there were more ships in the navy, and more elephants in the army, than the treaty made with Antiochus the Great, after the battle of mount Siphilus, allowed of, caused the ships to be burnt, and the elephants to be slain, that exceeded the number stipulated. This occasioned great murmurings and discontent among the people, and provoked one Leptines to such a degree of indignation, that he fell upon Octavius, as he was anointing himself in the Gymnasium at Laodicea, and there slew him. Eupator and Lysias did all they could to clear themselves from having any hand in this vile act, and to this purpose, sent ambassadors to Rome to inform the senate of their innocence; but the senate, after having heard what the ambassadors had to say, gave them no answer, expressing their resentment by their angry silence; and therefore Demetrius thought this no improper time to move the senate, when he perceived them, thus out of humour with Eupator, the usurper of his kingdom; *Prædeux's Connection, anno 162.*

A. M.  
3841, etc.  
Ant. Christ.  
163, etc.  
from 1.  
Macc. v. 1.  
2 Macc. x.  
xi. and Jos.  
lib. xiii. c. 14.  
to the end  
of 1 and  
2 Macc.  
and of Jos.  
lib. xiii. c.  
19.

of asserting his right, to whom it belonged, they confirmed Eupator in the kingdom.

Demetrius being excluded from all hopes of any favour or assistance from the senate, had nothing left to do, but to endeavour to make his escape from Rome, and to risk his fortune in his own country: This he did; (b) and landing at Tripoli in Syria, made it believed, that he was sent by the Roman senate (which would support his pretensions) to take possession of the kingdom. Hereupon Eupator's cause, being in the general opinion given up for lost, every one deserted from him to Demetrius; nay, the very soldiers seized on him, and the regent Lyfias, with an intent to deliver them up to this new-comer, as soon as he arrived at Antioch; but he refusing to see them, ordered them both to be put to death, and so, without any farther opposition, became thoroughly settled in the whole kingdom.

Alcimus,  
the high-  
priest's per-  
fidity and  
cruelty.

He had not been long so settled, before Alcimus (who on the death of Menelaus, had by Antiochus Eupator been constituted high-priest of the Jews, but was never acknowledged as such, because in the time of persecution he had apostatised) came, and implored his protection against Judas Maccabæus, and his party; accusing them of being enemies to the kings of Syria, fomenters of sedition, and murderers, and persecutors of his most faithful subjects. By this representation Demetrius was so exasperated, that (c) he immediately ordered Bacchides, the governor of Mesopotamia, to march with an army into Judea; and having confirmed Alcimus in the office of high-priest, joined him in the same commission for carrying on the war in Judea.

No sooner were they arrived in Judea, with a considerable body of troops, but the Scribes † and doctors of the law, met together, and consulted what they were to do upon this occasion. Very desirous they were to have an high-priest again settled among them, and not at all suspicious that any of the sons of Aaron would do them any wrong;

(b) 1 Maccab. vii. 1, &c.; 2 Maccab. xiv. 1. 2.; Joseph. Antiq. lib. 12. c. 16.; Justin, lib. 34. c. 3. (c) 1 Maccab. vii. 8,—20.

† These, in all probability, were a deputation from the great Sanhedrim, which, at this time, had the government of the nation in their hands; and why Judas, who was at the head of them, did not think proper to accompany them, the reason is pretty obvious. *Calmet's Commentary* on 1 Maccab. vii. 12.

and

and therefore, upon promise of safe conduct, they waited upon them, in order to bring matters to a peaceable accommodation: But the perfidious Alcimus, having got them in his power, caused sixty of them to be seized, and all put to death, on one day, which made the people more cautious of him for the future.

Bacchides, however, returning to Antioch, put Alcimus in possession of the country, and left him some forces to support him in it. With these the wicked high-priest did much mischief, and committed many murders upon those that were not for him: But as soon as Judas (*d*) with his men appeared in the field again, he left the country for fear, and returned to the king with fresh accusations against him, and his brothers, who, as long as they were permitted to live, (as he told him), would never suffer the king's authority to take place, nor any lasting peace to be established in the country. So that, upon this representation, Demetrius (*e*) sent another army against the Jews, under the command of Nicanor, with strict orders to destroy Judas, disperse his followers, and thoroughly establish Alcimus in the high-priest's office.

Nicanor was not insensible of the courage and conduct of Judas; and therefore, loath to come to an engagement with him, he endeavoured to compose matters by a treaty, and accordingly entered into articles of peace with him: But the high-priest, (*f*) not liking the peace, because his interest (as he imagined) was not sufficiently secured in it, went, the third time to the king, and so prepossessed him against it, that he refused to ratify what was agreed, and sent his positive commands to Nicanor, to go on with the war, and not cease prosecuting it, until he had either slain Judas, or taken him prisoner, and sent him bound to Antioch. Upon these instructions, Nicanor being obliged, though much against his will, to alter his conduct, marched his army up to Jerusalem, and designing, by craft and treachery, to get Judas into his power, (*g*) invited him to a conference, which the other, upon presumption of the depending peace, readily complied with, and came to the place appointed: But when he found that an ambush was laid for his apprehension, he fled from his presence, and so began the war afresh. This war was carried on with

A. M.  
3841, etc.  
Ant. Christ.  
163, etc.  
from 1  
Macc. v. 1.  
2 Macc. x.  
11. and Jos.  
lib. xii. c. 14.  
to the end  
of 1 and  
2 Macc.  
and of Jos.  
lib. xiii.  
c. 19.

Judas expels him the country, and quite destroys Nicanor and his army, for which the Jews keep an annual festival.

(*d*) 1 Maccab. vii. 23, 24. (*e*) Ibid. ver. 26,—29. 2 Maccab. xiv. 12,—25. (*f*) Ibid. ver. 26,—29. (*g*) Chap. vii. 27,—31.



A. M.  
3841, etc.  
Ant. Chriſt.  
163, etc.  
from 1  
Macc. v. 1.  
2 Mac. x.  
xi. and Joſ.  
lib. xii. c. 14.  
to the end  
of 1 and  
2 Macc.  
and of Joſ.  
lib. xii.  
c. 19.

various ſucceſſes for ſome time, and with ſome particular cruelties on Nicanor's ſide †, but at length, coming to a deciſive battle near a village called *Bethoron*, Nicanor was ſlain in the firſt onſet, which the reſt of the army perceiving, caſt away their arms, and fled; ſo that, what with Judas's purſuing them, and the country riſing upon them as they endeavoured to eſcape, not one of the whole army (which conſiſted of five and thirty thouſand men) was left to carry home the tidings of their overthrow.

After the purſuit was ended, the victorious army returning to the field of battle, took the ſpoils of the ſlain; and having found Nicanor's body among the dead, they cut off his head, and his right-hand, which he ſtretched out ſo proudly in his threatenings againſt the temple, and hanged them up upon one of the towers of Jeruſalem. A general joy overſpread the whole city upon this occaſion, and in commemoration of ſo great a deliverance, it was ordained, that the thirteenth day of their month *Adar*, (which answers in part to our February), the day whereon this victory was obtained, ſhould be ever after obſerved as an anniversary day of ſolemn thankſgiving; and ſo it is kept even to this preſent time, under the name of the day of Nicanor.

Judas  
makes a  
league with  
the Ro-  
mans, but  
is overcome  
by a much  
ſuperiour  
force and  
ſlain.

(b) Judas having now ſome reſpite after this victory, was thinking of making a league with the Romans. He had heard much talk of their power, prowels, and policy; and was therefore deſirous of making an alliance

† One inſtance of this kind was practiſed upon Razis, an eminent and honourable ſenator of the Jewiſh Sanhedrim, who had not only perſeversed in his religion through the worſt of times, but upon all occaſions been very munificent to the people. Him Nicanor was reſolved to cut off, the rather, becauſe he thought it would be an act of high diſpleaſure to the Jews; and therefore ſent a party to ſeize him. Razis was, at this time, at a caſtle of his which he had in the country, where he defended himſelf againſt them for ſome time with great valour; but at length finding that he could hold out no longer, he fell upon his ſword. The wound however was not mortal, and therefore he threw himſelf headlong over the battlements of the tower whereon he fought; but finding himſelf ſtill alive, he thruſt his hand into his wound, and pulling out his bowels, caſt them upon the aſſailants, and ſo died; 2 *Maccab.* xiv. 46.

(b) 2 *Maccab.* viii.; Jewiſh Antiq. lib. 12. c. 17.

with

with † them, in hopes of receiving thereby some protection and relief against the oppressions of the Syrians. To this purpose he sent Jason and Eupolemus, men of sufficiency for such an embassy, to Rome, who were kindly received by the senate, and from them obtained a decree, acknowledging the Jews for friends and allies to the Romans, a league of mutual defence between them, and a letter to Demetrius, requiring him, upon the peril of having war denounced against him, to desist from giving the Jews any farther molestation: But before the return of these embassadors Judas was dead.

(i) For Demetrius, having received an account of the defeat and death of Nicanor, sent Bacchides (with Alcimus) the second time into Judea, at the head of a very numerous army, made up of the prime forces, and flower of his militia. Judas, at their coming, had no more than three thousand men to oppose them; and these were so terrified with the strength and number of the enemy, that they deserted their general, all to eight hundred men. However, with these few, he resolved to try his fortune; and when his soldiers advised him to retreat, and wait for a supply; "God forbid," says he, "that the sun should ever see me turn my back to my enemies. If providence has ordained that we should die, let us die manfully, fighting for our brethren; and let us never stain the honour of our former valorous deeds by an ignominious flight:" And, so animating them by his own example, he charged and broke the right wing, where Bacchides commanded in person, and pursued them as far as the mountains of Azotus; but having not forces enough to keep the left wing in play, he was followed and encompassed. The action was very hot and obstinate: The Jews sold their lives at a dear rate: Their general did every valiant thing that man could do; till, being overpowered by numbers, he was slain, and his men, thus deprived of their heroic leader, were forced to fly.

† Josephus takes notice, that this was the very first treaty that ever the Jews made with the Romans, which is very probable from the manner in which the author of the first book of Maccabees prefaces his account of it; for there it appears, that the Jews, till this time, had very little knowledge of the Roman state; *Jos. Antig. lib. 12. c. 17*, and *1. Maccab. viii. 1*.

(i) *1 Maccab. ix. 1, &c.*

Thus

A. M. 3841, &c. Thus fell the great Judas Maccabæus, the restorer and preserver of the true worship of God, and the reliever and protector of his distressed countrymen, while he lived. His two brothers, Simon and Jonathan, took up his dead body, and conveyed it to the city of Modin, they there buried it, in the sepulchre of his ancestors, with all the funeral honour that was due to the memory of so brave a man, and so excellent a commander.

After the death of Judas, Bacchides made himself master of the country, and used all the friends and adherents to the Maccabees, wherever he found them, with the utmost barbarity; (*k*) so that Jonathan was in a manner necessitated to take upon him the command in the room of his brother Judas, and to become the captain of all those who had preserved their integrity. To this purpose, taking with him his brother Simon, and those that had resorted to him, he retired into the wilderness of Tekoa; and there encamped, with a morass on one side, and the river Jordan on the other, so that they could not easily be come at. But Bacchides (*l*) marching after them, and having made himself master of the pass that led to their encampment, assaulted them in it on the Sabbath-day, expecting to meet with no resistance. Jonathan, however, reminding his men of the determination that was made in this case in the time of his father Mattathias, encouraged them to dispute it bravely; which accordingly they did, even till they had slain about a thousand of the assailants: But then, finding that they should be overpowered with numbers, they cast themselves into the river, and by swimming over to the other side, made their escape.

Bacchides thought it not proper to pursue them any farther, but rather to go back to Jerusalem; where, having fortified mount Acra, and the neighbouring towns, and put garrisons in them, he took hostages for the fidelity of the inhabitants, and so returned to Syria †: But, before he departed, Alcimus, the great troubler of Israel, and

(*k*) 1 Maccab. ix. 28,—32.

(*l*) Ibid. ver. 43,—53.

† It is most likely, that Demetrius had, by this time, received the letters which were sent to him by the Romans in behalf of the Jews, and thereupon gave Bacchides orders to surcease his vexations of that people; and that, in obedience to these orders, Bacchides took occasion, on the death of Alcimus, to leave the country; *Priæux's Connection*, anno 168.

whom he had, not long before, settled in the high-priest-  
hood, was smitten with a palsy, whereof he suddenly died ;  
so that the land had rest for two years, and Jonathan an  
opportunity of bringing his affairs to some better settlement  
in Judea.

A. M.  
3841, etc.  
Ant. Christ.  
163, etc.  
from 1  
Macc. v. 1.  
2 Macc. x.  
11. and Jos.  
lib. xii.  
c. 14. to the  
end of 1  
and 2 Macc.  
and of Jos.  
lib. xiii.  
c. 19.

(*m*) The adverse party, however, was not long easy ;  
but, at the end of two years, prevailed with Bacchides to  
return with his army into Judea, proposing to seize Jona-  
than, and all his abettors, as soon as he was arrived with  
his forces to support the enterprise : But when Jonathan  
had intelligence of this, he laid hold on fifty of the prin-  
cipal conspirators, and put them to death, which quelled  
all the rest. Being sensible, however, that he could not  
stand against so great a force as Bacchides had brought a-  
gainst him, he retired to Bethbasi, a place strongly situate  
in the wilderness, and here he purposed to make a stand  
against the enemy.

Bacchides, as soon as he arrived in Judea, went after  
Jonathan ; but, upon his approach, Jonathan left Simon  
his brother with one part of the forces to defend the place,  
whilst himself, with the other part, took the field to har-  
ass the enemy abroad : In which capacities they both act-  
ed so well, Jonathan, by cutting off several of their par-  
ties, and now and then falling upon the outskirts of their  
army employed in the siege ; and Simon, by making fre-  
quent sallies upon them, and burning the engines they had  
brought against the place ; that Bacchides, (*n*) growing  
weary of this undertaking, and not a little enraged at those  
who were the occasion of his return and disgrace, put se-  
veral of them to death. This opportunity Jonathan laid  
hold on, and therefore sent messengers to him, to desire  
an accommodation, which Bacchides readily came into, so  
that a peace was concluded. The prisoners whom he had  
in his custody were all restored, and himself took an oath,  
never to molest the Jews any more : Which accordingly he  
fulfilled ; for as soon as the peace was ratified on both sides,  
he went away, and never more returned into the country.

When the wars were thus happily ended, Jonathan re-  
tired to Michmash, a town about nine miles distance to  
the north of Jerusalem, where he governed the people

(*m*) 1 Maccab. ix. 58,—61.  
Joseph. Antiq. lib. xii. c. 1. and 2.

(*n*) Ibid. ix. 69,—73.

A. M.  
3841, &c.  
Ant. Christ  
163, etc.  
from 1  
Macc. v. 1.  
2. Macc. x.  
11. and Jos.  
lib. xii.  
c. 14. to the  
end of 1  
and 2 Macc.  
and of Jos.  
lib. xiii.  
c. 19.

Balas (who  
took upon  
him the  
name of  
*Alexander*)  
usurps the  
kingdom of  
Syria, and  
is joined by  
Jonathan.

according to law; cut off all those that had apostatized from him; and, as far as in him lay, reformed all abuses, both in church and state; repairing the city of Jerusalem; fortifying it on every side, and causing the wall round the mount of the temple, which had been pulled down, to be rebuilt.

At this time Alexander, (for that was the name which he assumed), pretending to be the son of Antiochus Epiphanes †, laid claim to the Syrian monarchy; and being well supported by foreign powers, seized Ptolemais, a city of Palestine, and was making preparations to drive Demetrius out of the throne. On this occasion the two rival princes did both make their court to Jonathan, as thinking him a good ally: Demetrius (o) sent him letters, constituting him his general in Judea, with full authority to raise forces, and to provide them with arms to come to his assistance, and commanding, at the same time, that hostages, which were in the fortress of Jerusalem, should be de-

† In the reign of Antiochus Epiphanes, one Heraclides was his treasurer in the province of Babylon, while his brother Timarchus, another favourite of the king's, was governor of it; but on the coming of Demetrius to the crown, they were both found guilty of great misdemeanors, for which Timarchus was put to death; but Heraclides made his escape out of the kingdom, and took up his residence at Rhodes. While he was there, Demetrius, having given himself up entirely to luxury and sloth, so neglected the affairs of government, that his subjects justly took disgust against him, and were ready to enter into any conspiracy to depose him; which Heraclides understanding, in hopes of making a revolution in favour of himself, he contrived this plot.— In the isle of Rhodes there was a youth, of a very mean and obscure condition, called *Salas*, but, in other respects, every way fit for his purpose. Him he prevailed with to pass for the son of Antiochus Epiphanes; and having thoroughly instructed him how to act his part, he carried him to Rome, where, by his craft and earnest solicitations, he not only prevailed with the senate to own him, but procured a decree from them likewise, permitting him to recover the kingdom of Syria out of the hands of Demetrius, and promising their assistance in doing it. By virtue of this decree he raised forces, and with them sailing to Ptolemais in Palestine, seized that city; and there, by the name of *Alexander*, son of Antiochus Epiphanes, took upon him to be king of Syria. Great numbers, out of disaffection to Demetrius, flocked to him; so that, at length, Demetrius being defeated and slain, Alexander obtained the full possession of the Syrian empire; *Prideaux's Connection*, anno 152.

(o) 1 Maccab. x. 25, &c. Joseph. Antiq. lib. xiii. c. 4.

livered

livered to him ; which accordingly was done. (p) Alexander, on the other hand, † having sent him a purple robe, and a crown of gold, as ensigns of great dignity, made him a grant of the high-priesthood, and of the honour to be called the king's friend. Demetrius hearing of this, (q) and being resolved to outbid Alexander, made him still more advantageous offers : But the Jews, remembering what a bitter enemy he had been to all those that had adhered to the true interest of their country, and suspecting that these offers proceeding only from the necessity of his affairs, which would certainly be revoked as soon as the storm was blown over, resolved rather to enter into league with Alexander : And therefore Jonathan †, accepting of his grant of the high-priest's office, did, on the feast of tabernacles, which soon ensued, put on the pontifical robe, and officiated as high-priest, after that the place, from the death of Alcimus, had been vacant seven years.

A. M.  
3841, etc.  
Ant. Christ.  
163, etc.  
from 1  
Macc. v. i.  
2 Macc. x.  
11. and Jo.  
lib. xii.  
c. 4. to the  
end of 1  
and 2 Macc.  
and of Jos.  
lib. xiii.  
c. 19.  
Jonathan is  
made high-  
priest, and  
greatly pro-  
moted, and  
rewarded by  
Alexander.

(p) Ibid. x. 15, — 20. Joseph. Antiq. lib. xiii. c. 5.

† The letter which he sent him, together with these, is to this effect: " King Alexander, to his brother Jonathan, &c.  
" Being informed of your power and valour, and that you are  
" worthy of friendship, we constitute you high-priest of your  
" nation; and it is our pleasure that you should be inrolled  
" in the number of the king's friends. To this end we have  
" sent you a purple robe, and a golden crown, not doubting  
" of a suitable return from you, for our affection and friend-  
" ship;" Joseph. Antiq. lib. xiii. c. 5.

(q) 1 Maccab. x 25, &c. Joseph. Antiq. lib. xiii. c. 5.

† From the time of the return from the Babylonish captivity, the office of high-priest had been in the family of Jozadack, and, in a lineal descent, was transmitted down to Onias, the third of that name. He was supplanted by Jason his brother, as Jason was by his brother Menelaus, and after the death of Menelaus, Alcimus, who was of a different family, was put into the office by the command of the king of Syria. Whether the Asmonæans were of the race of Jozadack, or not, it is no where said ; but it is certain, that they were of the course of Joarib, (1 Maccab. ii. 1), which was the first class of the sons of Aaron ; and therefore, upon the failure of the former pontifical family, they had the best right to succeed. With this right it was, that Jonathan took the office ; and in his family it became settled, and continued for several descents, until the time of Herod, who, from an office of inheritance, changed it into that of arbitrary will and pleasure. Whoever had the power after him, put the high-priests in or out, as they thought fit, till at length the office was extinguished by the destruction of the temple by the Romans ; Prideaux's Connection, anno 253.

A. M. In the mean time, the two contending kings having  
 3841, etc. drawn together all their forces, committed the determina-  
 Ant. Chris. tion of their cause to a decisive battle, in which Demetrius  
 163, etc. † being defeated and slain, and Alexander, by this victory,  
 from 1 made master of the whole Syrian empire, (r) he sent to  
 Macc. v. 1. Ptolemy King of Egypt, demanding his daughter Cleopa-  
 2 Macc. x. tra in marriage. To this marriage (which was performed  
 11, and Jos. at Ptolemais) Jonathan the high-priest was invited, and  
 lib. xii. was received by both the kings (for Ptolemy was likewise  
 c. 14, to the at the nuptials) with great favour, especially by Ptolemy,  
 end of 1 and 2 Macc. who, to do him a particular honour, caused him to be  
 and of Jos. clothed in purple, and to take place, near himself, among  
 lib. xiii. the first princes of his kingdom; and, besides making him  
 c. 19. general of all his forces in Judea, gave him an office † of  
 great credit and renown in his palace.

But Alexander himself did not long enjoy this prosperous state. Demetrius (s), the son of the late Demetrius, resolving to revenge his father's death, and recover his kingdom, came from Crete, (where he and his brother Antiochus had been concealed in the late troubles), and, with an army of mercenaries, landed in Cilicia. It was not long before he gained over to his interest Apollonius † the governour

† In the first onset, Demetrius's left wing put the opposite wing of the enemy to flight; but as he pursued them too far, (a fault in war which has lost many victories), by the time that they came back, the right wing, in which Demetrius fought in person, was overborne, and he slain in the rout: For his horse having plunged him into a bog, they who pursued him shot at him there with their arrows, till he died; *Joseph. Antiq. lib. xiii. c. 5.*; *Justin, lib. xxxv. c. 1.*; *Apion de Syriacis*; and *Polybius, lib. iii. (r) 1 Maccab. x. 54. Joseph. Antiq. lib. xiii. c. 7.*

† The word *Meridarches*, which we translate a Duke, Grotius (in his commentary on 1 Maccab. x. 65.) makes to be the *chief sewer*, which, even in the German empire, is an office that one of the electors bears; But (in his commentary on Matth. xix. 28.) he makes it denote the *governour of a province*: And if, in this place, it were so taken, it would better become Jonathan (one would think) to be made governour of some part of the Syrian empire, than to be the regulator of the dishes at the royal table; *Prideaux's Connection, anno 150.*

(s) 1 Maccab. x. 67.; *Joseph. Antiq. lib. xiii. c. 8.*; *Justin, lib. xxxv. c. 2.*

† Apollonius was a common name among the Syro-Macedonians and Greeks; and, in the history of the Maccabees, we find so many mentioned of that name, that, for the prevention of mistakes,

gouverneur of Cælo-Syria, who, to oblige Jonathan to quit Alexander's party, and join with Demetrius (*t*), marched an army as far as Jamnia, and from thence sent a challenge to Jonathan to leave his fastnesses on the mountains, and come and fight him on the plains.

Provoked at this message, Jonathan marched out with ten thousand men. He first took Joppa, in the sight of Apollonius and his army, and then joining battle, not only vanquished him in the open field, but pursued his broken forces to Azotus. Here was a famous temple of the god Dagon, unto which the Syrians fled for shelter; but Jonathan entering the town, burnt it to the ground, and set the temple on fire; so that the number of those who were slain in battle, and perished by the flames, amounted

to a great number. A. M. 3841, &c. Ant. Christ. 163, &c. from 1 Macc. v. 1. 2 Macc. x. 11. and Jos. lib. xii. c. 14. to the end of 1 and 2 Macc. and of Jos. lib. xiii. c. 19.

mistakes, it may not be improper to give some account of the several persons who bore it. The first that we meet with of that name, is Apollonius, the son of Thraseas, 2 Maccab. iii. 5. who was gouverneur of Cælo-Syria and Phœnicia, under Seleucus Philopater, when Heliodorus came to Jerusalem, to rob the temple. He was chief minister of state to Seleucus; but, on the accession of his brother Antiochus Epiphanes to the crown, he left Syria, and retired to Miletus. He had a son of his own name, that was bred up at Rome, and resided with Demetrius, (the son of Seleucus Philopater) who was then an hostage in that place. When Demetrius recovered the crown of Syria, this Apollonius became his prime favourite, and was made gouverneur of Cælo-Syria and Phœnicia, the same government which his father held under Seleucus Philopater; and this I take to be the same Apollonius, who, being continued in the same government by Alexander, now revolted from him, to embrace the interest of Demetrius, the son of his old master, and, to engage Jonathan to do the like, marched his forces against him. Another Apollonius is spoken of, 2 Maccab. iv. 21. as the chief minister of Antiochus Epiphanes, who from him was sent as ambassador, first to Rome, and afterwards to Ptolemy Philopater, King of Egypt; and him I take to be the same, that, with a detachment of two and twenty thousand men, was sent to destroy Jerusalem, and build a fortress on mount Acra. There are, besides these, two other persons in the history of the Maccabees, mentioned under the name of *Apollonius*. The former of these, being gouverneur of Samaria in the time of Antiochus Epiphanes, 1 Maccab. iii. 10. was slain in battle by Judas Maccabæus; and the latter (who is called *the son of Genneus*, 2 Maccab. xii. 2.) being gouverneur of some toparchy in Palestine, under Antiochus Eupator, did then signalize himself by being a great enemy to the Jews; *Prideaux's Connection, anno 148.*

(*t*) 1 Maccab. x. 9, — 79.; Joseph. Antiq. lib. xiii. c. 8.



A. M. 3841, etc. Ant. Chris. 163, etc. from 1 Macc. v. 1. 2 Macc. x. 11. and Jos. lib. xii. c. 14. to the end of 1 and 2 Macc. and of Jos. lib. xiii. c. 19.

to no less than eight thousand men. After this, having treated the neighbouring towns that belonged to the enemy, in the like manner, he led his victorious army back to Jerusalem, loaded with spoils; whither he had not been long come, before Alexander, hearing of his renowned actions, in favour of his cause, (u) sent him a \* buckle of gold, such as none but the royal family were allowed to wear, and, at the same time, made him a present of the city of Ekron, and all the territories thereunto belonging.

(x) When Apollonius, governour of Cœlo Syria, had declared for Demetrius, Alexander called in his father-in-law, Ptolemy Philometor, to his assistance. He marched into Palestine with a great army; and, as he passed, in all the cities (which, by Alexander's orders, opened their gates to him) he left a good number of his own soldiers to strengthen the garrisons. But, whether or no this might give some umbrage to Alexander, so it was, that Ptolemy discovered a design, which Ammonius, Alexander's great favourite, had formed, to have him cut off at his coming to Ptolemais; and upon his demanding justice to be done to the traitor, by Alexander's refusing to give him up, he plainly perceived that the king was a party to the treason, and thence began to harbour an implacable hatred against him.

Alexander's plot against his father-in-law, Ptolemy Philometor, for which he is vanquished and slain.

He therefore marched his army to Antioch; and, having taken his daughter from Alexander, gave her to his rival Demetrius, and (with her) assurance to restore him to his father's throne. (y) The Antiochians, taking the opportunity of Ptolemy's approach to execute their resentments upon Ammonius, rose in a tumult, and slew him; and then, opening their gates to Ptolemy, were all disposed to make him their king; but he modestly declining that offer, recommended to them the restoration of Demetrius, the true heir: Whereupon Demetrius was received into the city, and placed on the throne of his ancestors.

(u) 1 Maccab. x. 88, 89.

\* The golden buckle (which was worn upon the shoulder) was a very singular mark of distinction both among the Greeks and the Persians, (from whom the Macedonians took it), and was generally made the reward of great and gallant actions in war; *Calmet's Commentary on 1 Maccab. x. 89.*

(x) 1 Maccab. xi. 1, — 5.; Joseph. Antiq. lib. xiii. c. 8.

(y) Ibid. xi. 13.; Joseph. ibid.

Alexander,

Alexander, who was then in Cilicia, hearing of this, came with all his forces towards Antioch, waſting the country with fire and ſword; but when Ptolemy, with his new ſon-in-law, met him, and gave him battle, his army was routed, and himſelf was forced to fly to Arabia, where Zabdiel, king of the country, cut off his head, and ſent it as a preſent to Ptolemy, who was not a little pleaſed with the ſight of it. His joys however did not laſt long; for, in five days time, he died of the wounds he had received in battle, leaving Demetrius in quiet poſſeſſion of his father's kingdom, which he having recovered by virtue of this victory, did thenceforward take upon him the name of *Nicanor*, i. e. *Conquerour*.

During theſe tranſactions, Jonathan (z) laid ſiege to the fortrefs at Jeruſalem; but ſome of the gariſon, eſcaping by night, came and acquainted Demetrius with it, who thereupon marched from Antioch with an army to relieve it. But coming to Ptolemais, he ſtopped there, and ſent for Jonathan to appear before him, and answer to ſuch accuſations as were preferred againſt him. Jonathan went thither, though he ordered the ſiege ſtill to go on; and when he came to Demetrius, by his rich preſents and wiſe management, he ſo molified the king, and inſinuated himſelf into his good graces, that he not only confirmed him in the poſſeſſion of what he had, but honoured him likewiſe with many new favours, and, upon the payment of three hundred talents, agreed to exempt from all tolls, taxes, and tributes, all the places that were under his government.

Jonathan, upon his return to Jeruſalem, preſſed the ſiege of the fortrefs very cloſely; but finding little or no ſucceſs therein, he ſent an embaſſy (a) to Demetrius, deſiring him to withdraw the gariſon, which he could not expel. This, and much more, Demetrius promiſed to do for him, if he would but ſend him ſome forces to reduce the inhabitants of Antioch, who, incenſed by his cruelty and oppreſſion, had taken up arms againſt him. Jonathan immediately diſpatched three thouſand choice men to his aid, who, coming to Antioch, when the people had beſet the palace with an intent to murder the tyrant, (as they called him), fell on with fire and ſword, and having burnt a great part of the city, and ſlain of the inhabitants

(z) 1 Maccab. xi. 20, 47.; Joſeph. Antiq. lib. xvii. c. 8.

(a) Ibid. xi. 47.—52.; Joſeph. Antiq. lib. xiii. c. 9.

A. M. about an hundred thousand persons, obliged the rest to  
 3841, etc. have recourse to the king's clemency, and pray for peace.  
 Ant. Christ. But all this service availed nothing. Demetrius (*b*) seeing  
 163, etc. this storm overpast, forgot the bargain which he had made  
 from 1 with Jonathan at Ptolemais; and (though he had received  
 Macc. v. 1. the three hundred talents in lieu of them) threatened him  
 2 Macc. x. with military execution, unless he sent the taxes and tri-  
 11. and Jos. bute which were usually paid by his predecessors: and  
 lib. xii. would certainly have done all that he had threatened, had  
 c. 14. to the not Tryphon found out another employ for his arms.  
 end of 1  
 and 2 Macc.  
 and of Jos.  
 lib. xiii.  
 c. 19.

Tryphon  
 overcomes  
 Demetrius,  
 and mur-  
 ders Jona-  
 than and  
 his two  
 sons, toge-  
 ther with  
 the young  
 king whom  
 he had set  
 up.

This Tryphon had formerly served Alexander, as go-  
 vernour of Antioch, but, in the present king's reign, was  
 laid aside. Observing, however, that the cruelty and ty-  
 ranny, which was every-where practised, the disbanding  
 the Syrian soldiers, and retaining only foreigners in pay,  
 together with many more grievances, which the people la-  
 boured under, had quite alienated their hearts, and made  
 them ready for a general defection, he thought this no un-  
 fit opportunity to put in practice his long-concerted scheme  
 of advancing himself to the crown of Syria.

To this purpose he goes into Arabia, (*c*); gets Antio-  
 chus, son of the late Alexander, into his hands; brings  
 him into Syria, claims the kingdom for him; and, to  
 support this claim, all the soldiers whom Demetrius had  
 disbanded, and several others, whom his ill conduct had  
 made his enemies, flock in great numbers to the pretend-  
 er. With these Tryphon marches against Demetrius,  
 vanquishes him in battle, forces him into Seleucia, and,  
 having taken possession of Antioch, places Antiochus up-  
 on the throne, and gives him the name of *Theos*, or the  
*Divine*.

The ill return which Demetrius made Jonathan, was,  
 doubtless, the chief reason for his declaring for this  
 new king; (*d*) who, by the advice of those that were  
 about him, took care, not only to confirm him in the  
 office of high-priest, and in all his other places and  
 dignities, but to make likewise his brother Simon com-  
 mander of all his forces, from Tyre to the frontiers of  
 Egypt. Upon this defection from him, Demetrius sent  
 all the troops that were left in Cœlo-Syria, and Phœnicia,

(*b*) Ibid. xi. 53. (*c*) Ibid. xi. 54,—56.; Joseph, *ibid.* and  
 Apion de Syriacis. (*d*) Ibid. xi. 57,—59.; Joseph. *ibid.*

to chastise him for it: But he not only repulsed them twice, but took Gaza likewise, and all the country as far as Damascus; while Simon (*e*), whom he left in Judea, penetrating into the land of the Philistines, took Joppa, and placed a strong garrison in it. Tryphon, who had no other aim in getting young Antiochus into his hands, than to serve his wicked purposes, knew very well, that, as long as Jonathan continued in his interest, it would be in vain for him to attempt the crown; and (*f*) therefore, having prevailed with him to dismiss his army, and to accompany him to Ptolemais, (under pretence of putting that place into his hands), with no more than a thousand men, they were no sooner entered, but the garrison having shut the gates upon them, seized Jonathan, and put his men to the sword.

Having thus circumvented Jonathan, he took him along with him, and marched his army into Judea: But the Jews by this time had chosen Simon his brother for their commander, and were ready to give him a warm reception. Not finding himself, therefore, able to engage them, he sent Simon this deceitful message,—(*g*) “That he had seized Jonathan only because he owed an hundred talents to the king; but that, in case he would send the money, and Jonathan’s two sons, to be hostages for their father’s fidelity, he would set him again at liberty.” Simon soon saw through this deceit; but he complied with the traitor’s demand, for fear it should be said that he had not done all that lay in his power to save his brother’s life; and accordingly sent the money and two young men. But when the villain had got them in his power, he put both them and their father to death; and, thinking that he had now nothing to obstruct his main design, he caused Antiochus to be murdered privately; and then, assuming the crown, declared himself king of Syria in his stead.

When Simon heard of his brother’s death, and that he was buried at Bascama in the land of Gilead, (*h*) he sent and fetched his dead body from thence; and, having buried it with great funeral solemnity in his father’s se-

(*e*) 1 Mac. xi. 64. Joseph. Antiq. lib. xiii. c. 9. (f) Ib. xii. 39,—52. (g) Ibid. xiii. 12,—19. Joseph. Antiq. lib. xiii. c. 11. (h) Ibid. xiii. 25,—30. Joseph. ibid.

A. M. pulchre at Modin, he erected over it a stately monument †, 3841, &c. all built of white marble, and curiously wrought and polished. Ant. Chiff. 163, &c.

(i) Simon, as soon as he was admitted to the government of the land, sent to Demetrius, who was then at Laodicea, a crown of gold, and a ambassadors to treat with him about terms of peace and alliance. The king granted to Simon a confirmation of the priesthood and principality, and to the people a release of all taxes, tolls, and tributes, with an oblivion of all past acts of hostility, on condition that they would join with him against the usurper: In virtue of which treaty, Simon, being made sovereign prince of the land, and the land freed from all foreign yoke, the Jews from this time, instead of dating their contracts and instruments by the years of the Syrian kings, (as hitherto they had done), dated them by the years of Simon and his successors.

from 1 Macc. v. 1. 2 Macc. x. 11. and Jos. lib. xii. c. 14. to the end of 1 and 2 Mac. and of Jos. lib. xiii. c. 19. Simon, succeeding his brother in the command of the Jewish forces, takes and levels the fortrefs of Acra.

Having thus obtained the independent sovereignty of the land, (k) he took a progress through it, to inspect what was wanting for its security; repairing the fortifications that were decayed, making new ones where they were wanted, and besieging and taking the places that stood out against him. He had no occasion however to besiege the fortrefs of Jerusalem, because the wall which his brother Jonathan had built against it had so cut off all communication with the city, that the garrison, being sore distressed for want of provisions, and all other necessaries, was forced to surrender the place; and Simon, wisely considering how much the city of Jerusalem had been infested by that citadel, pulled it down to the ground, that it might no

† This edifice, being erected on an eminence, was seen far off at sea; and, on that coast, was taken notice of as a good sea-mark. Near to the monument Simon placed seven pyramids, two for his father and mother, four for his four brothers, and the seventh for himself, and then encompassed the whole with a stately portico, supported by marble pillars, each of one entire piece, and whereon were engraved ships and arms, and other military ensigns. Josephus tells us, that this whole fabrick was standing entire in his days, and looked upon as a very curious and excellent piece of architecture, *Antiq. lib. xiii. c. 11.*; and Eusebius mentions it as still in being in his time, which was two hundred years after the time of Josephus; *Prideaux's Connection, anno 144.*

(i) 1 Mac. xiii. 34,—42. Jewish *Antiq. lib. xiii. c. 11.*  
(k) *Ibid. xiv. 7,—33.*

longer

longer be a retreat to sedition and faction; and (to prevent its being built at any time) levelled the hill on which it was situated; so that now no eminence was left but the mount of the temple only.

Demetrius \* at this time was prisoner in Parthia, and Cleopatra his queen had shut up herself and her children in Seleucia †; but, fearing to fall into the hand of the traitor Tryphon, and being provoked at her husband's marrying the daughter of Mithridates, king of Parthia (1), she sent to his brother Antiochus, who still continued in Crete, offering him the crown, and herself in marriage, if he would come and join his interest with her's against Tryphon. This offer he readily accepted of; and, in the beginning of the next year, landed in Syria, with an army of mercenaries, which was soon augmented by a large accession of the usurper's forces, which every day deserted from him: So that, not being able to keep the field, he

A. M.  
3841, etc.  
Ant. Chalf.  
63, etc.  
rom i  
Macc. v. i.  
2 Macc. x.  
11. and Jos.  
lib. xii. c.  
14. to the  
end of 1 and  
2 Mac. and  
of Jos. lib.  
xiii. c. 19.

Antiochus  
Siletes de-  
poses his  
brother De-  
metrius, but  
has his ar-  
my under  
Cendebeus  
defeated  
by Simon.

\* The reason of Demetrius being in this condition in this place, by profane historians, is said to be this:—As the Parthians had at this time over-run in a manner all the East, and had made themselves masters of every country from the river Indus to the Euphrates, those who were of the Macedonian race in those parts, not bearing their usurpation and insolence, invited Demetrius, by repeated embassies, to come to their relief, promising him a general revolt from the Parthians, and such assistance of forces against them as would enable him to suppress these usurpers, and recover to his dominions all the provinces of the East. Upon confidence in these promises, he undertook the expedition; and found, as soon as he appeared, that the Elymæans, the Persians, and the Bactrians, declared for him. By the assistance of these nations he overthrew the Parthians in several conflicts; but at last, under the shew of a treaty of peace, being drawn into a snare, he was made prisoner, and all his army cut to pieces. The king that reigned in Parthia at this time was Mithridates, the son of Priapatites, who, having thus gotten Demetrius into his power, carried him round the revolted provinces, that, by seeing the prince whom they considered in reduced to this ignominious condition, they might more easily be brought to submit to their former yoke: But, when he had done this, he allowed him a maintenance suitable to the state of a king, and gave him one of his daughters, whose name was *Rhodaguna*, in marriage; *Justin. lib. xli. c. 5. and 6.; Joseph. Antiq. lib. xiii. c. 9. and 12.; and Orosius, lib. v. c. 4.*

† It is a city of Syria, situate upon the Mediterranean, near the place where the Orontes discharges itself into that sea.

(1) Joseph. Antiq. lib. xiii. c. 12.

A. M. fled from place to place, till at length, coming to Apamea †, his own native city, he was there taken and put to death. This end being put to his usurpation, Antiochus became fully possessed of his father's throne; and, being a man much addicted to hunting, he had for that reason the name of *Sidetes*, which, in the Syrian language, signifies *the hunter*.

3841, &c. Ant. Christ. 163, &c. from 1 Macc. v. 1. 2 Macc. x. 11. and Jos. lib. xii. c. 14. to the end of 1 and 2 Mac. and of Jos. lib. xiii. c. 19.

Before Antiochus landed in Syria, (to gain Simon over to his interest), he wrote him a letter (*m*), wherein he made him many grants, and promised him more; but, as soon as he was settled in the kingdom, he forgot his promises, and sent an ambassador, demanding him to deliver up Joppa and Gazara, and other places, or else to pay him a thousand talents of silver for them. (*n*) These conditions were thought too unreasonable to be complied with; and therefore, when Antiochus sent an army under the command of Cendebeus, to enforce them, Simon, though very far advanced in years, with a juvenile courage, prepared to give him a warm reception; and, with his two sons, Judas and John, (who was afterwards called *Hyrchanus*) put his army to flight almost at the first onset, and, in the pursuit, cut off a great number of them: But, to be revenged of him for this defeat, Antiochus concerted the most abominable measures.

Ptolemy's base and perfidious murder of his father in-law Simon, and two of his sons.

Simon had a son-in-law named *Ptolemy*, whom he had appointed governour of the plains of Jericho. (*o*) This man, who was rich and ambitious, had laid a design (which he communicated to Antiochus) for the usurpation of the government to himself; but this could not well be done without the destruction of Simon and his family. As Simon, therefore, and two of his sons, Judas and Mattathias, were making a progress through the cities of Judah, when they came to Jericho, Ptolemy invited them to an entertainment which he had prepared for them in a castle of his own building: But, while they were drinking and making merry, he caused them, and all that attended them, to be assassinated; and, thinking thereupon to make himself master of the whole land, he sent a party to Ga-

† It is a city of Syria, lying upon the Orontes, and was built (as is believed) either by Seleucus the first king of Syria, or by his son Antiochus Soter, in honour of Queen Apamea the wife of Seleucus, the mother of Antiochus; *Calmeth's Dictionary*. under the word.

(*m*) 1 Mac. xv. 2.—5.

(*n*) Chap. xv. 30.—36.

(*o*) 1 Mac. xvi. 14.—22. Joseph. Antiq. lib. xiii. c. 14.

zara,

zara, where John Hyrcanus †, Simon's third son, resided, with a design to slay him likewise. But Hyrcanus having had intelligence of what passed at Jericho, was prepared to receive his intended murderers, and having dispatched them, hastened to Jerusalem to secure the city, and the mount of the temple, against those whom the traitor had sent to take possession of both. After this Hyrcanus was declared high-priest and prince of the Jews, in the place of his father Simon, who was greatly † lamented; but what finally became of this execrable villain \*, we have no manner of account in history.

Antiochus

† Why this captain was called *Hyrcanus*, some impute to the victory which he obtained over Hyrcanus, whom the books of the Maccabees, and Josephus, call *Cendebeus*, tho' others say, that he had this name from a gallant action against the Hyrcanians, perhaps in the expedition wherein he accompanied Alexander Sidetes beyond the Euphrates; *Calmet's Dictionary*, under the word.

† The commendation which the author of the first book of the Maccabees, chap. xiv. 4. etc. bestows upon Simon, is worth our observation; for he therein tells us, that he *sought the good of the nation*, in every thing, *so that his authority always pleased them well*: That during his administration, whilst Syria, and other neighbouring kingdoms were almost destroyed by wars, the Jews lived quietly, *every man under his own vine and fig tree*, enjoying, without fear, the fruits of their labours, and beholding with pleasure the flourishing state of their country; their trade increased by the reduction of Joppa, and other maritime places; their territories enlarged; their armies well disciplined; their towns and fortresses well garrisoned; their religion and liberties secured; their land freed from Heathen enemies, and Jewish apostates; and their friendship courted by all the nations about them, even by the Romans and Lacedemonians. He observes farther, that this Simon was no less zealous for the service of God, in exterminating apostasy, superstition, idolatry, and every thing else that was contrary to his laws; that he was a protector of the true Israelites, and a friend to the poor; that he restored the service of the temple to its ancient splendour, and repaired the number of the sacred vessels: So that we need not wonder, if the Jewish Saphedrim thought no dignity of honour, while he lived, and when he was so basely and barbarously cut off, no grief and lamentation too great for a man of his uncommon merit; *Universal History*. lib. ii. c. 11.

\* Josephus has something peculiar in his account of this vile miscreant, *viz.* that after he had killed his father-in-law Simon, he seized on his wife, and two of her children, and with them betook



A. M.  
3841, etc.  
Ant. Christ.  
163, etc.  
from 1  
Macc. v. 1.  
2 Macc. x.  
11. and Jos.  
lib. xii. c.  
14. to the  
end of 1 and  
2 Mac. and  
of Jos. lib.  
xiii. c. 19.

Hyrchanus's  
son, being  
made gene-  
ral, is forced  
to sur-  
render to  
Antiochus,  
and attend  
him to the  
Parthian  
war, where  
he and his  
army are cut  
to pieces.

(p) Antiochus having received from Ptolemy an account of the death of Simon and his sons, thought that he had now a fair opportunity to reduce Judea again under the Syrian empire; and therefore he immediately marched a large army thither; and having overrun the country, and driven Hyrcanus out of the field, he shut him up and all his forces within the walls of Jerusalem, and there besieged him. The siege was carried on vigorously; and the defence of the place was executed as gallantly: But Hyrcanus being distressed for want of provisions for so vast a number of people as was in the city, was forced to sue for peace, which was granted him upon these terms, that the besieged should deliver up their arms; that Jerusalem should be dismantled; that tribute should be paid to the king for Joppa, and the other towns which were held by the Jews out of Judea; and that to buy off the fortrefs of Jerusalem from being rebuilt; (which Antiochus much insisted on), they should pay him five hundred talents\*; three hundred down in hand, and the other two in a reasonable time, for which they were to give hostages.

The

betook himself to a certain castle not far from Jerusalem, called *Dagon*; that when Hyrcanus came to besiege it, the villain's custom was, to bring out his mother and brothers, and to whip and torment them, in the sight of all the people, with menaces to cast them headlong from the battlements, unless Hyrcanus withdrew the siege; that when Hyrcanus, out of tenderness to his mother and brothers, was thinking of raising the siege, and suffering the traitor to escape, his mother called to him aloud from the walls, not to regard her, or her childrens sufferings, but to proceed in the siege with vigour, that so he might do himself and his family right, in taking a just vengeance upon that execrable monster; that notwithstanding this magnanimous exhortation, he could not bear to see his relations tortured, and therefore delayed the siege, until the sabbatical year came on, wherein the Jews were obliged to rest; so that Ptolemy, by this means, being delivered from the war, and the siege, (after he had slain the mother and brothers of Hyrcanus), withdrew to Zeno, surnamed *Catyla*, a tyrant who at that time had usurped to himself the government of Philadelphia; *Antiq. lib. xiii. c. 15*. But our learned Usher is of opinion, that this whole account of Josephus is fabulous.

(p) 1 Mac. xvi. 18.; Joseph. *Antiq. lib. xiii. c. 16*.

\* Josephus tells us, that Hyrcanus, to find money for this, and other occasions of the government, broke up the sepulchre of David, and took from thence three thousand talents, and that


The treaty being thus concluded, Hyrcanus invited the king and his army into the city, where he gave them a splendid and most magnificent reception, and afterwards with some of his forces, attended him to the Parthian war :

For

that Herod the Great did afterwards the like, (Antiq. lib. xvii. c. 16. and lib. xvi. c. 11). But both these stories are highly improbable. David had now been dead near nine hundred years, and what is told of this treasure, supposes it to have been buried with him all this time. It supposes, that as oft as the city of Jerusalem, the palace, and the temple, during the reigns of the kings of Judah, had been plundered of all their wealth and treasure by prevailing enemies, this dead stock still remained safe from all rife or violation. It supposes, that as oft as these kings were forced to take all the treasure that was found in the house of the Lord, as well as in their own, to relieve the exigencies of the state, they never meddled with this, that was uselessly buried with David in his grave. It supposes, that when one of the worst of their kings (2 Kings xv. 8. &c. and 2 Chron. xxviii. 28. &c.) plundered the temple of its sacred vessels, and cut them in pieces, to melt them down into money for his common occasions ; and that when one of the best of them (2 Kings xviii. 14 16.) was forced to cut off the gold wherewith the gates and pillars of the temple were overlaid, to bribe a destroying enemy, this useless treasure still continued untouched. Nay, it supposes, that when Nebuchadnezzar destroyed both the city and temple of Jerusalem, so that, for many years they both lay in rubbish, this treasure in David's sepulchre lay, all the while, safe and secure under it ; and that when Antiochus Epiphanes, in like manner, destroyed the city, and robbed the temple of all that he could find, this treasure still escaped his rapacious hands, nor was ever molested, till Hyrcanus, at this time, was forced to make bold with it : All which suppositions seem highly improbable, and beyond belief. There is this, however, to be said in the matter, that as there certainly was a bank or treasury in the temple, where money was laid up for the support of the poor, for the relief of widows and fatherless children, and for the maintainance of divine service ; and where the great men, and rich men of the nation, were used to deposite their wealth, for its better security : It is not improbable, that upon the account of the frequent invasions and depredations they were liable to, this treasure might be kept in some secret and subterraneous place, unknown to all, but such as were at the head of affairs ; that Hyrcanus, being now under great difficulty to raise money, might borrow it out of this bank, till better times enabled him to repay it ; and that Herod, when he plundered it quite, might trump up this plausible story, that

A. M. 3841, &c.  
Ant. Chris. 163, &c.  
from 1  
Macc. v. 1.  
2 Macc. x.  
11. and Jos.  
lib. xii. c.  
14. to the  
end of 1  
and 2 Mac.  
and of Jos.  
lib. xiii. c.  
19.

A. M. 3841, &c. Ant Christ. 163, &c. For Antiochus, under pretence of rescuing his brother Demetrius Nicanor from the hands of Phraortes King of Parthia, who had long detained him as prisoner, marched against him with a powerful army. In three pitched battles he gained the victory, and recovered Babylonia, Media, and some other provinces that formerly belonged to the Syrian monarchy; and as Hyrcanus had his share in all these actions, he returned with the glory of them at the end of the year; but Antiochus and his army, who chose to winter in the east, were all, in one night †, destroyed by the inhabitants of the country.

19.  In the mean time Demetrius (r) whom Phraortes † had set at liberty, was returned to Syria, and, upon his brother's death, had recovered his kingdom; but still persisting in his vicious courses, and tyrannical way of government, he had not been long reinstated, before his subjects rebelled against him, and one Alexander Zabina, pretending to be the son of Alexander Balas, laid claim to his crown; and by the assistance of Ptolemy Physcon

Demetrius recovers his kingdom of Syria, but is again deposed, and put to death.

that it neither belonged to church, nor poor, nor any private person, but had been deposited there by David, and his successors, as a proper supply for the state in times of need; *Prideaux's Connection*, anno 135.; and *Universal History*, lib. ii. c. 11.

† The army, which, together with its attendants, amounted to the number of near 400,000 persons, being forced to disperse all over the country, were quartered at too great a distance from each other to be able in any time to gather together in a body; and as they had grievously oppressed all the places wherever they lay, the inhabitants took the advantage of this their dispersion, and conspired with the Parthians, in one and the same day, to fall upon them in their several quarters, and cut their throats; which accordingly they did, and when Antiochus, with the forces which he had about him, hastened to the assistance of the quarters that were near him, he was overpowered, and slain; so that of this numerous army, there scarce returned a man into Syria, to carry the doleful news of this terrible overthrow. Phraortes, however, (who was then king of Parthia), caused the body of Antiochus to be taken up from among the dead, and having put it into a silver-coffin, sent it honourably into Syria, to be there buried among his ancestors; *Justin*, lib. xxxviii. c. 12; *Joseph. Antiq.* lib. xiii. c. 16.; *Appion de Syriacis*.

(r) *Justin*, lib. xxxviii.; *Joseph. Antiq.* lib. xiii. c. 16.

† The reason of his releasing Demetrius, and sending him into Syria, was, that by raising troubles there for the recovery of his crown, he might force Antiochus to return, in order to suppress them; *Prideaux's Connection*, anno 130.

king

king of Egypt; (s) defeated him in a pitched battle. Demetrius fled for refuge to Ptolemais, where his wife Cleopatra † then resided; but she ordered the gates to be shut against him, so that he was forced to betake himself for refuge to Tyre, where he fell into the hands of his enemies, who first made him prisoner, and then put him to death. Zabina, by this means, ascended the throne of Syria, but he did not sit long there; for Physcon, expecting that he should hold it in homage from him, which the other was not inclinable to do, resolved to pull him down as fast as he had set him up; and therefore, having married his daughter Tryphæna to Antiochus Gryphus, the son of the late Demetrius, he assisted him with an army, which vanquished Zabina, and compelled him to shut himself up in Antioch: But the Antiochians, being informed that he intended to rob their temple of Jupiter, of a golden statue (which was very massy), to enable him to carry on the war, thrust him out from thence, so that wandering from place to place, he fell at last into the hands of those who carried him to Antiochus, by whose direction he was put to death.

A. M.  
3841, etc.  
Ant. Christ.  
163, etc.  
from 1  
Macc. v. 1.  
2 Macc. x.  
11. and Jos.  
lib. xii. c. 14.  
to the end of  
1 and 2  
Macc. and  
of Jos. lib.  
xiii. c. 19.  
Hyrca-  
nus  
enlarges his  
territories,  
destroys the  
temple on  
mount Ge-  
rizzim, and  
takes Sama-  
ria itself.

During these divisions and disturbances, Hyrcanus laid hold on the opportunity, not only to enlarge his own territories, but to shake off the Syrian yoke likewise, and make himself wholly independent. He built the stately tower, or rather castle of Baris †, upon a steep rock, that was  
fifty

(s) Justin. lib. xxxix. c. 1. and 2.; Joseph. Antiq. lib. xiii. c. 17.

† This Cleopatra was the daughter of Ptolemy Philomater king of Egypt, and Cleopatra his wife. She was at first married to Alexander Balas, and afterwards to this Demetrius, in his father's lifetime. While Demetrius was detained a prisoner in Parthia, she became the wife of his brother Antiochus Sidetes; but upon the death of Sidetes, the restoration of Demetrius, and recovery of his kingdom, she returned to his bed again, but never had any great esteem for him, because, in his captivity, he had married the daughter of the king of Parthia; *Prideaux's Connection, anno 127.*

† The word *Baris*, which is originally Chaldee, signifies properly *an house*, or *castle*, inclosed on every side, as this was encompassed with the wall which Simon built to stop the communication between the temple and the fortress of Acra. Here it was, that Hyrcanus built an apartment, for the safe keeping of his ponti-

A. M. fifty cubits high, and on all sides inaccessible, except to-  
 3841, etc. wards the temple. He took several cities, which the great  
 Ant. Chris. draughts of men the kings of Syria had made for their fo-  
 163, etc. reign expeditions, had left unprovided with garrisons :  
 from 1 He subdued Schechem, the chief seat of the sect of the Sa-  
 Macc. v. 1. maritans, and destroyed their temple which Sanballat had  
 2 Macc. x. built them on mount Gerizzim : (t) He conquered the I-  
 11. and Jos. dumæans, and prevailed with them all to become profes-  
 lib. xii. c. 14. lytes † to the Jewish religion, so that thenceforward they  
 to the end of were incorporated into the same church and nation, and in  
 1 and 2 time lost the name of *Idumæans*, or *Edomites*, and were all  
 Macc. and called *Jews* : He renewed the alliance with the Romans,  
 of Jos. lib. xiii. c. 19.

sical robes and ornaments, whenever he undressed himself; and here the Asmonæan princes took up their abode, and made it their royal palace, until Herod ascended the throne, and having rebuilt, enlarged, and beautified it, gave it the name of *Antonio*, in honour of his friend M. Antony; *Universal History*, lib. ii. c. 11.

(t) Joseph. Antiq. lib. xiii. c. 17.

† Among the Jews there were two sorts of proselytes, viz. the proselytes of the gate, and the proselytes of justice. 1. The *proselytes of the gate*, were so called, because they were permitted to dwell with the Jews in the same cities, and the occasion of their name seems to have been taken from that expression in the fourth commandment, *The strangers which are within thy gates*; where the word *ger*, which we render *strangers*, does every whit as properly signify *proselytes*. Now, this kind of proselytes were obliged only to renounce idolatry, and to worship God according to the law of nature, which the doctors of the Talmud reduced to seven articles, called by them the *seven precepts of the sons of Noah*. Whoever performed these were looked upon as in a state of acceptance with God; and allowed, not only to live quietly in their cities, but to resort likewise to their temple, there to offer up their prayers; but then they were permitted to enter no farther than into the outer court, which was called *the court of the Gentiles*. 2. The *proselytes of justice* were so called, because they took upon them to observe the whole law, both moral and ceremonial, in the latter of which, some of the Jews, and especially the Pharisees, made justification to consist. The former sort of proselytes had no form of initiation, but these were admitted by baptism, sacrifice, and circumcision; and when they were thus admitted, they were received into the Jewish church, and to all the rights and privileges of church-membership, in the same manner as if they had been natural Jews; *Préface générale sur le Nov. Test. par de Beausobre, et Lefant; et Prideaux's Connection, anno 129.*

and,

and, by a decree \* from them, obtained greater privileges and advantages than the Jews ever had before : And now, being much increased in riches and power, he sent his two sons, Aristobulus and Antigonus, to besiege Samaria, who on this occasion gave good proofs of their valour and conduct. The place held out for a whole year ; but, being forced to surrender at last, by the direction of Hyrcanus it was utterly demolished : For he caused not only the houses and walls to be pulled down, and razed, but trenches to be dug every way cross the ground whereon it stood, and to be filled with water, that it might never again be built.

A. M.  
3841, etc.  
Ant. Christ.  
163, etc.  
from 1  
Macc. v. 1.  
2 Macc. x.  
11. and Jos.  
lib. xii. c. 14.  
to the end of  
1 and 2  
Macc. and  
of Jos. lib.  
xiii. c. 19.

After the taking of Samaria, the remainder of his life Hyrcanus enjoyed in full quiet from all foreign wars ; but (u) towards the conclusion of it, met with some trouble from the Pharisees, a prevailing sect among the Jews. They, by their pretences to extraordinary strictness in religion, had gained to themselves a great reputation and interest among the common people ; and, for this reason, Hyrcanus endeavoured to gain their esteem by all manner of favours. Having therefore, one day, invited several of their leading men to a splendid entertainment, when the banquet was over, he desired them to tell him, “ If, in the “ conduct of his life, he had done any thing contrary to “ justice and religion, according to the maxims received “ and taught amongst them.” As soon as he had ended his discourse, all began to praise his administration, and

His indignation against the Pharisees, and upon what occasion.

\* The Ambassadors whom Hyrcanus sent to Rome to renew the league, which his father Simon had made with the senate, made their complaint, — That Antiochus Sidetes had made war upon the Jews, contrary to what the Romans had in their behalf decreed in that league ; that they had taken from them several cities, and made them become tributary to them for others, and forced them to a dishonourable peace, by besieging Jerusalem : Whereupon the senate decreed, that whatever of this kind had been done against them, since the time of the late treaty with Simon, should be all null and void ; that all the places which had either been taken from them, or made tributary by the Syrians, should be restored, and made free from all homage, tribute, and other services ; that, for the future, the Syrian kings should have no right to march their armies through the Jewish territories ; that for all the damages which the Syrians had done the Jews, reparation should be made them ; and that ambassadors should be sent from Rome to see this decree put in execution ; *Jewish Antiq. lib. xiii. c. 17.*

(u) Joseph. Antiq. lib. xiii. c. 18.

A. M. 3841, etc. Ant. Chris. 163, etc. from 1 Macc. v. 1. 2 Macc. x. 11. and Jos. lib. xii. c. 14. to the end of 1 and 2 Macc. and of Jos. lib. xiii. c. 19.

to give him all the commendations due to a brave man, and a just and worthy governour.

When the rest had done their encomiums, Eleazar, who had hitherto said nothing, rose up, and, directing his discourse to Hyrcanus, "Since you desire," said he, "to have the truth freely told you, if you would shew yourself a just man, resign the high-priesthood, and content yourself with the civil government of the nation." Hyrcanus then asking him, for what reason he gave him that advice? "Because," replied he, "we are assured by the testimony of the ancients among us, that your mother was a captive taken in the wars, and being therefore the son of a strange woman, you are incapable of that high office and dignity."

This was an allegation false in fact, and therefore all the company resented it with a just indignation; but Hyrcanus was so exasperated at it, that he resolved to be revenged in a very signal manner. This disposition one Jonathan, an intimate friend of his, but a zealous Sadducee, observing, took the opportunity to endeavour to set him against the whole sect of the Pharisees, (among whom Hyrcanus had been bred up), and to draw him over to that of the Sadducees. To this purpose he suggested to him,—"That this was not the single act of Eleazar, but, most certainly, a thing concerted by the whole party; that Eleazar, in speaking it out, was no more than the mouth of the rest; and to satisfy himself in these particulars, he needed only refer it to them in what manner the calumniation deserved to be punished." Hyrcanus followed his advice: And therefore consulting the chief leaders of the Pharisees with relation to the penalty, which he might deserve, who had thus slandered the prince, and high-priest of his nation, he received for answer,—"That as calumny was no capital crime, all the punishment that it merited could only be whipping † or imprisonment:" which

† This punishment, among the Jews, was not to exceed forty stripes, Deut. xxv. 3.; and therefore the whip wherewith it was inflicted, was made with three thongs, and at each blow gave three stripes, they never inflicted upon any criminal more than thirteen, because thirteen of these blows made thirty-nine stripes, and to have added another blow, would have been a transgression of the law, by inflicting two stripes more than what was prescribed. Rather than do this therefore, the usual way was, to give one too few; and therefore St. Paul tells us, 2 Cor. xi. 24. that when he was whipped

(x) which fully convinced Hyrcanus, that what Jonathan had suggested was true, and, from that very moment, he became a mortal enemy to the whole sect of the Pharisees. Their traditional constitutions he forthwith abrogated; he enjoined a penalty on all that should observe them; and himself for ever renouncing their party, went over to that of the Sadducees. But, notwithstanding this, he was an excellent governour; and, from the time of his father's death, having had the administration of all affairs, both in church and state, for the space of nine and twenty years, as his death, he left the high-priesthood and sovereignty to Judas Aristobulus, who was the first that (in a formal manner) took upon him the title of a king, by putting a diadem on his head.

A. M.  
3341, etc.  
Ant. Chrift.  
163, etc.  
from 1  
Macc. v. 1.  
2 Macc. x.  
11. and Jos.  
lib. xii. c. 14.  
to the end of  
1 and 2  
Macc. and  
of Jos. lib.  
xiii. c. 19.  
His death  
and charac-  
ter.

### The OBJECTION.

“ **I**N the the Asmonæan family there was indeed a race of heroes, great warriors, and zealous defenders of their country's laws and liberties; and yet if we look into their conduct, even in those books that were wrote on purpose to aggrandize their fame, rather than give us the real history, we shall meet with several passages that will not bear examination.

“ Judes Maccabæus was certainly the principal character among them; and yet, to say nothing of his prodigality, throwing away both his own and his soldiers' lives, by engaging the enemy (contrary to the persuasion of his friends) with a force no ways competent, (y) with no more than eight hundred against two and twenty thousand; we cannot but think, that the cruelty (z) which he exercised upon the Ephraimites, in putting all the males to the sword, razing their city, and riding in triumph, as it were, over the dead bodies of the slain, merely for refusing to open their gates to his army, were actions unbecoming the spirit of a generous conquerour.

whipped by the Jews, *he received forty stripes, save one; Pri-  
deaux's Connection, in the notes, anno 108.*

(x) Joseph. Antiq. lib. xiii. c. 18. (y) 1 Maccab. ix. 6, &c.  
(z) Chap. v. 46, &c.

“ To



A. M. 3841, etc. " To say nothing of those prodigious elephants (a),  
 Ant. Chris. " which, with strong wooden towers on their backs, could  
 363, etc. " carry thirty-two men and their arms, (a paradox which  
 from 1 " Bochart (b) himself looks upon as incredible), we cannot  
 Macc. v. 1. " but think, that Eleazar's exposing himself to certain  
 2 Macc. x. " death, by killing one of these elephants, even though  
 11. and Jos. " he could not but foresee, that it would infallibly fall up-  
 lib. xii. c. 14. " on him, and crush him, was an act of fool-hardiness,  
 to the end of " which the end he proposed, (c) of delivering his people,  
 1 and 2 " and getting himself a perpetual name, could no more  
 Macc. and " justify, than the pretence (d) of not falling into the  
 of Jos. lib. " hands of the wicked, could acquit Razis (in stabbing  
 xiii. c. 19. " himself, pulling out his bowels, and casting them among  
 " his enemies) from the imputation of rage, madness, and  
 " self-murder.

" Reasons of state, we allow, may sway princes in their  
 " alliances, their friendships and negotiations; but, in the  
 " illustrious house of the Asmonæans, to find Jonathan  
 " (e) joined in league with two known impostors, against  
 " the rightful heirs of the crown of Syria; to find Hyr-  
 " canus destroying the famous city of Samaria, and laying  
 " the whole place desolate, merely because it was the seat  
 " of a contrary sect; and notwithstanding this, to find  
 " him, (f) upon a slender disgust, turning Sadducee, and  
 " adjoining himself to a set of people, who had renounced  
 " all belief of a resurrection and future state, shews, as if  
 " neither had had any great sense of honour, humanity,  
 " or religion, but in what they did, consulted chiefly their  
 " interest and advantage, their resentment and revenge."

Answered,  
 by giving  
 some ac-  
 count of  
 the several  
 books of the  
 Maccabees.

The name of *Maccabees* relates not only to Judas and  
 his brothers, but to all those that joined with him in the  
 same cause; and not only to them, but also to all others,  
 who suffered in the like cause under any of the Grecian  
 kings, whether of Syria or Egypt, though some of them  
 lived long before them. Thus those who suffered under  
 Ptolemy Philopater, at Alexandria, fifty years before the  
 time of Judas, were afterwards called Maccabees, as were  
 likewise Eleazar, and the mother, and her seven sons, tho'

(a) Chap. vi. 37, &c. (b) De Animal. sacris, part 1. lib. ii.  
 c. 37. (c) 1 Maccab. vi. 43, &c. (d) 2 Maccab. xiv. 42.  
 (e) 1 Maccab. x. 47. (f) Joseph. Antiq. lib. xiii. c. 18.

they

they suffered likewise before Judas erected the standard which gave occasion to the name.

(g) As therefore those books which give us the history of Judas and his brethren, and their wars against the Syrian kings, in defence of their religion and liberties, are called *the first and second books of the Maccabees*; so that which gives us the history of those, who, in the like cause, under Ptolemy Philopater, were exposed to his elephants at Alexandria, is called *the third book of the Maccabees*; as that which contains the account of the martyrdom of Eleazar, and of the seven brothers, and their mother, is called *the fourth*.

A. M.  
3241, etc.  
Ant. Christ.  
163, &c.  
from 1  
Macc. v. i.  
2 Macc. x.  
11. and Jos.  
lib. xii. c. 14.  
to the end of  
1 and 2  
Macc. and  
of Jos. lib.  
xiii. c. 19.

(h) According to the order of time indeed, and the subject-matter which they treat of, these books are wrong placed; for the third should be set first, the second placed before the first, and the fourth immediately after it; so that (to reduce them to right order) the first should be put in the place of the third, and the third in the place of the first. Grotius indeed is of opinion, that the third book, though it treats of matters antecedent to what is the subject of the first and second, was nevertheless wrote after them, even after the book of Ecclesiasticus, and upon that account had the name of *the third book* given it; but the true reason of its being postponed is,—That, being of less repute and authority than the two former, it has always been reckoned after them, according to the order of dignity, though it be before them in the order of time.

The first of these books (i) was originally written in the Chaldee † language of the Jerusalem dialect, which was the only language spoken in Judea after the return from the Babylonish captivity, and is a very accurate and excellent history, coming nearest to the style and manner of the

(g) Prideaux's Connection, anno 216. (h) Calmet's preface sur le 3. liv. des Maccabees. (i) Prideaux's Connection, anno 166.

† It was extant in this language in the time of St. Jerom; for he tells us that he had seen it, and that the title which it then bore, was *Sharbit sar bene El*, i. e. *the sceptre of the prince of the sons of God*, a title which well suited Judas, who was so valiant a commander of God's people then under persecution. From the Chaldee it was translated into Greek by Theodotian, as some think, though others account that version elder; and, from the Greek, both the Latin translation and our English did proceed; *Prideaux's Connection, anno, 166.*

A. M. 3841, &c. Ant. Christ. 163, &c. from 1 Macc. v. 1. 2 Macc. x. 17. and Jos. lib. xii. c. 14. to the end of 1 and 2 Macc. and of Jos. lib. xiii. c. 19.

sacred historical writings of any extant. The second is a compilation of several pieces; of two epistles from the Jews at Jerusalem to those of Alexandria, (k) which seem to be spurious †; of a preface preceding the history; and of the history itself, which is an abridgement of a larger work composed by one Jason, an Hellenist Jew of Cyrene; but the whole is by no means equal to the excellence and accuracy of the first. The third †; which seems to have been written by an Alexandrian Jew †, in the Greek language, is set off with enlargements and embellishments of the author's own invention; but, as to the main groundwork of it, or the reality of such a persecution raised against the Jews at Alexandria, it is undoubtedly true;

(k) Prideaux's Connection, anno 166.

† The former of these epistles calls the feast of the dedication, *Σκηνοπηγία ἐν Κισλεὺ*, i. e. *the feast of making tabernacles or booths in Cisleu*. Now, as the month Cisleu fell in the middle of winter, it can hardly be presumed, that the people could either lie abroad in these booths, or find green boughs enough at this time of the year wherewith to make them. This is an incongruity enough to explode the former epistle. And then, as to the second, it is not only written in the name of Judas Maccabæus, who was slain six and thirty years before the date which it bears, but also contains such fabulous and absurd stuff, as could never have been written by the great council of the Jews, assembled at Jerusalem for the whole nation, as this pretends to be; *Prideaux's Connection, anno 166.*

† This book, though it is in most of the ancient manuscript copies of the Greek Septuagint, and quoted by several Fathers as an holy and divine book, yet was it never inserted in the vulgar Latin translation of the Bible; and, as our first English translations were made from that, none of them have it among the apocryphal books; nor has it ever since been added; though it certainly deserves a place therein much better than several other pieces that are there; *Prideaux's Connection, anno 214.*

† To this day it is extant in most of the ancient manuscript copies of the Greek Septuagint; as, particularly, in the Alexandrian manuscript in our king's library, and in the Vatican manuscript at Rome. But, as it was never inserted in the vulgar Latin version of the Bible, and as that version was the only one in use through the whole western church, until the Reformation, it thence came to pass, that, in the first translations which we have of the Bible in the English, the third book of Maccabees has never yet been inserted among other apocryphal tracts, though it certainly deserves a place there much better than some parts of the second book of the Maccabees; *Prideaux's Connection, anno 216.*

and,

and, though its style be a little too theatrical, its sentiments in many places are both beautiful and sublime. The fourth †, which is generally allowed to be the same with what is ascribed to Josephus, the Jewish historian, under the title of *The governing power of reason*, is designed to enlarge and adorn the history of old Eleazer, and of the seven brothers, who, with their mother, suffered martyrdom under Antiochus, as it is related more succinctly in the second book of (l) Maccabees.

The author of the epistle to the Hebrews (m) has stamped some authority upon these books, by alluding to their history, and the punishment which the Maccabees were made to undergo; but we must not therefore receive them as canonical, because, according to the report of St. Jerom, neither the Jewish nor the Christian church ever looked upon them in that capacity: *Maccabæorum libros legit quidem ecclesia, sed eos inter canonicas scripturas non recipit*: They read them as books which contained lessons of wholesome instruction, and excellent examples of worthy patriots, and glorious Martyrs suffering manfully in the defence of their religion and liberty, (n) and *not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection*.

(o) In the whole compass of history, where can we find a pattern in all respects equal to Judas Maccabæus? Most of the commanders we read of were carried away with their ambition, vanity, or vain-glory; and, while they valued themselves upon the subduction of others, had no rule or command over their own passions: But in this Jewish leader we find all the characters of a great hero; courage and intrepidity, guided by counsel and wisdom, and without any ally either of rashness or pride. And what a profound knowledge he had of the laws of God, and the principles of true morality, every speech that he makes to his men, when he is animating them to the combat, and inspiring them with a contempt of the greatest dangers, is a sufficient indication.

He died indeed a little unfortunately, and, when, his army had forsook him, encountered his enemies with an

Why he fought the enemy with an inferior force.

† This book, in like manner, though it be found in most of the ancient Greek manuscripts, is not to be met with in any of our Latin Bibles; and has therefore no place among our apocryphal books; *Prideaux's Connection, anno 216.*

(l) Chap. vi. and. vii. (m) Heb. xi. 35, &c. (n) Ibid.

(o) Calmet's Commentary on 1 Macc. ix. 18.

A. M. incompetent strength; but, as he had all along fought under the protection of God's good providence, he had no more reason to be diffident at this time than he had been formerly. In his first engagement with the Syrians, when he was to encounter (p) *forty thousand horse, and seven thousand foot*, he made proclamation in the camp, that all such (q) *as had betrothed wives, or were building houses, or planting vineyards, or were any ways afraid*, might return home, which could not but reduce his army considerably; and yet we find him, with this handful of men, routing three generals that were sent against him at once, forcing and burning their camp, defeating their troops, and returning loaded with their spoils. His notion was, that God could save with a few as well as with a multitude; and therefore he might look on the desertion of his forces as a providential thing, to make the victory the more conspicuous, and to magnify the divine interposition in his deliverance.

(r) *The people that are with thee*, says the Lord to Gideon, *are too many for me to give the Medianites into their hands, lest Israel vant themselves against me, saying, Mine hand hath saved me: Proclaim therefore in the tents of the people, that whosoever is fearful and afraid, let him return, and depart from Mount Gilead*; which reduced the Jewish army to ten thousand, and these again, by another expedient, were reduced to three hundred; and yet even these, by the assistance of the Lord of Hosts, utterly subdued the vast army of the Midianites. Upon this presumption, then, that Judas thought his army under the care and direction of the same Lord of Hosts, there was no discouragement in the desertion of his forces, nor any false reasoning in his speech: "*If our time be come, let us die manfully for our brethren*"; which, in the present juncture of our affairs, is the best thing we can do: But if it be not, God we know is able to give us victory, and to defend us. For how often have we experienced the effects of his almighty power? Is not conquest always in his hands? Or is there any difference, with regard to him, between a larger or a smaller number?" These seem to be the reasons that determined Judas in his choice of engaging the enemy, though superior in force:

(p) 1 Macc. iii. 39.  
vii. 2, &c.

(q) Ibid. ver. 56.

(r) Judges

And

And if these reasons are built upon right notions of God, and confirmed by a long experience of his goodness, they will certainly clear him from all imputation of rashness, or presumptuous tempting of God in this action: An action for which St. Ambrose, in particular, has represented him as a perfect model of true heroism: For (s) *Habes hic*, says he, *fortitudinem bellicam, in qua non mediocris honesti et decori forma est, quod mortem servituti præferat, ac terripitudini.*

A. M.  
3841, etc.  
Ant. Chris.  
163, etc.  
from 1  
Macc. v. 1.  
2 Macc. x.  
11. and Jos.  
lib. xii. c. xiv.  
to the end  
of 1 and  
2 Macc.  
and of Jos.  
lib. xiii.  
c. 19.

Why he  
might justly  
destroy the  
Ephraim-  
ites.

The message which Moses sent to the king of Edom was delivered in these words, — — — *Let us, pass, I pray thee, through thy country. We will not pass through the fields, or through the vineyards, neither will we drink of the water of thy wells. We will go by the king's high-way; we will not turn to the right hand or to the left, until we have passed thy borders: And Edom said unto him, Thou shalt not pass by me, lest I come out against thee with the sword.* But hereupon a question has arose, whether the Edomites might lawfully, and according to the rules of strict right, deny the Israelites a passage through their country?

(t) Selden is of opinion, that princes have always a right to deny foreign troops a passage through their country, not only to preserve their territories from being invaded, and their subjects from being plundered, but to prevent their being corrupted likewise, by the introduction of strange manners and customs into their kingdom. But (u) Gro- tius, on the other hand, asserts, that this refusal of the E- domites was an act contrary to the just rights of human society; that, after the promise which the Israelites had made of marching through their country quietly and inof- fensively, they might very justly have fallen upon the E- domites, had they not been restrained by a divine prohibi- tion; that, for this very cause, the Greeks thought pro- per to make war upon the kings of Mysia; and that the principal reason which the powers of Christendom gave for their carrying their arms against the Saracens was, because they hindered their brethren going in pilgrimage to Jeru- salem from passing through their country.

However the sentiments of these two great men may be, it is certain, that Gideon's severity against the inhabi-

(s) Ambros. lib. 1. Offic. c. 41.

(t) Mare Clausum, c.

20. (u) De jure belli et pacis, lib. 2. c. 2.; et Mare Clausum, lib. 1. c. 1.

A. M.  
3841, etc.  
Ant. Christ.  
163, etc.  
from 1.  
Macc. v. 1.  
2 Macc. x.  
xi. and Jos.  
lib. xiii. c. 14.  
to the end  
of 1 and  
2 Macc.  
and of Jos.  
lib. xiii. c.  
19.

tants of Succoth, for denying his army some necessary refreshments when they were pursuing the enemy, is justified upon the presumption, that such a refusal was a kind of rebellion against the state, that those who exposed their lives for the public safety had a right to be maintained at the public expence, and that no man might call any thing his own when a demand of this nature came upon him. And if Gideon, (x) who was sent immediately by an angel to deliver his brethren, and, in all his achievements, was supported by the Spirit of God, thought it no injustice to put the people of Succoth (y) to exquisite tortures for denying his army what they wanted; why might not Judas give the people of Ephron up to military execution, for being so cruel and inhuman as to deny him a passage thro' their city, when there was no possibility of taking his rout any other way?

What the particular situation of this Ephron was, we can no where learn; but the author of the book of Maccabees seems to imply, that the country all about it was impassable, *i. e.* was very probably so full of water and morasses, that the (z) company which Judas had along with him must have been lost, had they been obliged to *turn either to the right hand or to the left*. In their own defence, therefore, they were necessitated to make their way through the town; and if, in the siege and sackage of it, great numbers of people were put to the sword, this was properly the effect of their own folly and obstinacy, in refusing not so much to do a favour as an act of common right, even when it was humbly requested by a general, at the head of a victorious army.

The strength of the Behemoth (which, by most interpreters, is supposed to be the elephant) is thus expressed in the book of Job: (a) *His bones are as strong pieces of brass, and his small bones like bars of iron*; and therefore it is no wonder, that creatures of this prodigious strength (when the method of fighting was chiefly by force) should be made use of in all military expeditions. (b) Some of these creatures have been known to carry two cannons, fastened together by a cable rope, of three thousand pounds weight each, for five hundred paces together, with their teeth; and what reason have we to doubt, but

That an elephant might bear thirty-two men on his back.

(x) Judges vi. 14. (y) Chap. viii. 16. (z) 1 Maccab. v. 45, 46. (a) Chap. xl. 18. (b) Calmet's Commentary on 1 Maccab. vi. 37.

that

that they are able to carry a much greater weight upon their backs ?

The largest and strongest species of these animals is said to be bred in India, (for those that come out of Africa are not near so big) ; and therefore, if we suppose that the elephants which Antiochus carried to the wars with him were of this Indian breed, (as (c) the circumstances of the whole story make it highly probable that they were) there cannot be so much difficulty as is imagined in one of these creatures carrying upon its back two and thirty men light-armed, (as arches are known to be) with towers, or other such vehicles as might be thought proper to give them an ascendant in the fight, and so secure them from the darts and other weapons of the enemy. For, upon supposition that each of these men, one with another, weighed an hundred and fifty pounds, the amount of the weight of thirty-two will be no more than four thousand eight hundred pounds ; and yet it is a common thing to meet with elephants of a moderate size, that will carry you five or six thousand pounds weight ; so that, upon the lowest computation, we have full two thousand pounds weight allowed for the wooden machine wherein the slingers and archers were seated and secured.

The danger indeed of approaching this animal, with such a number of armed men upon its back, is very visible ; but most of the Jewish doctors and fathers of the Christian church look upon Eleazar's action in killing the royal elephant, (as he took it to be), though at the expence of his own life, as a singular instance of courage and magnanimity. Fool-hardiness it would have been had he been certainly persuaded, that the creature would have fallen upon him so directly and so suddenly as it did ; but why might he not rather think, that it might possibly tumble down on one side, so as to miss him, or live for some moments after it had received the wound, so as to give him an opportunity to escape ?

(d) The motives which the history assigns for his adventuring upon this exploit are not discommendable. The preservation of our laws, liberties, and religion, requires, upon a proper occasion, the hazarding our lives : Our reputation, too, is a natural good, which we are not only bound to preserve, but, by all lawful means, allowed to improve and increase ; and therefore charity (e) will not

A. M.  
3841, etc.  
Ant. Christ.  
163, etc.  
from  
Macc. v. 1.  
2 Mac. x.  
11, and Jos.  
lib. xii. c. 14  
to the end  
of 1 and  
2 Macc.  
and of Jos.  
lib. xiii.  
c. 19.

Eleazar's  
killing an  
elephant,  
not fool-  
hardiness.

(c) Ibid.

(d) 1 Maccab. vi. 44.

(e) Ibid. ver. 44.  
suffer



A. M.  
3841, etc.  
Ant. Chris.  
163, etc.  
from 1  
Macc. v. 1.  
2 Mac. x.  
xi. and Jos.  
lib. xii. c. 14.  
to the end  
of 1 and  
2 Macc.  
and of Jos.  
lib. xii.  
c. 19.

The action  
of Razis.  
discounte-  
nanced.

suffer us (without very good reasons) to believe, that these motives, which in themselves are laudable, lost all their merit, and were adulterated by any sinister ends that Eleazar might propose to himself. We cannot, I say, without rashness, blame him, or deny him that justice which we owe to all actions that are apparently commendable, *i. e.* to believe them really good, so long as we have no proofs to the contrary: And, as it is no uncommon thing in such heroic acts as these, to find persons (under the Jewish æconomy more especially) instigated by a divine impulse, it will best become us to suspend our judgments concerning this action of Eleazar's, until we can find arguments to prove that he had no motive extraordinary to attempt it.

But there is not the like reason, I think, to suspend our judgment concerning the action of Razis, which, upon due consideration, was no better than self-murder. (*f*) To consider it, indeed, according to the notion which some Heathens had of courage and magnanimity, contempt of death, and love of liberty, it comes nearer to what they called *true heroism*, than all the great actions that history has recorded of the Greeks and Romans. Nay, the Jews themselves are willing to place this man in the number of their most illustrious martyrs, and from his example (as well as some others) pretend, that upon certain occasions, self-murder is not only allowable, but highly commendable; never considering, (*g*) that, in the sixth commandment, it is as much prohibited as the murder of any one else; and that, if I must not shed the blood of another man for this very reason, because (*h*) *he is made in the image of God*, I must not shed the blood of myself, because I also am a man, and made in the image of God as well as he.

(*i*) Razis, indeed, was sorely beset, and *ready to have been taken*, by his enemies *on every side*; but then he should have surrendered himself to their treatment, and testified his magnanimity, not in butchering himself, but in manfully enduring whatever inflictions they laid upon him. Had the martyrs of old thought themselves at liberty to dispose of their own lives upon any emergent danger, or apprehension of suffering, we had read little of their being (*k*)

(*f*) Calmet's Commentary on 2 Maccab. xiv. 42.  
shop Fleetwood against self-murder.

(*g*) Bishop  
(*h*) Gen. ix. 6.

(*i*) 2 Maccab. xiv. 42.

(*k*) Heb. xi. 36, 37.

mocked

*mocked and scourged, and tormented, and less of their being stoned, and sawn asunder, but a great deal of their stepping out of the world, (as some call it), when any difficulty or persecution came to press upon them.*

Upon the whole, therefore, we may conclude, that as this was not the practice of those worthies of old, (*l*) who obtained a good report by faith, it was not true courage, but the want of it, that put Razis upon committing this barbarous cruelty to himself; that it was pride, not patience, (which is the proper virtue of a martyr), that made him fly to death, merely for refuge against these outrages which he had not strength of mind to withstand; and therefore St. Austin's short reflection upon the whole is,——(*m*) *Factum narratum est, non laudatum, et judicandum potius quam imitandum.*

A. M.  
3<sup>o</sup> 41, &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
163, &c.  
from 1  
Macc. v. 1.  
2 Macc. x.  
xi. and Jos.  
lib. xii. c. 14.  
to the end  
of 1 and  
2 Macc.  
and of Jos.  
lib. xiii.  
c. 19.

This reflection indeed will hold good in several other matters related in the history of the Maccabees, viz. that the author of it neither commends nor discommends, but only relates them. Demetrius Soter, for instance, was the rightful heir to the crown of Syria, and Alexander Balas no more than a vile impostor; and yet Jonathan thought proper to adjoin himself to him, because (*n*) he remembered what a bitter enemy Demetrius had all along been to the Jewish interest; how oft he had sent his generals with positive orders to take his brother Judas dead or alive; and what ruin and oppression his frequent invasions had brought upon the whole nation. And therefore no wonder, that we find him taking a contrary part to the man, whom he looked upon as an enemy to his country. Demetrius Nicanor, in like manner, was the true heir to the same crown, and Alexander Zabina no more than a broker's son of Alexandria; and yet we find John Hyrcanus entering into a league and alliance with the latter, because indeed Demetrius had behaved so ungratefully to the Jews, (who had rescued him from the rebellion of his subjects), as to load them with heavy taxes, even though he had promised them an immunity from them to engage their assistance.

Jonathan  
not to  
blame in  
joining an  
usurper.

The truth is, the kingdom of Syria was always in hostility with Judea. Its kings were tyrants, and great persecutors of the Jewish religion; and therefore what reason had any Jewish prince to trouble himself with the right of

(*l*) Heb. xi. 39.      (*m*) Epist. 61.      (*n*) Prideaux's Con-  
nection, anno 153.

succession

A. M. 3841, etc. Ant. Chris. 163, etc. from 1 Macc. v. 1. 2. Macc. x. 11. and Jos. lib. xii. c. 14. to the end of 1 and 2 Macc. and of Jos. lib. xiii. c. 19.

Hyrcanus did not destroy Samaria out of enmity to the sect of Samaritans,

succession in an enemy's country? All that he seemed to be concerned in was, (o) to make what advantages he could of their divisions, and by adjoining himself to the party, from whence he might expect the best treatment and support, to secure and establish his own and his country's interest. It is a mistake however to think, that Hyrcanus destroyed Samaria, out of the hatred which the Jews bore to the sect of the Samaritans, because, upon examination, we shall find, that none of that sect did, at that time, live in that place. (p) The ancient Samaritans, who were of the sect that worshipped God on mount Gerizzim, had slain, in a tumult, (as we related before), one Andromachus, a favourite of Alexander the Great, whom he had constituted governour of Syria; and in revenge for this base act, Alexander had expelled them all from Samaria, and in their stead, new-planted the city with a colony of Macedonians, Greeks, and Syrians mixed together, and they were the descendents of those who inhabited Samaria, when Hyrcanus made war against it; for the expelled Samaritans retired to Schechem, where they settled their abode, and made it the head seat of their sect ever since.

nor follow the Sadducees in any wicked tenets.

In like manner, it is a mistake to think, that because Hyrcanus is said to have left the Pharisees, and adjoined himself to the Sadducees, that therefore he espoused their doctrine against a resurrection and a future state. (q) On the contrary, it seems highly probable, that at this time, the Sadducees had gone no farther in the doctrine of their sect, than their rejecting all the unwritten traditions which the Pharisees held in so much veneration. Josephus mentions no other difference, in his time, between them: nor does he say, that Hyrcanus went over to the Sadducees in any other particular, than in the abolishing the traditional constitutions of the Pharisees; and therefore we can hardly think, that so good and righteous a man as he is represented to have been, would, upon any provocation whatever, have been induced to renounce the great and fundamental articles of his religion; but it can be no diminution to his character, we hope, that he made it his business to oppose those false interpretations of the law, which our blessed Saviour, in the course of his ministry, so severely condemned.

(o) Ibid. 126.

(p) Ibid. 109.

(q) Ibid. 108.

DISSERTATION IV.

*Of the Original, and Tenets of the Jewish Sects.*

IT seems very probable indeed, that during the times of the prophets, who, by their commerce with God, were immediately instructed in his will, no disputes about matters of religion could possibly arise, because their authority was sufficient for the decision of every controversy; but that when this race of prophets disappeared, and their authority ceased, men soon began to wrangle and dispute, and to form themselves into different sects and parties, upon the first occasion that offered.

After the return of the people from Babylon, Joshua, the high-priest, and Zerubbabel the governour, together with the chief elders their cotemporaries, and others that afterwards succeeded them, collected together all the ancient and approved usages of the Jewish church, which had been in practice before the captivity. These, and whatever else pretended to be of the like nature, Ezra brought under a review, and after due examination, having settled them by his approbation and authority, he thereby gave birth to what the Jews call their *Oral Law*. For (r) they pretend, that when God gave unto Moses the law on mount Sinai, he gave him, at the same time, the interpretation of it, with a strict injunction to commit the former to writing, but to deliver the other down to posterity only by word of mouth; that, pursuant to this injunction, Moses wrote several copies of the law, which he left behind him among the several tribes, but in the interpretation of it, he took care more especially to instruct his successor Joshua; that after his death, Joshua delivered this interpretation, or oral law, to the elders who succeeded him, and that they delivered it to the prophets, who transmitted it down to each other, until it came to Jeremiah; that Jeremiah delivered it to Baruch; Baruch to Ezra; Ezra to the men of the great synagogue, until it came to Simon the Just; and that Simon delivered it to others, who handed it down, in a continual succession,

A. M.  
3841, etc.  
Ant. Chist.  
163, etc.  
from 1  
Macc. v. 1.  
2 Macc. x.  
11. and Jos.  
lib. xii.  
c. 14. to the  
end of 1  
and 2 Macc.  
and of Jos.  
lib. xiii.  
c. 19.  
When sects  
first began.

(r) Prideaux's Connection, anno 446.

A. M. 3841, etc.  
 Ant. Christ.  
 163, etc.  
 from v  
 Macc. v. 1.  
 2 Macc. x.  
 11, and Jos.  
 lib. xii.  
 c. 14. to the  
 end of 1  
 and 2 Macc.  
 and of Jos.  
 lib. xiii.  
 c. 19.

until it came to Rabbah Judah Hakkadosh, who wrote it into the book which they call *the Mishnah*.

But all this is a mere fiction, spun out of the fertile invention of the Talmudists, and the little truth that there seems to be in it, is only this, ——— That after the death of Simon the Just, there arose a sort of men, (whom the Jews call *the Tannaim, or Mishnical doctors*), that made it their business to study and descant upon these traditions, which had been received, and allowed by Ezra and the men of the great synagogue, to draw such consequences and inferences from them, as they thought proper; to ingraft these into the body of the ancient traditions; and to expect from others that they should receive them, as if they had been as authentic as the other. But this imposition was too gross and palpable not to be attended with remonstrances from several: So that, in a short time, the Jewish church came to be divided into two grand parties, viz. those who adhered to the written law only, among whom the Sadducees were the chief; and those who, over and above this, received the traditions and constitutions of the elders, among whom the Pharisees made the greatest figure.

The Sadducees.

(s) The most ancient sect among the Jews, was that of the Sadducees, which took its name from Sodock, the founder of it. This Sodock (as the Talmudic story is) was the disciple of Antigonus Socho, who lived (according to the Jewish calculation) about three hundred years before Christ, and used often to inculcate to his disciples, that they ought to serve God disinterestedly, without any view of compensation, and not like slaves, who only serve their master for the sake of reward: And from hence his disciples Sodock and Baithus made this wrong inference, viz. that there was no reward to be expected in another world, and consequently that the soul dies, and the body will not rise again. Whether this mistake of the doctrine of Antigonus, or, as others suppose, the dissoluteness of manners which at that time might prevail, gave occasion to the opinion of the Sadducees, but so it was, that in process of time, they grew to be very impious and detestable.

(s) Prideaux's Connection, anno 446; Lamy and Beausobre's Introduction.

They

They denied the resurrection of the dead, the being † of angels, and the existence of the spirits or souls of men departed. Their notion was, that there was no spiritual being, but God only; that, as to man, this world was his all; that, at his death, his soul and body die together, never to live any more; and that therefore there is no future reward or punishment. They acknowledged indeed, that God made this world by his power, and governs it by his providence, and for the carrying on of this government, hath ordained rewards and punishments; but then they suppose, that these rewards and punishments are in this world only; and for this reason alone it was, that they worshipped him, and paid obedience to his laws. All unwritten traditions, as well as all written books \*, except the five books of Moses, they absolutely rejected; and the probable reason

A. M.  
3841, etc.  
Ant. Christ.  
163, etc.  
from 1  
Macc. x. 1.  
2 Macc. x.  
11. and Jos.  
lib. xii.  
c. 14. to the  
end of 1  
and 2 Macc.  
and of Jos.  
lib. xii.  
c. 19.  
Their principles

† In what sense the Sadducees denied the existence of angels, it is difficult to determine, since they certainly acknowledged the authority of the Pentateuch. Some pretend, that they accounted the invention of angels but a novel thing, and that their very name was never heard of, until the return from the captivity, and therefore they rejected them; whilst others suppose, that they looked upon them as the inseparable powers of God, which, like the rays of the sun, without being parted from that planet, shine and shed their influence here below. But now, considering that the Sadducees received the five books of Moses, they could hardly entertain any such notions as these. As therein they read of frequent apparitions of angels, they could not fancy them a new invention of the Rabbins that returned from the captivity. As they saw in these books, that they properly came down from heaven upon earth. They could not imagine, that they were beings inseparable from the Deity; and therefore we may suppose, that they rather looked upon them only as so many phantasms; and that, as the bodies, which these angels put on, had perhaps only the appearance of human bodies, the same notion they might have of the spirits which animated them; because every thing, except God, in their opinion, was material; *Basnage's History of the Jews, lib. ii. c. 6.*

\* Mr. Basnage, in his history of the Jews, lib. ii. c. 6. though he allows the question to be difficult, seems to be of a contrary opinion. 1<sup>st</sup>, Because the Sadducees taught and prayed in the temple, where the prophets, and other holy writers, were read, as appears from the example of Christ, who explained a passage out of Isaiah. 2<sup>dly</sup>, Because Josephus, who ought to have been well acquainted with the principles of this sect, relates of them, (lib. vi. c. 9.), that they received what was written. And, 3<sup>dly</sup>,

A. M.  
3841, etc.  
Ant. Christ.  
163, etc.  
from 1.  
Macc. v. 1.  
2 Macc. x.  
11. and Jos.  
lib. xii.  
c. 14. to the  
end of 1  
and 2 Macc.  
and of Jos.  
lib. xiii.  
c. 19.

reason why they did so, is, that they could not so well maintain these opinions, which are not so flatly contradicted in the Pentateuch as in the other sacred books, if once they admitted these books to be canonical. All supernatural helps to their duty they utterly denied: For their doctrine was, that God had made man perfect master of all his actions, with a full freedom to do either good or evil as he thinks fit, without any assistance to him for the one, or restraint upon him as to the other; and for this reason, because they looked upon all men to have an inherent power to make their condition better or worse, according as they took right or wrong measures, whenever they sat in judgment upon criminals, they were always remarked to pass the severest sentences: As indeed their general character was, that they were a very ill-natured sort of men, churlish and morose in their behaviour even to each other, but cruel and savage to every one besides. Their principles, one might suppose, would have naturally led them into all manner of riot and excess; but it was not always so. Some of them were men of rigid virtue and strict probity; for (t) though they had cast off the belief of

because the Pharisees, in their disputes with them about the doctrine of the resurrection, quote, not only the writings of Moses; but those of the prophets likewise, and other hagiographers, whose authority the others do not deny, but only endeavour to elude the force of the passages, that are thence produced against them. Upon the whole, therefore, Scaliger (*Elench. Trihær.* c. 16.) is of opinion, that these Sadducees did not absolutely reject all the sacred writings, but rather looked upon them as books composed by holy men, whose memories they revered, though they could not believe them of the like authority with the law of Moses, which to them was the only rule of faith. But notwithstanding this, “ the account which is given us in the “ gospel (says the learned Prideaux) of the disputation which “ Christ had with the Sadducees, plainly proves the contrary. “ For seeing there are so many texts in the prophets and ha- “ giographa, which plainly and directly prove a future state, “ and the resurrection from the dead, no other reason can be “ given why Christ waved all these proofs, and drew his ar- “ gument, only by consequence, from what is said in the law, “ but that he knew, that the Sadducees had rejected the pro- “ phets and the hagiographa, and therefore would admit of “ no arguments, but from the law only.” Anno 107.

(t) Bafnage's History of the Jews, lib. ii. c. 6.

a future

a future state, yet as they admitted of a Providence to punish vice, and reward virtue, in this life, their desire of present and temporal happiness put a restraint upon their appetites, and kept them within the bounds of their duty. And for the same reason, they were not without their expectations of a Messias to come. Nay, upon this subject they argued with more consistency than the other Jews did. For confining all their hopes to the present state of things, and looking upon him as a temporal king and deliverer only, they had a more than ordinary interest and concern in his appearance in their lifetime, that thereby they might reap the fruits of his conquests, and enjoy the happiness which the prophets had promised during his reign. Their number was the fewest of all the sects of the Jews; but they were men of the best quality and greatest estates: And as all those who were of the greatest power and riches, were cut off in the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, it is generally supposed that this whole sect then perished with them.

A. M.  
3841, etc.  
Ant. Christ.  
163, etc.  
from 1  
Mac. v. 1.  
2 Mac. x.  
11. and Jos.  
lib. xii.  
c. 14. to the  
end of 1  
and 2 Macc.  
and of Jos.  
lib. xiii.  
c. 19.

(u) The Jews, who were carried captive into Egypt, though they kept themselves clear from the idolatry of the country, did nevertheless (about the time of Ptolemy Philometor) fall into their method of handling divinity, and were not a little fond of their allegorical interpretations. This mystical treatment of the Scriptures alarmed others, who, from the word *Kara*, (x) which signifies *to read*, obtained the name of *Karraites*, i. e. such as adhered to the text, and were literal expounders of Scripture. Josephus indeed takes no notice of any people of this denomination; but his silence is no argument against their existence, because we find him omisive in other particulars of the like nature. The Herodians, for instance, a sect well known in the gospel, and remarkable for their political as well as doctrinal principles, he makes no mention of, and might therefore well pass by the Karraites, who, having no peculiar tenets, but only that of teaching and expounding the law according to its literal sense, could not well be discriminated by the name of any particular sect. These *Scripturists*, as they were called, (y) when they came to be headed by Shammai, a learned doctor of the law, (who about an hundred years before our Saviour Christ, opened

The Karraites.

(u) Ibid. lib. ii. c. 9. (x) Lamy's introduction, lib. i. c. 9.  
(y) Prideaux's Connection, anno 37.



A. M. a great school against Hillel, who was for the mystical way  
 384<sup>1</sup>, etc. of interpretation) made a considerable figure: But at length  
 Ant. Chris. the school of Hillel, by the determination of a voice from  
 163, etc. heaven, (as was pretended), carried it against the school of  
 from 1 Shammai; so that the Karraites were quite absorbed, till  
 Macc. v. 1. they appeared again about the sixth century after Christ.  
 2 Macc. x.  
 11. and Jos.

lib. xii. At this time the Talmud, a vast voluminous book, which  
 c. 14. to the contained all the traditions of the Jewish church, was pu-  
 end of 1 blished, and a great deal of deference and veneration was  
 and 2 Macc. required to be paid to it: But when men of learning and  
 and of Jos. judgment came to look into it, and found it (as it is) stuff-  
 lib. xiii. ed with trifling and incredible stories, they rejected its au-  
 c. 19. thority, as not deserving their belief, and betook themselves  
 wholly to such as were of undoubted credibility, *the writ-  
 ings of the law and the prophets*. In consequence of which  
 there arose two parties, one standing up for the Talmud  
 and its traditions, and the other disavowing both, as con-  
 taining, in their opinion, the inventions of men, and not  
 the doctrines and commands of God. Those who stood  
 up for the Talmud and its traditions, were chiefly the Rab-  
 bins and their followers, from whence their party had the  
 name of *Rabbinists*; and the others, who were for the Scrip-  
 ture only, were again called *Karraites*; under which two  
 names the controversy was at that time carried on between  
 them, and so continues even to this day.

Among all the Jewish doctors, these Karraites are justly  
 accounted the most learned set of men; but their number  
 (in these western parts especially) is but small. (z) About  
 the middle of the last century there was a particular ac-  
 count taken of them, wherein it appeared that in Poland  
 there were two thousand; at Caffa in Crim-Tartary, twelve  
 hundred; at Cairo, three hundred; at Damascus, two  
 hundred; at Jerusalem, thirty; in Babylon, an hundred;  
 and in Persia, six hundred, which, in all, amount to no  
 more than four thousand four hundred and thirty; a small  
 number in comparison of the bulk of the nation, which is  
 of the party of the Rabbinists.

The Phari-  
 sees.

The *Pharisees* were so called from the Hebrew word  
*Pharas*, which signifies *to separate*; because the prevailing  
 passion, or rather ambition of this sect was, to distinguish

(z) Calmet's Dictionary, under the word.

and

and separate itself from the rest of the people, by a greater degree of holiness and piety, but accompanied with very much affectation and abundance of vain observances. (a) At what time this sect began first to appear, is no easy matter to determine. Josephus makes mention of them in the government of Jonathan, an hundred and forty years before Christ, as a very powerful body of men at that time; nor is it improbable, that their origin was somewhat earlier, and that, as soon as the Sadducees discovered their principles to the world, these men of different sentiments might not long after rise up in opposition to them: For it is evident from the character which the Jewish historian gives of them, that, in the main articles of their belief, they were entirely repugnant to the Sadducees. (b) The Pharisees believe in a fate, says he, and attribute all things to it, but nevertheless they acknowledge the freedom of man; but how they made these two apparent incompatibles consist together, is no where sufficiently explained. They teach, that God will one day judge the world, and punish or reward men according to their merits. They maintain, that souls are immortal, and that, in the other world, some will be shut up in an eternal prison, and others sent back again; but with this difference, that those of good men shall enter into the bodies of men, those of wicked men into the bodies of beasts; which exactly agrees with the famous transmigration of Pythagoras. Their adherence to the law was so exact, that, for fear of violating the least precept of it, they scrupulously observed every thing that had the least relation to it, even though the law had neither commanded nor forbidden them. Their zeal for the traditions of the elders was such, that they derived them from the same fountain with the written word itself, pretending, that Moses received both of them from God on mount Sinai, and therefore ascribing an equal authority to both. They had a notion, that good works were meritorious; and therefore they invented a great number of supererogatory ones, upon which they valued themselves more than upon a due observance of the law itself. Their frequent washings and ablutions, (c) their long prayers in public places, their (d) nice avoidance of re-

A. M.  
3841, &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
163, &c.  
from 1  
Macc. v. 1.  
2 Macc. x.  
11. and Jos.  
lib. xii.  
c. 14. to the  
end of 1  
and 2 Macc.  
and of Jos.  
lib. xiii.  
c. 19.

(a) Vide Lamy's Introduction, and Prideaux's Connection.  
(b) Joseph. De bello Jud. lib. ii. c. 12. (c) Matth. vi. 5.  
&c. (d) Luke vii. 39.

A. M.  
3841, etc.  
Ant. Chriſt.  
163, etc.  
from 1  
Macc. v. 1.  
2 Macc. x.  
11. and Joſ.  
lib. xii.  
c. 14. to the  
end of 1  
and 2 Macc.  
and of Joſ.  
lib. xiii.  
c. 19.

puted finners, their faſting and great abſtinence, their penance and mortification, (e) their minute payment of tithes, their (f) ſtrict obſervance of the Sabbath, and (g) oſtentatious enlargement of \* Phylacteries, were all works of this kind; which nevertheless gained them ſuch eſteem and veneration, that while the common people loved, the greater ones dreaded them, ſo that their power and authority in the ſtate was conſiderable, though generally attended with pernicious conſequences, becauſe their hearts were evil: For notwithstanding their ſhow of mighty zeal and great aſterity, they were in reality, no better than what our Saviour calls them, vain and oſtentatious, ſpiteful and malicious, gripping and voracious, lovers of themſelves only, and deſpiſers of others; inſomuch, that it was hard to ſay which was moſt predominant in them, their inſatiable avarice, their inſupportable pride, or abominable hypocrify.

The Scribes.

In conjunction with the Pharifees, the Scribes are often mentioned in the Scriptures of the New Teſtament. They were not however any particular ſect, but a profeſſion of men of divers kinds, following literature. For generally all, that were any way learned among the Jews, were; in

(e) Matth. xxiii. 23. (f) Chap. xii. 2. (g) Chap. xxiii. 5.

\* The word *Phylactery*, in the Greek, ſignifies *a place to keep any thing in*; in the Hebrew, it is called *Tephillim*, which ſignifies *prayers*, becauſe the Jews wear their Phylacteries chiefly when they go to their devotion. It is a common opinion, that theſe Phylacteries were long pieces of parchment, whereon were written certain paſſages out of Exodus and Deuteronomy, which they tied to their foreheads and left arm, in memory of the law; but a late explainer of the Jewiſh cuſtoms aſſures us, that they were parchment-caſes, formed with very great nicety, into their proper ſhapes; that the caſe for the head had four cavities, into each of which they put a piece of parchment rolled up, wherein were written ſome ſections of the law; but that which was for the arm, had but one cavity, and into it they put one piece of parchment, wherein four paſſages of Scripture were written; *Lamy's Introduction, lib. i. c. 16.* The whole of the cuſtom is founded on Exod. xiii. 9. and Deut. vi. 8.; but the words are only metaphorically to be underſtood, as a command to have God's laws perpetually before our eyes, and his deliverance always in remembrance. It cannot be denied however, that theſe Phylacteries were generally worn by the Jews in our Saviour's time, and were not diſuſed ſo late as St. Jerom's; *Lamy, ibid.*

the

the time of our Saviour and his apostles, called *Scribes*,<sup>A. M. 3841, etc.</sup> but especially those, who by their skill in the law, and divinity of the Jews, were advanced to sit in Moses's<sup>Ant. Chriſt. 163, etc.</sup> seat, either as judges in their Sanhedrim, or teachers in their schools or synagogues. Both their name and profession began immediately after the Babylonish captivity, about five hundred years before the birth of Christ; for Ezra<sup>from 1 Macc. v. 1. 2 Macc. x. 11. and Joſ. lib. xii. c. 14.</sup> himself was one of the first. They were a body of the most learned men of the nation, and chiefly of the sect of the Pharisees, though some of them might possibly be Karraites, or Antitraditionists, as it seems to appear by one of them asking our Saviour, *(b) which was the first commandment of all?* and being so highly pleased with his answer.

Those who were descended from the stock of Levi, were usually called *Scribes of the clergy*; but such as were sprung from any other tribe, were named *Scribes of the people*. The business of the latter, was to take care to preserve the purity of the text in all the Bibles, which they copied out, and to see that no corruption was crept into the original. It was not held proper for every vulgar pen to transcribe the great mysteries of the law, and therefore this peculiar order of men appointed to that purpose; but they did not so entirely apply themselves to it, as not to take in many other matters both of civil and religious concern, being public notaries in the Sanhedrim, and courts of justice, as well as registers in the synagogues. The office of the scribes of the clergy, was to teach in public, and instruct the people by expounding to them the law in their sermons and set discourses; by which practice, they grew into such repute in the Jewish state, that it was hard to say, whether the Pharisees, or they, were held in the greater veneration: For what the Pharisees gained among the common people by their pretences to extraordinary sanctity, these more justly obtained by their zeal for the written word, in preserving it from the dangers of corruption, and expounding it in the ears of the people.

It is supposed, with a good deal of probability, that the<sup>Essenes.</sup> sect of the Essenes began about an hundred and fifty years before Christ, and during the persecution of Antiochus Epiphanes, when great numbers of Jews were driven into the wilderness, where they inured themselves to a hard

(b) Mark xii. 28, &c.

A. M.  
3841, etc.  
Ant. Christ.  
163, etc.  
from 1  
Macc. v. 1.  
2 Macc. x.  
11. and Jos.  
lib. xii. c. 14.  
to the end of  
1 and 2  
Macc. and  
of Jos. lib.  
xiii. c. 19.

and laborious course of living. Why we find no mention made of them in all the New Testament, the probable reason may be, that the major part of them lived in Egypt, at a considerable distance from Judea, which, at this time, was infested with such persecutions, and intestine broils, as were abhorrent to their retired and hermetic course of life, which, as it secluded them from all places of great resort, might make them less curious to inquire after our Saviour's person and doctrine, thinking very probably, that if he was really the Messiah, he would not fail to seek and find out them; but that, if he was not, he had already enemies enough to oppose him, without their leaving the solitary and contemplative life they were accustomed to, merely to bear testimony against him. Philo, who gives us a full account of these people, tells us, that they were called *Essenes*, from the Greek word *εσιος*, which signifies *holy*, and that there were two sorts of them: Some who living in society, and marrying, (though with a great deal of wariness and circumspection), lived in villages, and applied themselves to husbandry, and other innocent trades and occupations, and were therefore called *practical*; but others, who living a kind of monastic life, gave themselves wholly up to meditation, and were therefore called the *contemplative Essenes*: But however they differed in their manner of life, they were both of the same belief, and followed the same maxims.

Their principles.

They had not indeed the like traditions with the Pharisees, but as they were allegorists, they had several mystical books, which served them for a rule in explaining the sacred writings, all of which (contrary to the Sadducees) they acknowledged and received. They believed that God governs the world, but by such an absolute predestination of every thing, as allowed mankind no liberty of choice in all their actions. They acknowledged a future state, thinking that the souls of good men went into the Fortunate Islands, while those of the wicked were shut up in subterraneous places; but as for the resurrection of the body, and the soul's returning to it again, after they were once parted, of this they had no manner of notion. All practical religion they reduced to these three kinds. 1. The love of God. 2. The love of virtue. And, 3. The love of mankind. 1. Their love of God expressed itself in accounting him the author of all good, and, consequently, applying to him every morning and night for the

the blessings they wanted; in their abstaining from swearing, from lying, and all other sins that are abhorrent to his nature; and in their strict observance of the Sabbath, and all other holy writes, except sacrificing; for tho' they sent their gifts to the altar, yet they themselves went not thither, presuming, that the sanctity of their lives was the purest and most acceptable sacrifice to God that they could offer. 2. Their love of virtue was shewn in the government of their passions, their refraining from pleasures, their contempt of riches, their abstinence in eating, their continence, their patience, the simplicity of their speech, and the modesty of their carriage. And, 3. Their love of mankind appeared in their great benevolence and strict justice; their charity to the poor, and hospitality to strangers; and there needs no other proof of their love to one another, than the union in which they lived. For they had the same houses, the same provisions, the same habits, the same tables; their gains were put in the common stock; they divided the care of the sick among them; and honoured the elder men of their society with the same reverence as if they had been their fathers.

This strictness and regularity of theirs gave them an eminent character, and made it a matter of no small consequence to be admitted into their society. For when, after a due course of probation, any one presented himself for that purpose, they bound him under the most solemn vows and protestations, "To love and worship God, and do justice to all men; to profess himself an enemy to the wicked, and a friend to the lovers of virtue; to keep his hands from theft, and all fraudulent dealings, and his soul unpolluted with the desire of unjust gain; not to usurp upon his inferiours, nor distinguish himself from them by any ornaments of dress or apparel; not to conceal any of the mysteries of religion from his brethren, nor to disclose any to the profane, though it were to save his life; but to preserve the doctrine he professed, the books that were written of it, and the names of those from whom he had it." This was the form of admission into their communion, which whoever violated, in any gross instance, was immediately excluded, and never received again, without the deepest humiliation and repentance. And if such was the religion and manner of life of the Essenes, we have less reason to be surprised, at our finding some authors so much ex-

A. M.  
3841, etc.  
Ant. Chris.  
163, etc.  
from 1  
Macc. v. 1.  
2 Macc. x.  
11. and Jos.  
lib. xii. c. 14.  
to the end of  
1 and 2  
Macc. and  
of Jos. lib.  
xiii. c. 19.

A. M. 3841, etc. Ant. Christ. 163, etc. from 1 Macc. v. 1. 2 Macc. x. 11, and Jos. lib. xii. c. 14. and doctrine. In the time of Trajan and the reign of Justinian, though they were known under the pompous title of *angels* or *angelic persons*, yet were they found to come infinitely short of the beings whose names they assumed, and, upon that account, falling into great disesteem, in a very short time † they dwindled into nothing.

The Herodians.

There was another sect among the Jews, (*k*) mentioned in the gospel, which, though of later original, may not improperly be considered in this place, and that is the Herodians \*, who, in their main principles, were not very different from the Sadducees. They sprang up, no doubt, in the time of Herod the Great, some twenty or thirty years before Christ, and had their denomination from him; but upon what account is not so well agreed. The common opinion is, that they looked upon Herod as the promised Messiah: But it is a very improbable thing, that any Jew should, in the time of our Saviour's ministry, above thirty years after the death of Herod, hold him to have been the Messiah, when they had found no one of

(*i*) Basnage's History of the Jews, lib. 2. c. 13.

† Some indeed are of opinion, that these Essenes did renounce Judaism, and were converts to Christianity; and that such among them as were called *Therapeutæ* became monks, and were formed into that order by St. Mark, who was the first founder of the Christian church in Alexandria. But though it seems not unlikely, that some of this sect might be converted, yet, that the main body of them should embrace Christianity, and so be lost in the societies of Christian hermits, is far from being probable; especially since we find no traces of any such institution as monkism till after the beginning of the second century, when these Ascetics, who had formerly fled from persecution, finding the sweets of their retirement and solitude, began to multiply, and so erected themselves into bodies; Prideaux's *Connexion*, anno 107.; and Basnage's *History of the Jews*, lib. 2. c. 13.

(*k*) Matth. xxii. 16. Mark iii. 16. Chap. 8. 15. Chap. xii. 13.

\* Accordingly St. Mark (Chap. viii. 15.) calls that *the leaven of Herod*, which Christ styles *the leaven of the Sadducees*, Matth. xvi. 6.

those

those particulars which they expected from the Messiah performed by him, but rather every thing quite contrary. (l) Others therefore suppose, that they were called *Herodians*, because they constituted a sodality (or club as we call it) in honour of Herod at Jerusalem, as there were several in Rome in honour of their emperors \*. But, since the earliest of these sodalities in Rome were not instituted till after the death of Augustus, who out-lived Herod sixteen years and upwards, this could be no pattern or foundation for the institution of the like in memory of Herod, who died so long before.

Herod, no doubt, came into the government with great opposition, and, as he was by birth a foreigner, and had made his entrance with much blood, his title was not acknowledged by the greater part of the Jews, especially as long as Antigonus was alive. Those, therefore, that would own his title, and espouse his interest, might, for this reason, perhaps, go under the name of *Herodians*; but this seems not to be the whole of the matter. Our blessed Saviour cautions his disciples (m). *against the leaven (i. e. against the evil and erroneous tenets) of Herod*; which seems to imply, that Herod himself was the author of some false notions, which constituted a particular sect differing from the other sects of the Jews; and that his followers, imbibing these principles from him, had the denomination of *Herodians*. (n) Forasmuch, then, that Herod (o), the better to secure his possession of the throne, had put himself under the Roman protection, (p) contrary to an express precept of the law; and, to ingratiate himself with the great men at Rome, built temples, and erected images in them for idolatrous worship, excusing himself to the Jews, that all this he did purely in compliance to the commands he was necessitated to obey, and might probably lay it down for a maxim in religion, that, in case of compulsion, it was lawful to submit to unjust injunctions; there is no wonder at all that some bold men should rise up to justify the king's practice, and (by the royal permission)

(l) Scaliger in animadver. ad Eusebii chron. et Casaubon. exercit. &c.

\* Such were the Augustales, Adrianales, Antonini, &c. constituted in honour of Augustus, Adrian, and Antoninus, and the rest of the emperours, after their death; *Prideaux's Connection, anno 107.*

(m) Mark viii. 15. (n) *Prideaux's Connection, anno 107.*

(o) Joseph. Antiq. lib. xv. c. 12. (p) Deut. xvii. 15.

call

A. M.  
3841, etc.  
Ant. Chr.  
163, etc.  
from 1  
Macc. v. 1.  
2 Macc. x.  
11. and Jos.  
lib. xiii. c. 14.  
to the end of  
1 and 2  
Macc. and  
of Jos. lib.  
xiii. c. 19.



A. M. 3841, etc.  
 Ant. Christ.  
 163, &c.  
 from 1  
 Macc. v. i.  
 2 Macc. x.  
 11. and Jos.  
 lib. xii. c. 14.  
 to the end of  
 1 and 2  
 Macc. and  
 of Jos. lib.  
 xiii. c. 19.

call themselves by his name, whose distinguishing tenet might probably be, "That although they professed the Jewish religion, and abominated idolatry in their hearts, yet, to humour the Romans, and make themselves easy with their governours, it was not unlawful to comply sometimes with their demands, and, at least outwardly, to become occasional conformists." This is the leaven of the Herodians, which our Saviour cautions his disciples against; but it was not of long continuance in the Jewish church: For Herod Antipas (q) having lost his credit at Rome, and being deposed and banished out of Judea, the sect that was instituted by his father, and supported by his favour and countenance, could not support itself after his disgrace.

Zealots † Another sect, mentioned by Josephus (r) as rising after this time, was that of Judas of Galilee: For when Archelaus, son of Herod the Great, was sent into banishment, and Judea reduced to a Roman province, Judas †, a native of Galamala, took occasion, from some new exactions, to exhort his countrymen to shake off the Roman yoke; pretending, that to pay tribute to any foreign power was a shameful badge of their slavery. An aversion to the Roman dominion, and an hatred of the publicans, (who had the care of receiving the taxes and tributes), was natural enough to all the Jews; but they, whose zeal led them to join Judas, and form a particular sect, valued themselves upon their holiness and justice, because they would not acknowledge any other sovereign but God; and, rather than submit to the dominion of man, or give him the title of *Lord*, they chose to subject themselves to any torments, or even to death itself. Judas indeed perished, *and all, as many as obeyed him, were dispersed for a while*; but in the time of the Jewish wars they gathered again, and soon became a faction strong and considerable enough to put every thing in confusion. They affected the title of *Zealots*, (says (s) Josephus), as if their undertakings had been good and honourable, even while they outdid the very worst of men

(q) Basnage's History, lib. ii. c. 14. (r) Joseph. Antiq. lib. xviii.

† Augustus furnished him with a plausible pretence for it, by issuing out his edict to have the whole province of Syria new surveyed, and taxed about this time.

(s) De bello Jud. lib. 4.

in wickedness. They looked upon themselves indeed, as the true successors of Phinehas, (t) who, out of zeal for the honour of God, did immediate execution upon Zimri and Cosbi, for which he received the divine thanks and approbation. And, in imitation of him, these men took upon them to execute judgment upon such as they called notorious offenders, without staying for the ordinary formalities of law. And therefore, they made no scruple of robbing, and plundering, and killing the principal of the nobility, under pretence of their holding correspondence with the Romans, and betraying the liberty of their country. At last, joining with the Idumæans, they committed all manner of outrage, seized on the temple, and profaned the sanctuary, and slew many of the high-priests themselves. So that, when Jerusalem came to be besieged, they were perpetually raising tumults and distractions within, which ended at last in the destruction of their city and temple, and the total dissolution of their state.

These were the several sects, which, much about this period of time, sprang up in the Jewish church; and, if the like differences in opinion have since appeared in the Christian, it is no more than what the Spirit of God has foretold: (u) *For there must be heresies among you, that they who are approved, may be made manifest among you.*

A. M.  
3841, etc.  
Ant. Christ.  
163, etc.  
from 1  
Macc. v. 1.  
2 Macc. x.  
11. and Jos.  
lib. xiii. c. 14.  
to the end of  
1 and 2  
Macc. and  
of Jos. lib.  
xiii. c. 19.

## CHAP. V.

*From the death of John Hyrcanus, to the birth of Jesus Christ.*

### THE HISTORY.

**H**Yrcanus, when he died, left five sons: Aristobulus, Antigonus, and Alexander, were the three first; but the name of the fifth was Absalom. Aristobulus, as eldest, succeeded his father, both in the pontificate and principality of the nation, and (as we said before) was the first in Judea, since the Babylonish captivity, who put on a diadem, and assumed the title of a king; but he was a man of a bloody and suspicious disposition. His own mother, because, in

A. M.  
3897, &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
107, &c.  
from Jos.  
lib. xiii.  
c. 19. to  
the end of  
lib. xv.  
Aristobulus  
succeeds his  
father,  
makes him-  
self kind of  
Judea, but  
murders  
his mother  
and bro-  
ther.

(t) Numb. xxv. 13.

(u) 1 Cor. xi. 19.

virtue

A. M.  
3897, &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
107, &c.  
from Jos.  
lib. xii.  
c. 19. to  
the end of  
lib. xv.

virtue of his father's will, she claimed some share in the sovereignty, he first cast into prison, and there starved to death. All his brothers he put under the like confinement, except Antigonus, who was his great favourite, and, at first, shared in the government with him; but he soon cooled in his affections, and at last had him put to death; though, in this piece of cruelty, the instruments about him were more to blame than he.

As soon as he was settled on the throne, he engaged in a war with the Ituræans †; and having subdued the greatest part of them, he forced them to become proselytes to the Jewish religion, in the same manner as his father had done to the Idumæans; but returning sick from the war to Jerusalem, he left his brother behind him to finish it, which accordingly he did with success; and so returning in triumph, at a time when the feast of tabernacles was celebrating, he went directly by the temple (as did the guards that attended him) with his armour on, to pay his devotions to God.

The queen, and the courtiers of her party, who envied the interest which Antigonus had with the king, were always buzzing in his ears such stories as they thought would excite his jealousy; and now they come and tell him, "That it was high time for him to look to himself; that his brother was gone into the temple in an equipage not becoming a private man; and that, in all probability, it would not be long before he would come with a troop of his armed soldiers, and execute his wicked design against him."

This representation made some impression upon Aristobulus, so that he sent to his brother to put off his armour and immediately come to him; concluding, that if, pursuant to his orders, he came unarmed, there was no mischief intended, but that if he did otherwise, there might be something in what the queen had suggested: and therefore placing his guards in a subterraneous passage, which

† Ituræa, the country where these people dwelt, was part of Cœlo-Syria, bordering upon the north-east part of the land of Israel; and lying between the inheritance of the half tribe of Manasseh beyond Jordan, and the territories of Damascus. It is the same country that is sometimes called *Auronitis*, and had its name from Itur one of the sons of Ishmael, Gen. xxv. 15. who, in our English version, is wrongfully called *Jetur*; *Prideaux's Connection*, anno 107.

led from the palace † to the temple, and through which his brother was to come to the king's apartment, he ordered them, that, if he came unarmed, they should let him pass, but if otherwise, they should instantly fall upon him, and dispatch him.

The queen, knowing this, prevailed with the messenger whom Aristobulus sent to bid his brother come unarmed, to tell him, on the contrary, that the king being informed of a very beautiful suit of armour which he had brought with him from the wars, was minded to see how it became him, and therefore desired him to come in it ; which accordingly he did, suspecting no ill. When he came to the place where the guards were posted, they, seeing his armour on, executed their orders, and immediately slew him; but, no sooner was the fact committed, than Aristobulus severely repented it.

For the sense of the loss of a good brother brought to his remembrance the murder of his mother, and his conscience flew in his face for both at once. The anxiety of his mind increased the distemper of his body ; so that, finding no ease for the one, and no cure for the other, in the utmost agonies of guilt, and with many bitter accusations of himself, he gave up the ghost, † and, after

A. M.  
3897, etc.  
Ant. Chrif.  
107, etc.  
from Jos.  
lib. xiii. c.  
19. to the  
end of lib.  
15.

Dies miser-  
ably, and is  
succeeded by  
his brother  
Alexander.

21

† When Hyrcanus built the the palace of Baris, he caused this passage, which led from thence to the temple, to be made, that upon all occasions he might have a ready communication with it : And as over this passage there was a turret, or tower of the palace, called *Straton's tower*, Josephus tells us a very remarkable story concerning it, viz. That one Judas, an Essene, having foretold that Antigonius should, that very day, be slain in Strat n's tower, which he took to be a town so called, lying on the sea-coast, and two days journey from Jerusalem ; and seeing Antigonius come into the temple, he fell into a great passion, and began to exclaim against truth itself, as supposing his prediction impossible now to be fulfilled ; but, while he was in this agony, news being brought, that Antigonius was slain in that part of the subterraneous gallery which was directly under the turret called *Straton's tower*, the Essene rejoiced in the comfort and satisfaction of having his prophecy verified, at the same time that every one else was lamenting the murder of this young prince ; *Jewish Antiq lib. xii. c. 19.*

† Aristobulus was a great favourer of the Greeks, for which reason he was called *Philellen* ; and the Greeks indeed had an

A. M. 3897, etc. Ant. Christ. 107, etc. lib. xiii. c. 19. to the end of lib. 15.

a reign of no more than one year, was succeeded by his brother Alexander Jannæus.

Ever since his father's death, he had been kept in prison by the late king; but, upon his decease, his widow Salome released him, and his other two brothers, from their confinement; so that, being now on the throne, and having discovered that the elder of these brothers had formed a design to supplant him, he caused him to be put to death; but the other, who was called Absalom, desiring to live quietly, and in a private condition, he took into his favour, and under his protection.

Alexander's war with the people of Ptolemais, Gaza, etc.

As soon as he had settled his matters at home, he led forth his forces to make war with the people of Ptolemais; and, having vanquished them in a pitched battle, shut them up in the city, and laid close siege to it. This place, and Gaza, together with the tower of Straton, and the fortrefs of Dura, which Zoilus possessed, were the only places on the coast, which were not under Alexander's dominion; and therefore, dividing his forces, with one part he besieged Ptolemais, and employed the other in ravaging the territories of Zoilus, and those of Gaza. In the mean time, the besieged had sent to Ptolemy Lathyrus \*, the expelled king of Egypt, who reigned then in Crete, to come

equal favour for him: For, as Josephus tells us out of Strabo, one of their historians has left this character of him: —“ That he was a prince of equity, and had in many things been very beneficial to the Jews, in that he had augmented their territories, and ingrafted into the Jewish state part of the nation of the Ituræans;” but the actions of his short reign shew him to have been a man of a quite different disposition; *Prideaux's Connection*, anno 106.

\* This Ptolemy Lathyrus, by his mother Cleopatra, was made King of Egypt; by his affecting to reign without her, he so far incurred her displeasure, that she procured his expulsion by this artifice. — Some of her favourite eunuchs she caused to be wounded; and then bringing them out into the public assembly of the Alexandrians, she there pretended, that they had suffered this from Lathyrus, in defence of her person against him, and thereupon accused him of having made an attempt upon her life; and by this means she so far incensed the people, that they rose in a general uproar against him, and would have torn him to pieces, had he not fled for his life. Hereupon Cleopatra sent for Alexander, her younger son, who for some time had reigned in Cyprus, and having made him king of Egypt, forced Lathyrus to be content with Cyprus, upon his brother's leaving it; *Juslin. lib. xxxix. c. 4.*

Come to their relief; but afterwards, bethinking themselves better, they came to a resolution, (which they communicated to Ptolemy), to trust to their own strength, rather than admit of any auxiliaries.

Ptolemy however was already set to sea, when he heard this news; and therefore, proceeding in his voyage, and landing his army in Phœnicia, he advanced towards Ptolemais: But the people in the town would neither receive his messengers, nor send him any answer, so that he was in no small perplexity what course to take, when Zoilus, and the Gazeans sent Ambassadors, desiring his assistance against Alexander's forces, which they were not able to oppose.

Ptolemy being very glad of any opportunity to make an honourable retreat from before Ptolemais, readily marched his army to their relief; but Alexander, not thinking it advisable to hazard an engagement with him, withdrew his army into their quarters, and there thought to gain by policy, what he could not attain by force.

To this purpose he entered into a treaty with Lathyrus, and engaged to pay him four hundred talents of silver, on condition, that he would deliver Zoilus, and his territories, into his hands, which Lathyrus agreed to do, and, accordingly had got Zoilus into his custody; but when he came to understand, that at the same time Alexander was clandestinely treating with Cleopatra, to bring her upon him with all her forces, he, detesting such double dealing, broke off all friendship with him, and resolved to do him what mischief he could.

The two armies therefore met the next year, and a very fierce battle ensued near Asophus, not far from the river Jordan, wherein Alexander being vanquished, lost thirty thousand of his men, besides those that were taken prisoners. After this victory, Ptolemy made everywhere great havock, and spread the terror \* of his name throughout all

\* There is a very cruel and barbarous act, which he is said to have done at this time, viz. that, coming with his army in the evening after the victory, to take up his quarters in the adjoining villages, and finding them full of women and children, he caused them to be all slaughtered, and their bodies to be cut in pieces, and put in caldrons over the fire to be boiled, as if they had been for supper; that so he might leave an opinion in that country, that his men fed upon human flesh, and thereby create the greater dread

A. M.  
3897, etc.  
Ant. Chris.  
107, etc.  
from Jos.  
lib. xiii. c.  
19. to the  
end of lib.  
15.



His perfidy  
to Ptolemy,  
who defeats  
his army,  
and wastes  
his country.

A. M.  
3897, etc.  
Ant. Chris.  
107, etc.  
from Jos.  
lib. xiii. c.  
19. to the  
end of lib.  
15.

all the province ; but his mother Cleopatra being fearful, lest so much success should make him powerful enough to invade Egypt, set out with a large fleet, and a numerous army, which she landed in Phœnicia, and thence proceeded to Ptolemais, expecting that the people would have opened their gates to her ; but finding the contrary, she invested the place to take it by force ; while Ptolemy, believing that it would be easy for him to recover Egypt in the absence of his mother and her army, left Syria, and went upon that expedition ; but meeting with more opposition than he expected, he was obliged to return to Gaza, where he passed the winter, and from thence went back again to Cyprus.

He makes  
an alliance  
with Cleo-  
patra, queen  
of Egypt.

As soon as Cleopatra had taken Ptolemais, Alexander went thither with considerable presents, and was kindly received as an unhappy prince, who was Ptolemy's enemy, and had no other refuge but the queen's protection : And therefore when some about her suggested, that now she had an opportunity to seize on him and his dominions, Ananias, one of her generals, who by birth was a Jew, and by descent a relation to Alexander, by representing to her the danger and injustice of such a procedure ; how base and injurious to her own honour, which for no considerations whatever ought to be tarnished ; how prejudicial to her interest, by provoking all the Jews in the world against her ; and how contrary to the rules of faith and common honesty, which are observed among all mankind, it would be to treat a friend and ally in this manner ; he prevailed with her to desist from all thoughts of it ; so that, having concluded an amicable alliance with Alexander, she returned with her army to Egypt.

As soon as the country was clear of these foreigners, and Alexander had recruited his shattered forces, he marched into Cœlo Syria, where (after a siege of ten months) he took Gadara, and, after that, the strong fortress of Amathus, where Theodorus, the son of Zeno, prince of Philadelphia, had laid up all his treasure : But Theodorus falling suddenly upon him, as he was returning from the conquest, not only recovered his treasure again, but slew ten thousand of his men, and took all his baggage from him.

and terrour of his army. This barbarous cruelty Strabo and Nicholaus (as Josephus tells us) make mention of ; *Jewish Antiq.* lib. xiii. c. 21.

All

All these misfortunes however did not discourage this prince. The next year he marched his forces again over the Jordan; and after having taken some neighbouring places, came, and sat down before Gaza, with a design, if he took it, to use the people with the utmost severity; but Apollodorus, who commanded the town, made a gallant defence, and in a sally with twenty thousand of his men, one night fell so furiously upon Alexander's camp, that he had like to have ruined him and his whole army; but as soon as the day appeared, the Jews, discovering who they were, (for they thought in the dark that Lathyrus was come again to the assistance of Gaza), rallied again, and repulsed the Gazeans into the city, with the loss of a thousand of their men.

A. M.  
3897, &c.  
Ant. Christ.  
107, &c.  
from Jos.  
lib. xiii. c.  
19. to the  
end of lib.  
15.  
Besieges Ga-  
za, and puts  
the inhabi-  
tants to the  
sword.

The city however still held out, till Lysimachus envying the credit and esteem which his brother Apollodorus had gained in the defence of the place, treacherously slew him, and then as treacherously delivered up the city to Alexander; who, as soon as he had got possession of it, let loose his soldiers upon it, with a full license to kill, plunder, and destroy, which produced a sad scene of barbarity. The Gazeans, thus finding that they were to have no quarter, stood upon their defence, and sold their lives at so dear a rate, that in the carnage and sackage of the place, Alexander lost as many men of his own, as he killed of the enemy; but had the horrid pleasure, before he went away, to see this ancient and famous city reduced to utter ruin and desolation.

When he returned to Jerusalem, he was far from finding matters there in any peaceable posture. For, in the feast of tabernacles, while he was offering the usual sacrifices as high-priest, the people, who were assembled in the temple, had the insolence to pelt him with citrons, (for during this festival it was a custom among the Jews to carry † branches of palm-trees, and lemon-trees in their hands) Is insulted and hated by his own subjects, who run into open rebellion against him.

† The word in the original is *Attrog*, which the Jews imagine to have been *the forbidden fruit*, that our first parents eat in paradise. It very much resembles a citron or lemon, except that it has a very rough and uneven rind, which they fondly imagine, was originally occasioned by Eve's impressing her teeth on it, and that these marks it has still retained. The custom of carrying these in their hands is in testimony of their joy, but on the seventh day, which closes the festival, they break their branches, and throw them away; and therefore it is supposed, that it was on this day, when



A. M. hands) and to give him very opprobrious language, tel-  
 3897, &c. ling him that he was a slave †, and unworthy to go up to  
 Ant. Christ. the holy altar to offer solemn sacrifices, which enraged him  
 107, &c. to such a degree, that he fell upon them with his soldiers,  
 from Jos. and slew six thousand of them. After this he surrounded  
 lib. xiii. c. the court of the priests, wherein the altar and the temple  
 19. to the stood, with a wooden partition, to hinder the people from  
 end of lib. coming near him, while he was officiating, and to secure  
 15. his person against all future attempts, he took guards into  
 his pay from Pisidia, and Cicilia, (for he durst not trust  
 his own countrymen), and of these he had six thousand al-  
 ways about him.

Having thus, in some measure, laid the storm at home, he marched his forces against the Moabites and Ammonites, and made them become tributary to him. He attacked again the fortress of Amathus; but Theodorus, not daring to stand his coming, had removed his treasure, and withdrawn the garrison, so that he took it without opposition: But in his war with Thedas, an Arabian king, he had not the like success; for falling into an ambuscade, which that prince had laid for him near Gadara, he there lost most of his army, and not without some difficulty escaped himself.

This loss added to the hatred which the Jews had conceived against him, made them fly out into an open rebellion, so that here a civil war commenced, which lasted for six years. In most encounters he had the advantage of his subjects; but so exasperated were they against him, that he could never bring them to submit: For having one day asked them, what they would have him do to please them, they all with one voice replied, "That he should cut his own throat; for upon no other terms would they be at

when the mutinous multitude pelted the high-priest with these *At-trogs*, which, at this time, were very common in Palestine; *Universal History*, lib. ii. c. 11.

† In this they alluded to what Eleazar, a leading Pharisee, had said to his father Hyrcanus, viz. That his mother was a captive taken in the wars, and he, consequently disqualified to be their high-priest; *vide* page 104. But the true reason of their exasperation against him was, that he followed his father's steps, and not only gave countenance to the contrary sect, but continued the penal laws against those who should observe the traditions and customs introduced by the Pharisees; *Universal History*, lib. ii. c. 11.

" peace

"peace with him; and well it were, (they said), considering the great † mischiefs he had done them, if they could be reconciled to him, even after he was in his grave;" and thereupon they sent deputies to Demetrius Eucærus, who was then king of Damascus, to desire succours from him against their sovereign.

A. M.  
3897, &c.  
Ant. Chris.  
107, &c.  
from Jos.  
lib. xiii. c.  
191 to the  
end of lib.

Demetrius, at their request, came into Judea with an army of three thousand horse, and forty thousand foot, Syrians and Jews. Alexander marched against him with six thousand Greek mercenaries, and twenty thousand Jews, who continued faithful to him; but in the engagement he was quite vanquished. All his foreign troops were lost to a man: and the greatest part of his other forces was so miserably broken, that he was forced to flee for shelter to the mountains, with the poor remnant he could get together.

15.  
His success  
against  
them, and  
unheard of  
cruelty.

This misfortune, which, in all appearance, must have totally ruined his affairs, proved the very means of re-establishing them. Six thousand of those very Jews, who had so lately appeared in arms against him, when they saw him reduced to this distressed condition, were moved with compassion, and went over to him: And Demetrius, being content with the first advantage he had gained, or fearing perhaps that the rest of the Jews would do the same, retired into Syria, leaving the rebels to make war against their king with their own forces.

In most of the conflicts that happened between them, Alexander defeated them, but still he could bring them to no terms of peace; till at last, coming to a decisive battle, he cut off the major part of them, and the rest he shut up in a place called *Bethome*. This he besieged, and took; and having carried eight hundred of the rebels prisoners to Jerusalem, he there caused them to be crucified all on one day, and their wives and children to be slain before their faces, as they were hanging on the crosses, whilst he made an entertainment for his wives and concubines near the place, where this scene of terror was acting, with an in-

† The fourth book of the Maccabees (chap. xxix.) tells us, that this war was chiefly between the Pharisees and Sadducees, and that Alexander, having declared himself against the former, had put fifty thousand of them to death within the space of six years, which so exasperated the rest, that they would hearken to no accommodation; *Universal History*, lib. ii. c. 11.

A. M. 3897, etc. Ant. Christ. 107, etc. from Jos. lib. xiii. c. 19. to the end of lib. 15.

tent chiefly to feast himself and them with this horrid sight. This was a savage and unheard of cruelty : And, upon this occasion, the people of his own party called him *Thracides*, i. e. *as cruel as a Thracian*, as no name indeed could be bad enough to express so inhuman a procedure.

After these civil wars were ended, Alexander led his army against the two kings of Damascus, Antiochus first, and afterwards Aretas †, who, at different times had invaded his kingdom. He took several strong places in the neighbouring territories, and, after an expedition of three years continuance, returned to Jerusalem, and was well received by his subjects. But that felicity he did not long enjoy : For having at a certain time drank to a great excess, he thereupon fell sick, and was afterwards seized with a quartan ague, which he was never able to shake off. This however did not interrupt his military undertakings, till, being quite exhausted, he was forced to submit to fate, while he was besieging the castle of Ragaba, in the country of the Gerasens. His queen Alexandra, who was with him at the siege, observing him to draw near his end, was exceedingly troubled at the ill state wherein she and her children should be left at his death. She knew how much he had exasperated the Pharisees, then a powerful sect among the Jews, and how great hatred the generality of the people, at their instigation, had contracted against them ; and therefore she saw nothing else, but that she, and her family, would be given up to destruction, and made victims to the public rage ; and thus she sat by his bedside, lamenting, and bemoaning herself, while he lay a-dying.

To ease her mind from these dismal apprehensions, the advice which he gave her was this : — (a) “ That she should conceal his death till the castle was taken, and then, carrying his dead body with her, should lead back the army in triumph for this success ; that, as soon as she was come to Jerusalem, she should send for some of the leading men of the sect of the Pharisees, lay his dead corpse before them, and tell them, that she resigned it wholly to their pleasure, either to treat it

† This Aretas was king of Arabia Petraea, but upon the death of Antiochus, was chosen king of Damascus likewise.

(a) Joseph. Antiq. lib. xiii. c. 23.

with indignity, (as his treatment of them had deserved),  
 " or to dispose of it as they thought fit ; and, withal, that  
 " she should not forget to assure them, that, as her hus-  
 " band had made her regent during her children's minori-  
 " ty, she would do nothing in the administration without  
 " their advice and participation."

A. M.  
 3897, etc.  
 Ant. Christ.  
 197, etc.  
 from Jos.  
 lib. xiii.  
 c. 19. to the  
 end of lib.

After the reduction of Ragaba, Alexandra returned to Jerusalem in the manner that was prescribed, and in every thing else observed her husband's directions most punctually ; which succeeded so well, that the usual invectives against him were changed into encomiums. All deplored the loss of so violent a prince, and honoured his funeral with a more than ordinary pomp and solemnity ; all pitied the queen-dowager, and, in obedience to her husband's will, settled her in the supreme government of the nation.

Alexander, when he died, left behind him two sons, Hyrcanus and Aristobulus ; but the regency he invested in the queen, who indeed had the name of the government : but the administration was entirely in the power of the Pharisees. The first thing therefore that they did, was to have the decree of John Hyrcanus, against their traditional constitutions abolished ; next to release all the prisoners, and recal all the exiles that were concerned with them in the late civil wars ; and then to demand justice against all those by whose instigation and advice the eight hundred rebels above mentioned had been crucified.

The alterations and persecutions which the Pharisees occasion

To this purpose they exhibited articles against one Diogenes, a noted confidant of the late king's ; had him condemned and executed ; and proceeded in like manner against several others ; so that the late king's friends and adherents, seeing no end of these persecutions, went at length to the queen in a body, with Aristobulus her younger son at the head of them, to remonstrate against these proceedings. They had been old officers to the king, and had faithfully adhered to him in all his wars and difficulties ; and therefore they requested, that if no regard were to be had to their services, they might at least be permitted to depart the land, and seek their safety elsewhere, or else, to be out of the reach of their enemies, might be sent into the several garrisons of the kingdom : And to this last demand of theirs the queen consented.

The Jews happily delivered from their apprehensions of Tigranes's invading them.

In the mean time news was brought to Jerusalem, that Tigranes king of Armenia, with an army of five hundred

A. M.  
3897, &c.  
Ant. Chriſt.  
307, &c.  
from Joſ.  
l. b. xiii.  
c. 19. to the  
end of lib.  
xv.

thouſand men, had invaded Syria, and would ſin a ſhort time be in Judea. This put the queen, and all the Jews, into a terrible fright; and therefore they immediately diſpatched away ambaffadors, with preſents of great value, to court his friendſhip, and divert the ſtorm. The ambaffadors found him laying cloſe ſiege to Ptolemais, and when they were introduced, (for he was a man \* of great pride and ſtate), he commended their forwardneſs in applying to him, accepted their preſents, and aſſured them of his good inclinations. But the true reaſon of all this civility was, that Lucullus, the Roman general, in purſuit of Mithridates, had entered Armenia, and was putting the country under military contribution, which obliged Tigranes to return home, and ſo delivered the Jews from the apprehenſions of an invaſion from that quarter.

A. M.  
3935, &c.  
Ant. Chriſt.  
69, &c.

Alexandra  
makes Hyrcanus her  
ſucceſſor;  
but he is  
ſupplanted  
by Ariſto-  
bulus.

Alexandra, when ſhe was declared queen, made Hyrcanus high-prieſt, and left Ariſtobulus to lead a private life; but a private life was not agreeable to his aſpiring temper. As ſoon therefore as he perceived that the queen was ſick, and paſt all hopes of recovery, he privately in the night went out of Jeruſalem, attended only with one ſervant; and having viſited all the caſtles, in which, by his procurement, his father's friends had been placed in gariſon, in fifteen days time he ſecured to his intereſt twenty of theſe fortrefſes, and thereby in a manner made himſelf maſter of the reſt of the ſtrength of the kingdom; ſo that when his mother died, (which was not long after

\* This vain man aſſumed to himſelf the title of *King of kings*; and, to make this claim to it the better appear, having taken ſeveral petty princes priſoners in his wars with them, he made them wait on him as his domeſtic ſervants. He never went abroad but he had four of them to attend him; two running by him on one ſide of his horſe, and two on the other; and thus, in like manner, he was ſerved by ſome of them at his table, in his bed-chamber, and on all other occaſions, but more eſpecially when he gave audience to ambaffadors; for then, to make the greater oſtentation of his glory to foreign nations, he made all theſe captive kings, in the poſture and habit of ſervants, to range themſelves on each ſide of him. But, as proud as he was, when once he came to feel the power of the Roman arms, he was ſoon brought into ſuch a ſtate of mean and abjeſt humiliation, that when he appeared before Pompey, he plucked his crown or royal tiara from off his head, and caſt himſelf proſtrate on the ground before him; *Plutarch. in Lucullo et Pompeio.*

his

his departure from Jerusalem, though she had declared his brother Hyrcanus her successor, he nevertheless met him in the plains of Jericho: But as the two armies were going to engage, most of the forces of Hyrcanus deserted, and went over to Aristobulus, which obliged Hyrcanus to come to a treaty with his brother; in which it was agreed, that he should make a resignation of the crown and high-priesthood to Aristobulus, and submit to live quietly upon his own private fortune; which accordingly was ratified by public sanction.

Hyrcanus was a quiet and peaceable man, a lover of retirement and ease, and therefore his resignation of the crown was not so great a grievance to him, as it was to some about him. Among these Antipater †, the father of Herod, surnamed the *Great*, was the chief; who having persuaded Hyrcanus, that, while he continued in Judea, his life was in danger, and that he had no other choice left, but either to reign or die, advised him to make his escape to Aretas King of Arabia, and with him to stipulate for forces for the recovery of his kingdom. Hyrcanus

A. M.  
3935, etc.  
Ant. Christ.  
69, etc.  
from Jos.  
lib. x.ii.  
c. 19. to the  
end of lib.  
xv.

Hyrcanus  
assisted by  
Aretas, ce-  
lebrates Ari-  
stobulus,  
and they  
both appeal  
to Pompey.

† Eusebius and Julius Africanus tell us, that the father of this Antipater was an Heathen, and an inhabitant of Ascalon; that a company of robbers having pillaged a temple near Ascalon, took this young Antipater, the father of Herod the Great, who, at that time, was the priest of the temple, away with them; and that his father, being not able to redeem him, they carried him into Idumæa, where he settled, and made his fortune. But there is much more probability, that what Josephus, in the history of the Jewish wars, lib. i. c. 5. tells us of this great man may be true, viz. that he was the son of another Antipater, who was made governour of Idumæa by Alexander Jannæus; and as to his religion, there is no question to be made, but that he was a Jew and circumcised; because the Idumeans had, long before, received circumcision and the religion of the Jews, even when Hyrcanus made a conquest of their country. This Antipater, having had his education in the court of Alexander Jannæus, and Alexandra his queen, who reigned after him, had wrought himself into the good graces of Hyrcanus, the eldest of their sons, in hopes to rise by his favour, when he should come to the crown after his mother; but when Hyrcanus was deposed, and Aristobulus made king in his place, all the measures he had taken for his advancement were broken; and being too obnoxious to Aristobulus ever to have any prospect of favour from him, he thought himself obliged, both in his own interest and defence to act the part we find he did; *Cabinet's Dictionary*, under the word; and *Prideaux's Connection*, anno 65.

A. M.  
3935, &c.  
Ant. Chris.  
69, &c.  
from Jos.  
lib. xiii.  
c. 19. to the  
end of lib.  
of lib. xv.

canus did so; and upon condition that he would restore the towns, which his father Alexander had taken from him, Aretas supplied him with fifty thousand men, who being joined with the Jews that were of Hyrcanus's party, gave battle to Aristobulus, and having obtained a complete victory, pursued him to Jerusalem, and thence to the mount of the temple, where they besieged him, and committed some outrageous acts\*. In the mean time, Scaurus, One of Pompey's lieutenants, being come with a Roman army as far as Damascus, Aristobulus took care, with the promise of four hundred talents, to engage him on his side; so that he sent to Aretas to withdraw his forces from Jerusalem, and threatened him with the Roman arms in case of refusal. Hereupon Aretas was forced to raise the siege and march off: But in his retreat Aristobulus fell upon his rear, and destroyed about seven thousand of his men.

Not long after this Pompey himself came into Syria, and took up his residence at Damascus, where he was attended with ambassadors from several nations, and, among the rest, Hyrcanus and Aristobulus sent their deputies, desiring both his protection and determination of the controversy depending between them. But when Pompey had heard what they both had to say, he ordered that the two brothers should appear in person before him, that so he might be better able to enquire into the merits of the cause, and determine it in such a manner as justice should direct.

\* One barbarous action of this kind is thus related by Josephus.—At this time there was at Jerusalem, one Onias, a man of great reputation for the sanctity of his life, and who, by his prayers, had been thought to have once obtained rain from heaven in an extremity of drought. Upon a fond imagination therefore, that his curses would be as prevalent as his prayers, the besiegers brought him into the camp, and there pressed him to curse Aristobulus, and all that were with him. He opposed their request as long as he could; but at length, finding no rest from their importunities, he lifted up his hands to heaven, and, as he was standing in the midst of them, said, “O Lord God, Ruler of the universe, since both we, that stand here before thee, are thy people, and they that are besieged in the temple, are thy priests, I humbly beseech thee not to hear the prayers of either of them against the other.” Whereupon they who brought him thither, were so enraged against the good man, that they fell upon him, and stoned him to death; *Jewish Antiq. lib. xiv. c. 3.*

The two brothers accordingly waited upon Pompey to receive his decision; and, at the same time, several chief men of the Jews came to remonstrate against them both. The Jews pleaded, "That it had been formerly the usage of their nation to be governed by the high-priest of the God whom they worshipped, who, without assuming any other title, administered justice to them, according to the laws and constitutions transmitted down to them from their forefathers. They owned indeed, that the two contending brothers were of the sacerdotal race, but then they alledged, that they had changed the old, and introduced a new form of government, in order to enslave the people, and thereupon they prayed that they might not be governed by a king."

Hyrcanus on his part urged, "That, being the elder brother, he was unjustly deprived of his birthright by Aristobulus, who leaving him only a small portion of land for his subsistence, had usurped all the rest, and, as a man born for mischief, practised piracy at sea, and rapine and depredation at land, upon his neighbours." And for the attestation of all this, there appeared above a thousand of the principal Jews. What Aristobulus had to say, in answer to this, was, "That Hyrcanus was superseded in the government, by reason of his incapacity to rule, and not through any ambition of his; that his sloth and inactivity had brought upon him the contempt of the people, and that therefore he was forced to interpose, merely to preserve the government from falling into other hands." And, to witness the truth of this, he produced several young gentlemen of the nation, who, by the gaudiness of their dress, and the levity of their carriage, did no great credit to the cause which they pretended to support.

Upon this hearing Pompey could not but perceive the injury which Aristobulus had done his brother; but for the present he dismissed them with fair words, and referred the full determination of the matter, until himself should come to Jerusalem, which he would not fail to do, as soon as he had finished the Arabian war. Upon the whole, Aristobulus perceiving which way Pompey's discourse and inclinations tended, left Damascus without ever taking leave, and, returning to Judea, there armed the country in his defence. Pompey had soon done his business in Arabia, and thence coming to Judea, found, that, upon his approach, Aristobulus had shut himself up in the castle of

A. M. 3935, etc.  
Ant. Christ.  
69, etc.  
from Jos.  
lib. xiii.  
c. 19. to the  
end of lib.  
xv.  
Their  
pleadings  
on both  
sides.

Aristobulus  
takes up  
arms against  
Pompey,  
who con-  
quers Jeru-  
salem, and  
restores  
Hyrcanus.



A. M.  
3935, etc.  
Ant. Christ.  
69, etc.  
from Jos.  
lib. xiii.  
c. 19. to the  
end of lib.  
xv.

of Alexandrion, which was a strong fortress, built by his father (and therefore called by this name); on an high mountain that stood in the entrance of the country of Judea, towards the Samaritan side. Hither Pompey marched his army; and, having encamped before it, sent a messenger to Aristobulus to come down to him. Aristobulus, though with much reluctance, was forced to comply; and when Pompey demanded of him to deliver up his castles, and to sign orders to that purpose to all who commanded in them, he durst not refuse doing it, though he complained of the force that was thus put on him; and, as soon as he got out of Pompey's hands, fled to Jerusalem, and there prepared for war.

Pompey was not long before he marched after him; but when he drew near to Jerusalem, Aristobulus † repenting of what he had done, went out to him, and endeavouring to reconcile matters with him, promised an entire submission for the future, and a considerable sum of money besides, if he would but withdraw his forces. Pompey accepted the proposal; and accordingly sent Gabinius, one of his lieutenants, with a body of men, to receive the money; but, when he came to Jerusalem, he found the gates shut against him, and was told from the walls, that those within would stand to no such agreement.

This was such treatment, that the Roman general, without any more to do, clapped Aristobulus (whom he had taken with him) in chains, and so marching forward with his whole army, was, by the prevalence of Hyrcanus's party, received into Jerusalem; but the other faction, retiring to the mount of the temple, broke down the bridges over the deep ditches and valleys that surrounded it, and so resolved to defend the place: But there was no withstanding a Roman army long. In three months time Pom-

† The fourth book of Maccabees (chap. xxxvi.), says nothing of this submission of Aristobulus to the Roman general, but tells us, that Pompey marched directly against Jerusalem, were observing the situation of the place, the strength of its walls, towers, &c. he resolved to try to gain Aristobulus by fair means; that he invited him to come into his camp, and promised him all the safety that he could desire; that accordingly he came to him, and engaged to deliver up all the treasure of the temple, if he would but declare for him; but that the priests having refused to ratify the king's promise, this made the general lay siege to the temple; *Universal History, lib. ii. c. 11.*

pey † became master of the mount, which he carried sword in hand; and, having made a dreadful carnage upon this occasion, he caused afterwards all such prisoners † to be put to death, as were found to have been the principal incendiaries of this war.

A. M.  
3935, &c.  
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69, &c.  
from Jos.  
lib. xiii.  
c. 19. to the  
end of lib.  
xv.

Before he left Jerusalem, he, with several other chief officers accompanying him, went into the temple, and caused the most sacred parts of it, even the holy of holies, (into which himself entered), to be opened. He visited the treasuries likewise, where he found two thousand talents of silver, besides vessels and other things of great value; but \* touching nothing of all this, he left it entire for the sacred uses to which it was appropriated. He thought it adviseable, however, to destroy the walls of Jerusalem; and though he restored Hyrcanus to the high-priesthood,

† It is supposed by Josephus, that the mount of the temple would have hardly been taken so soon by the Romans, had it not been for the superstition of the Jews in their observation of the Sabbath. For though they now held it lawful to defend themselves vigorously on that day, yet they would not stir an hand to annoy the enemy, or obstruct them in any of their works. This Pompey observing, ordered his men to employ the Sabbath-day in nothing else but in making their approaches, wherein the besieged giving them no molestation, their engines of battery were brought forward, and without opposition placed just as they pleased; and so being fitted, and raised to advantage, soon made a breach in the wall large enough for an assault; *Josephus De bello Jud. lib. i. c. 5.*

† Among these, it is supposed, that Absalom, a younger son of the famous John Hyrcanus, suffered; he had lived a private life, without meddling with public affairs, under the protection of his brother Alexander Jannæus; but having unhappily married his daughter to his nephew Aristobulus, he was, by that means, drawn into his son-in-law's party, and being taken prisoner, in all probability was put to death; because from that time we find no further mention made of him; *Joseph. Antiq. lib. xiv. c. 8.*; and *Universal History*.

\* But though Pompey was thus modest, yet Crassus soon after, coming that way, not only extorted the two thousand talents, and a large bar of gold, by way of bribe, to restrain him from farther plunder, but, contrary to the promise which he had given upon oath, ransacked the temple all over, and robbed it of every thing that he thought worth taking away, insomuch, that the whole of his sacrilegious plunder amounted to the value of ten thousand talents, which is above two millions of our money; *Joseph. Antiq. lib. xiv. c. 12.*; et *De bello, lib. i. c. 6.*

and

A. M.  
3935, &c.  
Anc. Chris.  
69, &c.  
from Jos.  
lib. xiii.  
- 19. to the  
end of lib.  
xv.

He attempts  
to raise  
fresh dis-  
turbances,  
but is pre-  
vented by  
poison at  
Rome.

and made him prince of the country, yet he deprived him of all the new conquests which his predecessors had made would not permit him to wear a diadem; and obliged him to pay an annual tribute to the Romans: And having thus regulated all matters, he set forward on his journey home, carrying with him Aristobulus, his two sons, Alexander and Antigonus, and two of his daughters, as captives, to be led before him in his triumph.

Alexander, by the way, found means to make his escape; and, after three years, returning into Judea, gathered forces, and possessed himself of several places; but Gabinius, the Roman governor in Syria, defeated him in all his attempts, and then coming to Jerusalem, confirmed Hyrcanus in the priesthood; but the civil administration † he took from the Sanhedrim, and

† Before this, the government had been managed, under the prince, by two sorts of councils, or courts of justice; one consisting of twenty-three persons, called the *lesser Sanhedrim*; and the other, of seventy-two, called the *greater Sanhedrim*. Of the first sort there was one in every city; only in Jerusalem (because of the greatness of the place) there were two, which sat apart from each other in two distinct rooms. Of the later sort there was only one in the whole land. The lesser Sanhedrim dispatched all affairs of justice arising within the respective cities where they sat, and the precincts belonging to them. The great Sanhedrim presided over the affairs of the whole nation, received appeals from the lesser Sanhedrims, interpreted the laws, and, by new institutions from time to time, regulated the execution of them. All this Gabinius abolished; and instead thereof, erected five courts, or Sanhedrims, and invested them all with sovereign power, independent on each other. The first of them he placed at Jerusalem; the second at Jericho; the third at Gadara; the fourth at Amathus; the fifth at Sephoris; and having, under these five cities, divided the land into five provinces, he ordered the inhabitants of each to repair to the court which he had there erected, and from which there was no appeal, except it was to Rome. Besides the two sorts of Sanhedrims above mentioned, there was a third court among the Jews, which was not affected by any of these alterations, and that was the Court of Three, instituted for the deciding all controversies about bargains, sales, contracts, and all other such matters of common right between man and man. In all which cases, one of the litigants chose one judge, and the other another, and these two chose a third, which three constituted a court to hear, and ultimately determine the matter in contest; *Talmud in Sanhedrim; Lightfoot's prospect of the temple, chap. xx. and xxii.; Joseph. Antiq. lib. xiv. c. 10.*

put

put into the hands of such magistrates as himself made choice of ; and having divided the whole land into five provinces, appointed a court of justice (with power ultimately to determine every thing) over each of them. Aristobulus, late king of Judea, after he had been five years a prisoner at Rome, having with his son Antigonus made his escape, returned to Judea, and with some few forces, which he had got together, was endeavouring to raise fresh troubles. But Gabinius came upon him before he was prepared to make a sufficient resistance ; and having taken him and his son prisoners, sent them both again to Rome, where his father was kept in durance ; but his children, upon the intercession of Gabinius, were immediately sent back to Judea.

A. M. 3935, &c.  
Ant. Christ. 69, &c.  
from Jos. lib. xiii. c. 19. to the end of lib. xv.

Not long after this, the difference between Cæsar and Pompey occasioned a distraction in the Roman affairs, and a general contention all the empire over. Pompey had left some forces in Syria ; and Cæsar, to oppose against these, had set Aristobulus at liberty, and proposed to have sent him with two legions into Judea, in order to secure that province : But before he could get out of Rome, he was poisoned by some of Pompey's party, and his body remained a long time there embalmed in honey, till M. Anthony procured it to be carried into Judea, where it was honourably interred in the royal sepulchre.

When Cæsar returned from the Alexandrian war, Antigonus, the second son of Aristobulus, (for Scipio, by Pompey's order, had caused his elder brother's head to be struck off at Antioch), met him in Syria, and having complained of the hard fate which his father and brother had met with, he charged Hyrcanus and Antipater with having possessed themselves of the government by force ; but Antipater, who was then with Cæsar, defended his own and Hyrcanus's cause so very well, that Cæsar, instead of restoring Antigonus, as he desired, made it a † decree, that

Hyrcanus confirmed in the government of Judea by Julius Cæsar.

Hyrcanus

† This decree, which at once abolished the aristocracy which Gabinius had lately set up, and restored the Jewish state to its pristine sovereignty, (according to Josephus), runs in this form : “ Julius Cæsar, Emperor, the second time Dictator, and Pontifex Maximus, &c. Forasmuch as Hyrcanus, the son of Alexander, a Jew, has, at all times, as well in war as peace, approved himself to be our good and trusty friend and ally, as appeareth by

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4 A

“ several

A. M. 3935, etc.  
Ant. Chriſt.  
69, etc.  
from Joſ.  
lib. xiii. c.  
19. to the  
end of lib.  
xv.

Hyrchanus ſhould hold the office of high-prieſt at Jeruſalem, and the principality of Judea with it to him, and thoſe of his family, in a perpetual ſucceſſion ; (by which he reſtored the government to its ancient form, and aboliſhed the ariſtocracy which Gabinus had inſtituted), and that Antipater ſhould be the procurator of Judea under him.

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Herod's in-
ſolent car-
riage and
aſſumption
of power.

This Antipater, who was a perſon of great wiſdom, of powerful intereſt in ſeveral places, and in high favour with the Romans, had two ſons, Phafael and Herod ; to the former of which he gave the government of the country about Jeruſalem, and to the other that of Galilee. Phafael behaved himſelf, in his adminiſtration, with great lenity ; but Herod was a man of a different character, and his boiſterous temper made him leſs acceptable to the Jews.

At this time there was a gang of thieves that infeſted Galilee, and the neighbouring parts of Cœlo-Syria, whom Herod fell upon, and having taken one Hezekiah their ring-leader, with ſeveral of his aſſociates, put them all to death. Thoſe who envied the proſperity of Antipater, and the growth and greatneſs of his power, made this an handle to accuſe Herod to Hyrchanus for executing men without a legal trial, and obtained a citation from him to ſummon Herod to anſwer for it before the Sanhedrim. He came ; but as he made his appearance in a purple robe, and ſurrounded with his guards, he ſo overawed that great council, that they all ſat ſilent without ſaying a word againſt him, until Simeas, a man of great juſtice and integrity, roſe up, and with a becoming preſence of mind, complained, that he never ſaw a criminal appear in a court of juſtice ſo attended ; that he looked as if it meant to make

“ ſeveral atteſtations of unqueſtionable credit, &c. Theſe ſervices
“ and good offices duly conſidered, I do hereby confirm and eſta-
“ bliſh to him and his heirs, the perpetual government of the Jews,
“ both as their prince and high-prieſt, after the manner and me-
“ thod of their own laws ; and from this day forward, enrol them
“ among the number of my truſty and well beloved friends, and
“ ratify any affinity with them as my aſſociates. I ordain likewiſe,
“ that all the legal pontifical rights and privileges be devolved up-
“ on him, and his ſons for ever ; and that in caſe any controver-
“ ſy ſhall ariſe among the people concerning the Jewiſh diſcipline,
“ himſelf and his family, in the courſe of ſucceſſion, ſhall be the
“ only judges of it ;” *Antiq. lib. xiv. c. 17.*

the administration thereof more dangerous to the judges, than the malefactor : “ But this, (says he, turning to the “ high-priest), is not so much to be imputed to his insolence, as to your connivance, which encourages it : Yet “ know, (continued he), that his person whom you screen “ from the justice of the laws, will be a scourge to you all.” Nor was he in this a false prophet.

A. M.
3935 etc.
Ant. Christ.
69, etc.
from Jos.
lib. xiii. c.
19. to the
end of lib.
xv.

For Herod having, by the persuasion of the high-priest, for fear that the sentence of the Sanhedrim should pass against him, made his escape from Jerusalem, and retired to Damascus, where Sextus Cæsar, the præfect of Syria, then resided, and put himself under his protection, he so far insinuated himself with him, that for a sum of money, with which he presented him, he obtained the government of Cœlo-Syria, where he soon raised an army, and marched it into Judea, with an intent to have deposed Hyrcanus, and cut off the whole Sanhedrim for the indignity they had put upon him by their late process ; but his father Antipater, and his brother Phasael, met him, and dissuaded him from it ; so that, for the present, he dropped his resentment.

As long as Julius Cæsar lived, the Jews were held in great honour and esteem by the Romans, and had several decrees passed in their favour : But † after his untimely death,

Antipater
poisoned
by Malice
but his
death re-
venged by
his sons.

† While Julius Cæsar was preparing for an expedition against the Parthians, in order to revenge the death of Crassus, and the Romans that were slain with him at the battle of Carrhæ, on the ides of March, *i. e.* on the fifteenth day of that month, four days before he intended to set out upon that expedition, he was murdered in the senate-house by a conspiracy of the senators. This was a most villainous act, and the more so, because the prime authors of it, viz. Marcus Brutus, Decimus Brutus, Cassius, Trebonius, and some others of them, were the very persons whom Cæsar, in the highest manner, had obliged ; yet it was executed under the notion of an high heroic virtue, in thus freeing their country from one whom they called a tyrant ; and the manner in which it was executed, is this :—As soon as he came into the senate-house, Attilius Cimber, who was one of the conspirators, presented himself (according as it was agreed among them) to demand his brother's pardon, who was banished ; but upon Cæsar's refusal, under pretence of begging it with greater submission, laid hold of the bottom of his robe, and pulled him so hard, that he made him bend his back : Then Casca drew his dagger, and stabbed him in the shoulder, but the wound

A. M.
3935, etc.
Ant. Christ.
69, etc.
from Jos.
lib. xiii. c.
19. to the
end of lib.
xv.

death, their country became a prey to every hungry general of Rome. Cassius, having made himself master of Syria, exacted of the Jews above seven hundred talents of silver, which Antipater prevailed with his two sons to pay him, and so preserved himself the longer in the government of Judea. He was (as we said) procurator of the province under Hyrcanus; and the next man to him in power and authority was Malicus: But not being contented to be the second man next the prince, he would fain have been the first; especially since he was a natural Jew, and Antipater but an Idumean. Antipater had all along been his fast friend, and upon more occasions than one, saved his life: But he, like an ungrateful wretch, was continually laying plots against him; and, at length, taking the opportunity of his dining one day with Hyrcanus, he bribed the butler to give him poison in his wine, of which he died, and then, with an armed force, seized on the government of Jerusalem. Phasaël and Herod had, for a long time, suspected this traitor's design against their father, and when they heard of his death, they concluded that he was the author of it. They thought proper however to conceal their resentment for the present; but as soon as Herod found a fit opportunity, * he had him taken off.

No

proved but slight, so that Cæsar fell upon him; but as they were scuffling, another of the conspirators came behind, and stabbed him in the side. Cassius, at the same time, wounded him in the face, and Brutus pierced his thigh. With much courage he still defended himself; but the blood he lost thro' so many wounds having much weakened him, he went to the foot of Pompey's statue, where he fell and expired, after having been stabbed in three and twenty places, by the hands of those whom he thought he had disarmed by his good offices; *Prideaux's Connect. anno 44.*; and *Vertot's Revolutions of Rome, c. 13.*

* The matter was conducted thus:—Cassius being informed by Herod of the manner of his father's death, gave him leave to revenge himself on the murderer, and sent his orders to the forces, under his command at Tyre, to be assistant to him therein. On Cassius's taking Laodicea, all the princes and chief lords of Syria and Palestine hastened thither with their presents and congratulations. Hyrcanus, together with Malicus and Herod, put himself upon the road for the same purpose; and as they drew near to Tyre, where they were to lodge that night, Herod invited all the company to sup with him; and sending his servants before, under pretence of providing the supper by them, he communicated the orders of Cassius to the commanders of the Roman garrison in the city, who accordingly

sent

No sooner was the death of Malicus, and the manner of it known at Jerusalem, but a party of his friends rose in arms to revenge it on the sons of Antipater; and having gained Hyrcanus, and Fœlix the commander of the Roman forces on their side, put the whole city in an uproar. Herod was then with Fabius, the Roman governour of Damascus, and there laid up with sickness; so that the whole storm fell upon Phasaël, which he weathered with full success: For he drove Fœlix, and all that tumultuous party out of Jerusalem, and when his brother recovered and returned, they both together soon quelled the faction, and would doubtless have resented the high-priest's behaviour upon this occasion with more severity, but that, at this time, a match was set on foot between Herod and his grand-daughter Mariamne †, which reconciled all differences. But though the faction was, for the present, suppressed, it was not long before it revived.

A. M. 3935, etc.
Ant. Christ.
69, etc.
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After the defeat of Brutus * and Cassius, by M. Anthony

The Jews
ny in a body
apply to
Anthony
against
them, but
are reject-
ed.

sent out a party of armed men, that fell upon Malicus, as he drew near to the place, and slew him; *Joseph. Antiq. lib. xiv. c. 10.*; and *De bello, lib. i. c. 9.*

† She was the daughter of Alexander, the son of King Aristobulus, by Alexandra the daughter of Hyrcanus the Second, and therefore was grand-daughter to both these brothers. She was a lady of extraordinary beauty and great virtue, and in all other laudable qualifications, accomplished beyond most of her time; but the true motive for Herod's desiring to make her his wife, was, because the Jews, at this time, had a very zealous affection for the Asmonæan family; and therefore he thought, that by marrying this lady, he should the easier reconcile the hearts of the people to him; *Prideaux's Connection, anno 38.*

* Philippi is a town of Macedonia, to the inhabitants of which St. Paul wrote his epistle; but what made this place the most remarkable, was the famous battle that was fought near it, between the army under Octavianus and Anthony, and that under Brutus and Cassius, consisting of near an hundred thousand men each. Brutus and Cassius both commanded in the action; but Octavianus being sick in his tent, the command of the other army fell wholly upon Anthony. The forces commanded by Cassius were soon repulsed, so that he retired to an hill, there to wait for an account of that party of the army which was commanded by Brutus: But in the confusion and dust, not being able to perceive what was doing, his mind misgave

A. M.
3935, etc.
Ant. Chris.
69, etc.
from Jos.
lib. viii. c.
29. to the
end of lib.
xv.

ny and Cæsar Octavianus † at Philippi, Anthony, coming into Asia, was attended by the deputies of most princes and states in that part of the world, and, among the others, with several principle persons of the Jewish nation, who were sent to accuse Phasael, and Herod, of usurping the government from Hyrcanus : But partly by money, and partly by interest, Herod had so far prevailed with Anthony, that he would not so much as hear them. This, however, did not discourage the Jews that were his enemies : For when Anthony came to Daphne near Antioch, an hundred of the most considerable among them waited upon him with the like complaints. Here Anthony gave them an hearing ; and when he put it to Hyrcanus, whether the two brothers, or their accusers, were, in his opinion, fittest to govern the state under him, he gave it for the two brothers ; and Anthony, being minded to do them a farther favour, made them both tetrarchs †, and committed all the affairs of Judea to their administration. This he confirm-
ed

misgave him that Brutus was overcome, and thereupon he commanded his servant Pindaras to cut off his head. Brutus, in the first day of action, was so successful, that he made the enemy retire, and took Octavianus's camp ; but in a few days after, coming to a second engagement, he was entirely routed ; and being loth to fall into the enemies hands, prevailed with his friend Strabo to dispatch him : And what is very remarkable in these two mens deaths is, that they were both killed with the same swords wherewith they had murdered Cæsar ; *Plutarch, De Bruto ; Valerius Paternulus, lib. ii. c. 70. ; Apion, De bellis civilibus, lib. iv. ; and Dion Cassius, lib. 47.*

† Octavianus was the son of Caius Octavius, by Atia the daughter of Julia, sister of Julius Cæsar ; and therefore Julius adopted him (as being his nephew, and next male relation) to be his son ; upon his uncle's death, he took upon him the name of Caius Julius Cæsar Octavianus, and by this name he was afterwards known, till that of Augustus, which was given after the victory at Actium swallowed up all the rest ; *Prideaux's Connection, anno 44.*

† This word, which sometimes occurs in Scripture, and is pretty frequent among the descendents of Herod the Great, according to the force of the Greek, signifies a lord that has the fourth part of a state, province, or kingdom, without wearing a diadem, or bearing the title of a king : But it must not always be understood in a rigorous sense, because the name of tetrarch was given to him that possessed sometimes an half, and sometimes a third part, of any principality ; nay, oftentimes the name of a king was given to him
that

ed by letters to the Jews; and to oblige them to obey what he had done, he detained fifteen of the hundred as hostages, and would have put them to death, had not Herod saved them by his intercession.

This notwithstanding, they did not still give over their sollicitation; but when Anthony came to Tyre, they sent a thousand of their principal men with the like accusations against the two brothers: But looking on this as a tumult, rather than an embassy, he directed his soldiers to fall upon them, so that some of them were slain, and more wounded; and at the same time, he sent a peremptory order to the magistrates to assist Herod in the recovery of his government. With this order Herod went to Jerusalem, and would have persuaded the people to receive him, by expostulating the danger of disobeying him, and provoking the Roman general; but instead of regarding his threats or advice, they fell upon him; and, by killing some, and wounding others of his attendants, so enraged Anthony against them, that he ordered their fifteen hostages to be put to death, and threatened a severe revenge against the rest.

In the mean time Antigonus, the son of Aristobulus, having had long before attempted to possess himself of Judea, but being defeated, and expelled by Herod, fled to Parthia, and was there kindly received and protected. After he had been there some time, and established an interest among the most considerable persons of that nation, he promised them a thousand talents, and five hundred of the finest women † in the country, if they would assist him in the recovery of his father's kingdom. The Parthians accepted of the proposal, and the king sent his general along with Antigonus, at the head of a powerful army, to invade Judea. As soon as they were entered the country, great numbers of the Jews joined them in their march; and when they came to Jerusalem, the faction that hated

that was but a tetrarch, and that of a kingdom, to a tetrarchy; *Calmet's Dictionary*, under the word.

† The fourth book of Maccabees (chap. 49) says eight hundred women, the fairest and best bred in all the country: But Josephus adds, that Antigonus was not able to make good his contract, by reason that Herod had seized on most of the fine women, and sent them away with his wife and family to Massada, a place of safe retreat, whilst himself staid behind with his guards, to cover their march, and prevent their being pursued.

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A. M.
3935. &c.
Ant. Chris.
69, &c.
from Jos.
lib. xiii. c.
19. to the
end of lib.
xv.



A. M.
3935, etc.
Ant. Chris.
69, &c.
from Jos.
lib. xiii. c.
19. to the
end of lib.
xi.

the two brothers, declared for them : So that Herod, not being able to defend the city, especially after he found that Hyrcanus, and his brother Phasaël were taken by the Parthians, and put in chains, made his escape by night ; and, taking his mother Cyprós, and his sister Salome, Mariamne his bride, and Alexandria the mother of Mariamne with him, made the best of his way to Massada, a prodigious strong fortress, built on the top of a very high-mountain, near the west side of the lake Asphaltites; and having furnished it with provisions for several months, he there left his mother, and the other women of quality, whom he had brought with him from Jerusalem, under the care and government of Joseph, another of his brothers, and so took his way to Petra in Arabia, hoping to procure some assistance from Malchus, who had succeeded Aretas, as king of that country : But before he reached Petra, he received a message from Malchus, desiring him to depart his dominions, because he was afraid he should offend the Parthians, who were his neighbours, if he should receive him.

The Parthians, when they found that Herod was gone from Jerusalem, after they had plundered the place, and the country round about, made Antigonus (as they had agreed) king of Judea, and delivered to him Hyrcanus, and Phasaël in chains. Phasaël knowing that his death was determined, put a voluntary end to his life and sufferings. For not having the liberty of his hands to dispatch himself, he beat out his brains against the wall of the prison, and Hyrcanus (to (b) incapacitate him from being any longer high-priest) had his ears cut off, and was then delivered back again to the Parthians, by them to be carried into the east, who, upon their return, left him at Seleucia.

Herod goes
to Rome,
and by the
means of
Anthony
and Augu-
stus obtains
from the
senate a
grant of the
kingdom of
Judea.

Herod, having met with this unworthy treatment in Arabia, made what haste he could into Egypt; but when he came to Rinocorura, he there was informed of his brother's death, and in what manner he had effected it; from thence he went to Pelusium, and so to Alexandria, where he took ship, and after a voyage of no small danger and difficulty, landed at Brundisium, from whence he proceeded to Rome; and having acquainted M. Anthony with the miserable state of his affairs in Judea, he most earnestly prayed his aid.

(b) Lev. xxi. 18. ---24.

Anthony

Anthony, remembering his friendship which he had with his father first, and afterwards with him, and being exasperated against Antigonus, whom he always looked upon as an enemy to the Roman people, and not a little affected with the promises which Herod had made, of giving him a large sum of money if ever he should be reinstated; not only warmly espoused his cause himself, but engaged likewise Octavianus (who was afterwards called *Augustus*) so closely in his interest, that, by the help and influence of those two men, the senate unanimously decreed, that Herod should be king of Judea, and Antigonus declared an enemy to the commonwealth. Having in the short space of seven days dispatched his affairs thus prosperously, he left Rome, and landing at Ptolemais, began to raise forces, with a design to march against Antigonus, who, ever since his departure, had besieged the fortress of Massada. With these, and such Roman auxiliaries as he received from Ventidius, Anthony's generals and Silo his lieutenant in Palestine, he made himself master of the greatest part of the country, took Joppa, relieved Massada, and, taking the castle of Ressa in his way, marched directly to Jerusalem, and there incamped on the west side of the city. Antigonus had provided the place with all warlike munitions, and a good garrison, which, with darts and stones from the walls, and flying parties frequently making excursions, very much infested Herod's army. Herod, in hopes of making easy work of it, sent an herald about the walls, to proclaim indemnity to all that would submit. Antigonus, on the contrary, directing his speech to Silo and the Romans, complained of the injustice they did him, in transferring the crown from him, who was of royal descent, to a plebeian, and half Jew, as Herod was: And from these, and such like reproaches on both sides, they came at length to acts of hostility, wherein Antigonus and his men behaved themselves so valiantly, that they soon drove the enemy from the walls.

Ventidius, indeed, had left Silo in Judea, to be assistant to Herod in the reduction of Jerusalem; but in his manner of managing the war (which was, to get great sums from Herod to promote his interest, and greater from Antigonus to hinder it) he did him more harm than good; For he did not only take all methods to squeeze him, but encouraged his soldiers likewise to mutiny, on pretence of

A. M.
3935, etc.
Ant. Chris.
69, etc.
from Jos.
lib. xiii. c.
19. to the
end of lib.
15.

But is opposed by Antigonus, and but badly assisted by the Romans.

A. M. wanting forage and provisions, more commodious quarters,
 3935, etc. and better pay; which, when at any time Herod endea-
 Ant. Christ. voured to remedy, Antigonus, having notice of all that
 69, etc. passed, with flying parties and ambuscades, frequently in-
 from Jos. tercepted and cut off the convoys that were designed for
 lib. xiii. c. the united army: Though Herod, who was as active and
 19. to the diligent as the enemy, very often came up with them, and
 end of lib. pursued his advantage so closely, that, having with some
 15. difficulty recovered all Galilee from Antigonus, he, after
 that, betook himself to rid it of those gangs * of thieves
 and banditti, which at that time very much infested it.

All this while the siege of Jerusalem went on but slowly; and Herod, perceiving that the Roman generals were very cool to his interest, was resolved to go again to Anthony, (who was then besieging Samosata, a city upon the Euphrates), to make a representation of their behaviour. During his absence, he left his brother Joseph to command in Judea, giving strict orders to put nothing to the hazard until his return; but Joseph, forgetting this, ventured upon an expedition against Jericho, where, being circumvented by the enemy, he was slain himself, and most of his forces cut to pieces; which gave those that were disaffected to Herod, both in Galilee and Idumæa, an opportunity of revolting. Anthony, when he heard that Herod was coming, drew out his army to receive him, and, while he staid with him, shewed him all the marks of friendship and esteem: But, designing himself to go to Egypt †, he left the army with Socius, ordering him to assist Herod upon

* These thieves had so sheltered themselves in the caves, and holes of the mountains, that it was no easy matter to come at them, because the steepness and cragginess of the mountains made it almost impossible, either to scale them from below, or from above to get down to them by any passage; and therefore (to ferret them out of their dens) Herod was forced to make certain large chells, and, filling them with soldiers, to let them down into the entrances of these caves by chains from engines which he had fixed above; by which means, he either destroyed all that lurked in them, or else reduced them to terms of submission; *Joseph. Antiq. lib. 14.*

† Where Cleopatra, at this time, was queen; who, by the charms of her beauty and wit, had drawn him into those snares which held him enslaved to her as long as he lived, and, in the end, caused his ruin. She was a woman of great parts, and spake sever-

upon all occasions; and he accordingly gave him two legions for the guard of his person, and marched after himself with the rest of the forces.

Upon his return from Anthony, Herod, while he was at Daphne, had an account of his brother's death and defeat, which made him hasten to mount Lebanon, where he raised eight hundred of the natives, and with these and the Roman forces came to Ptolemais, and thence marching by night, he passed through Galilee, subdued all that came in his way, and forced the rest into their strong holds. But while he was hastening towards Jericho, with an intent to avenge his brother Joseph's death, a party of six thousand of the enemy came resolutely down the hills, and put the Romans into great consternation, beating back the van-guard, and pursuing them home to their camp, where they so warmly engaged them, that Herod himself was wounded in the conflict: But, not long after, when Antigonus, flushed with this success, had sent Pappus his general, with the main strength of his forces against him, he gave them an entire defeat, slew Pappus in the rout, and (had it not been for the severity of the winter, which was now approaching) had gone immediately to Jerusalem, and so made an end of the war: But that he was forced to refer to the operations of the next campaign.

When Herod came before Jerusalem, his own army consisted of about thirty thousand, to which Socius brought

A. M.
3935, etc.
Ant. Christ.
69, etc.
from Jos.
lib. xiii. c.
19. to the
end of lit.
15.

Herod besieges Jerusalem, takes Antigonus prisoner, and prevails with Anthony to have him put to death.

ral languages (as well as Latin and Greek) very fluently; but then she was a person of great vices, and (among others) of such insatiable avarice and ambition, that she made a conscience of nothing if she could but get by it. Her brother, a youth of about fifteen years of age, she caused to be dispatched, and prevailed with Anthony to have her sister Arsinoë cut off at Ephesus, even in the temple of Diana. Anthony indeed was a man of a sweet temper, and great generosity, an eloquent speaker, and a complete master in all military abilities: But then, he was a great libertine in his way, and so eager in the pursuit of his unlawful pleasures, that he stuck at nothing to attain them; by which means he brought himself so absolutely under the command of this wicked and voluptuous woman, that (as Josephus expresses it) *she seems not only to have captivated, but bewitched him*; *Prideaux's Connection, anno 30. and Joseph. Antiq. lib. xv. c. 4.*

† It is generally thought, that a legion was composed of ten cohorts; a cohort, of fifty maniples; a maniple, of fifty men,

A. M.
3935, etc.
Ant. Chrif.
69, ecc.
from Jos.
lib. xiii, c.
19. to the
end of. lib.
15.

brought eleven legions of foot, and fix thousand horfe, befides the auxiliary troops of Syria. However the city held out feveral months with a great deal of refolution; but, at laft, the befieged being beaten out of all their places of defence, and the enemy exasperated at the length and tediousnefs of the fieve, all things were in the utmoft confufion. Rapine, and devaftation was the general work; and death and flaughter raged every where, without diftinction of age or fex. In vain did Herod endeavour to put a flop to this ravage and cruelty. “The fpoils of the city, he” was told, were the foldiers due, as a reward for their “labour and valour in taking it.” So that, with a large fum of money, he was forced to preferve and redeem it.

Antigonus, feeing all loft, furrendered himfelf to Socius, and, in a fubmiffive and abject manner, fell at his feet, imploring mercy: But Socius, infulting his meannefs of fpirit, and want of courage, had him put in chains; and fo leaving Herod in full poffeffion of the kingdom, took his prifoner along with him to Anthony. Anthony, at firft, intended to have referved Antigonus in order to grace his triumph; but Herod, not thinking himfelf fafe in his kingdom, as long as this remainder of the royal family continued alive, never left folliciting him, till at length, by a good fum of money, he obtained that this poor prince fhould be put to death; and, with him ended the reign of the famous and illuftrious houfe of the Afmonæans; (illuftrious in itfelf, for the long continuance of the regal and facerdotal fucceffion in it, and no lefs famous for the many fignal fervices which they and their anceftors, from time to time, had done the public), after it had lafted, from the beginning of Judas Maccabæus to this time, one hundred and twenty-nine years.

A. M.
3978, etc.
Ant. Chrif.
26, etc.

Here revenges
himfelf of
his enemies,
makes his
wife Mari-
anne’s bro-
ther, Arifto-
bulus, high-
prieff, and
gets Hyrcanus into his
power.

As foon as Herod had got full poffeffion of the kingdom of Judea, he began to revenge himfelf on all thofe whom he looked upon as his enemies; and, among thefe, put all the members of the great Sanhedrim to death, ex-

and confequently that a legion was a body of fix thousand foldiers; but others are clearly of opinion, that it was an uncertain number, and contained fometimes four, fometimes five, and fometimes fix thousand men; *Calmet’s Dictionary*, under the word; and *Pri-deaux’s Connection*, anno 37, in the notes.

cept

cept Pollio † and Simeas, who, during the siege, were all along for delivering up the city to Herod, whereas all the rest opposed the motion, and did what they could to excite the people to that fierce and obstinate resistance which they made. All this while Hyrcanus was captive in Parthia; and, as the people wanted an high-priest, Herod's business was to chuse a man of obscurity to that office, who, having no credit or interest at Jerusalem, might not be capable (notwithstanding his high station and dignity in

A. M.
5678, &c.
Aut. Christ.
26, &c.
from Jos.
lib. xiii. c.
19. to the
end of lib.
15.

† They are so named by Josephus; but the Jewish writers generally call them *Hillel* and *Shammai*; and of Hillel, in particular, they give us this account, *viz.* That he was born in Babylonia, and there lived till he was forty years old; that when he came to Jerusalem, he betook himself to the study of the law, in which he grew so eminent, that, after forty years more, he became president of the Sanhedrim, and that in this office he continued forty years after; so that, according to this account, he lived full an hundred and twenty years; but the Jewish writers, for the sake of a round number, are frequently negligent whether they are exact or not in their chronological computations. Of Shammai they likewise tell us, that he was for some time the scholar of Hillel, and upon the removal of Manahem into Herod's service, was made vice-president of the Sanhedrim in his room; and that of all the Tannaim or Mishnical doctors, he came nearest to his master in eminence of learning, though in many points he differed in opinion from him. What we are chiefly to observe in relation to these two men at present, is,—That Herod should thus generously forgive them both, though Shammai, or Simeas, was the person who appeared so intrepid against him at his trial before the Sanhedrim, and Hillel, or Pollio, had all along warmly espoused the party of Hyrcanus. It must be presumed, however, that these two great men, whom he not only spared above all the rest, but took into his especial favour and confidence, had, during the siege, taken care to make their peace with him, by exhorting the besieged to a surrender: For while the contrary faction was encouraging the people with crying out, *The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord!* and making them expect some miraculous deliverance, these two wise politicians, foreseeing that the city could not hold out much longer against against such a vigorous siege, and under the excessive want of all provisions, told them, in short, that all resistance was in vain, since God, for their sins, was now bringing them into subjection to this foreigner; and this piece of service (had Herod been of a more vindictive temper than he really was) could not well fail of reconciling them to his favour; *Prideaux's Connection, anno 37.*; and *Joseph. Antiq. lib. xv. c. 1.*

A. M.
3978, etc.
Ant. Chris.
26, etc.
from Jos.
lib. xiii. c.
19. to the
end of lib.
15.

the church) to interfere with the regal authority ; and, accordingly, he sent for one Ananel from Babylon, (who was of the pontifical family indeed, but of no farther merit, than that he was an acquaintance of Herod's), and put him into the office.

Mariamne, his best beloved wife, had then a brother, whose name was Aristobulus, to whom by right of birth the high-priesthood did belong ; and, as she was continually soliciting him in behalf of her brother, so her mother Alexandra, who was the daughter of Hyrcanus, and a woman of an high spirit, wrote to Cleopatra queen of Egypt, (who had an absolute ascendant over Anthony), to incline him to bestow the pontifical honour upon her son : So that for fear of offending Anthony, more than for gratifying of the ladies, he deposed Ananel †, and made Aristobulus (who was then but a youth of seventeen years old) high-priest in his stead.

When Phraortes came to be king of Parthia, and was informed of Hyrcanus's character and quality, he treated him with great courtesy : For he ordered him to be released from his chains, and allowed him to reside at Babylon, which was then part of the Parthian empire, and where a great number of Jews dwelt, who paid him both the reverence due to an high-priest, and the honour due to a king.

In this condition Hyrcanus might have lived, and ended his days very happily ; but, being desirous of returning to his native country, he began to entertain great hopes of Herod's friendship, as having been once the preserver of

† This is the third person that had been deposed from the pontifical dignity, since the time of the return from the Babylonish captivity ; and Herod was so sensible of the illegality of it, that when Anthony sent to desire him to put Aristobulus into Ananel's place, at first he excused himself, by alledging that such depositions were contrary to the Mosaic law, which enjoined, that the dignity should last as long as the life of the possessor, unless some defect happened to disqualify him. The first instance we meet with of this kind, is that of Jason's supplanting his brother Onias, and, by a larger sum of money, buying that office of Antiochus, in prejudice of the incumbent. The other was that of Hyrcanus, by his nephew Aristobulus, who wrested that dignity from him by main force. But these depositions became afterwards so frequent, that there was hardly any other way of coming into that office, but by the expulsion of the incumbent ; *Universal History, lib. ii. c. 11.*

his

his life, when he was arraigned before the Sanhedrim, and the founder indeed of all his fortunes. Herod, on the other hand, was as desirous to have Hyrcanus in his power, as the other was to come: And therefore, he not only invited him with great earnestness, and greater promises, but sent an embassy to Phraortes, to solicit his return. Thus having obtained the king's dismission, the unfortunate old prince was carried back to Jerusalem, and, for some time, treated by Herod with all the outward tokens of kindness and respect.

A. M.
3978, etc.
Ant. Christ.
26, etc.
from Jos.
lib. iii. c.
19. to the
end of lib.
15.

His daughter Alexandra, having, by her interest with Cleopatra, obtained the high-priesthood for her son, thought that (as it was his right) she might by the same means procure him the crown, and therefore went on intriguing with Cleopatra; which when Herod came to understand, he confined her to the palace, and set spies upon her. This she resented with great indignation, as being made a prisoner, and therefore formed a design to make her escape, and to carry her son with her into Egypt to Cleopatra, who, upon this occasion, had invited them thither. But the design was discovered, and their journey stopped. Herod, however, for fear of Cleopatra, was forced to suspend his resentment, and making a virtue of necessity, pretended, with great clemency, to pardon in both what he could not well punish in either: But in a short time he had his revenge.

At the approach of the feast of tabernacles, Aristobulus was to officiate as high-priest. He was a very beautiful person, tall and well shaped, and in the eighteenth year of his age. In the time of his officiating, he discharged himself with so becoming a reverence, and the splendour of the pontifical robes added such a lustre to the gracefulness of his person, that by both these he captivated the affections of the people, and every man's mouth was full of his praises; which raised the tyrant's jealousy to such a degree, that as soon as the festival was over, he had him drowned at Jericho †, though (to make his death pass for an un-

He causes Aristobulus to be drowned, confines Alexandra, and puts his uncle Joseph to death.

† Herod had invited him to an entertainment at Jericho, and when after dinner several of his attendants bathed themselves in a fish-pond, Aristobulus was prevailed upon to bear them company; but no sooner was he plunged into the water, but those that were in it before, (according as they were directed by Herod), ducked and dipped him (by way of sport and play, as they pretended) so long under water, that at length he was actually drowned; *Jewish Antiq. lib. xv. c. 3.*

happy

A. M. happy accident, wherein he had no hand) he acted the
 3978, &c.
 Ant. Christ. part of chief mourner, and expended a large sum in a
 26, etc. splendid funeral for him: But his hypocrisy was seen
 from Jos. through, and detested by all.

lib. xiii. c. Alexandra, in particular, was inconsolable for the loss
 19. to the of her son; nor could she have survived it, but for the
 end of lib. hopes of having an opportunity of being revenged. To
 15. this purpose, having acquainting Cleopatra with the murder, she so represented Herod's villainy, and her own distress, as moved the queen's compassion, and engaged her to do her utmost to revenge her cause: For she never left soliciting Anthony, till, at length, she prevailed with him to call Herod to an account for this wicked fact. But when Herod appeared before him, by fair words and large presents, he so effectually wrought upon Anthony, that instead of condemning, he seemed to vindicate him for what he had done: Whereupon, returning with much joy, and in triumph as it were over his accusers, he grew more tyrannical than ever, and in a short time shut up Alexandra in close confinement.

When he went to appear before Anthony, he left his uncle Joseph in the administration of the government, and gave him particular charge, that in case Anthony should put him to death, he should not suffer Mariamne, his best beloved wife, to survive the first news of it, that none, as he pretended †, might enjoy so rare a beauty but himself. In his absence, some words had passed between Mariamne and his sister Salome, wherein the queen reproached her with the meanness of her original, in comparison of the royal stock of the Asmonæans, from whom she descended. This the other was resolved to revenge; and therefore, as soon as Herod returned, she accused Mariamne of having too great a familiarity with Joseph, whom (though he was her own husband, as well as her uncle) she was

† This he did, not so much that none else might have the enjoyment of the beautiful Mariamne, as that none might be left alive of the Asmonæan family to claim the crown, in opposition to that disposal which he had made of it to his brother Pheroras. Alexandra, the mother of Mariamne, he knew very well was a crafty and aspiring woman; and therefore, being apprehensive that the scheme which he had laid for the succession, could not take place, if either she, or her daughter were left alive after him, he ordered that both of them should be put to death, in case he should miscarry in his application to Anthony; *Joseph. Antiq. lib. xv. c. 11.*

content

content to sacrifice, rather than not obtain her will upon the other. One thing that might contribute to the increase of Herod's jealousy, and the confirmation of what his sister had told him, was the fatal secret which Joseph had indiscreetly blabbed out, and Mariamne, in her passion, could not retain; for nothing less than an adulterous conversation, he thought, could have produced such a discovery: And therefore, when she upbraided him with it, he was going to draw his dagger, and strike her to the heart; but though his love interposed to save her, he ordered his uncle immediately to be executed, without allowing him leave so much as to speak for himself; which, when he came to know his innocence, and the queen's virtue, he could not but regret.

A. M.
3978, etc.
Ant. Christ.
26, etc.
from Jos.
lib. xiii.
c. 19: to the
end of lib.
xv.

While these things were thus going on in Judea, there happened a grievous breach * between Anthony and Octavianus, which terminated in a civil war, wherein Anthony at the battle of Actium, was quite ruined and undone. During the whole course of this war, Herod had always followed Anthony's party, and had therefore reason to fear, that the conquerour would deprive him of his kingdom for being so firm a friend to his enemy, and perhaps restore again Hyrcanus, who had once reigned under the protection of the Romans; and therefore, to prevent this, upon pretence of his holding correspondence with Malchus king of Arabia, in order to accomplish some treasonable

He executes
old Hyrcanus; secures
his wife and
her mother,
and so goes
to meet Augustus,

* Anthony had provoked Octavianus against him, by the wrong done to Octavia his sister, whom Anthony had married, and yet divorced her for the gratification of his adulterous love to Cleopatra, though Octavia was much the handsomer of the two. Anthony had likewise given out, that Cleopatra had been married to Julius Cæsar, and that Cæsarion, whom she had by him, was his lawful son, and consequently had the proper right to the inheritance, which Octavianus held only as his adopted son. These things were objected against Anthony; and Anthony, by his agents and letters, was not forgetful to recriminate. But these things were no more than pretences: The true reason of their disagreement was, that both these two great men, being not contented with half of the Roman empire, were each resolved to have all, and accordingly agreed to throw the die of war for it; *Plutarch De Antonio*; and *Prideaux's Connection*, anno 33.]

A. M.
3978, etc.
Ant. Chris.
26, etc.
from Jos.
lib. xiii.
c. 19. to the
end of lib.
xv.

designs against him, he * caused him to be put to death, after he had passed the eightieth year of his age. His wife Mariamne, and her mother, he secured in the castle of Alexandrion, with a strong guard, under the command of Sohemus, and with the same order that he had left with his uncle Joseph before; and having committed the government of the kingdom to the care of Pheroras, another of his brothers, he set forward on his journey to meet Octavianus.

who confirms him in the kingdom of Judea, but upon his return, he meets with family-uneasinesses.

Octavianus was then at Rhodes, where Herod, having obtained audience, as he entered into his presence, laid aside his diadem, and in his address to him, freely owned all that he had done for Anthony, and what he was farther ready to have done, had he required it of him. "This (he said) he thought himself obliged to, by the friendship that was between them; and would he be pleased to think the like friendship worthy of his acceptance, (since Anthony was now quite lost), he would not fail to serve him with the same zeal and fidelity." This Herod delivered with such an intrepidity, that Octavianus, pleased with the spirit of the man, caused him to put on his diadem again, accepted of his friendship, and confirmed him in the kingdom of Judea.

Pleased with this good success, Herod went back to Judea with great joy; but on his arrival, found all his felicity soured with the troubles of his own family. Mariamne, his most beloved wife, in whose conversation he took the greatest delight, having bribed the secret out of Sohemus, conceived thereupon such a strong hatred and aversion to him, that she refused his embraces with scorn, and concealing the true cause of her resentment, was perpetually upbraiding him with the murder of her nearest relations; so that, by this provoking treatment, his patience was almost quite worn out. Hearing however of the death of Anthony and Cleopatra, and how Octavius had thereupon made himself master of all Egypt, he thought himself obliged to wait on him there likewise.

* The character which Josephus gives of this prince is to this effect. — He was a man of eminent candour, justice, and moderation; but a lover of his ease, and so conscious to himself of his own insufficiency for the offices of public administration, that, for the most part, he intrusted that charge in other hands. This facility of his was the making of Antipater and Herod's fortune, though (without any colour of law or equity) it cost him his life; *Jewish Antiq. lib. xv. c. 9.*

He was received with great kindness, and having, in his return, accompanied him to Antioch, he so far ingratiated himself with him on the way, that he granted him several places in augmentation of his dominions, and, for ever after, of all the tributary princes in the Roman empire, gave him the first place in his favour. But how prosperous soever he was in his affairs abroad, when he returned, he found nothing but trouble and vexation at home. Mariamne still retained her resentment, for the cruel commission given to Sohemus; so that, when he offered her his caresses, she not only rejected them (as usual) with the utmost aversion, but added, over and above, such bitter reproaches for the death of her relations, as provoked and enraged him to so high a degree, that he could hardly forbear laying violent hands upon her. This fit of rage her implacable enemy Salome took the advantage of, and sent in his butler (whom she had before suborned for that purpose), to accuse the queen of having tempted him to give the king poison; whereupon he ordered her favourite eunuch, without whose privy he knew she did nothing, to be put upon the rack; but all that he confessed was, that something which Sohemus had told Mariamne, was the cause of her being out of humour.

Upon the hearing of this, Herod fell into a rage of jealousy; and, supposing that nothing but a criminal intimacy could have induced Sohemus to betray this secret to her, he ordered him immediately to be put to death; and then, calling together a council of his friends, and accusing her of an intention to take away his life, he had her condemned, but not with a design to have her put to death; but the malice of his mother and sister was so bitter against her, they would not let him be quiet. They knew very well his temper; and, being apprehensive, that as long as she was alive, he might easily relapse into his former fondness, they urged the necessity of her speedy execution, and had that influence over him, that he commanded her immediately to be put to death. But he soon repented him of his rashness. For, after that his rage was quenched by her blood, his love revived, and the consideration of what he had done filled his mind with the agonies of remorse, and the regret of her loss affected him so, that he fell dangerously ill; but, upon recovery, he nevertheless gave orders for the execution of Alexandra, for having too easily credited the news that was spread abroad of his death.

A. M.
3978, etc.
Ant. Christ.
26, etc.
from Jos.
lib. xiii.
c. 19. to the
end of lib.
xv.
Goes to Augustus again,
and when he
returns, puts
his wife
Mariamne
and her
mother to
death;

A. M.
3978, etc.
Ant. Christ.
26, etc.
from Jos.
lib. xiii.
c. 19, to the
end of lib.
xv.
and three
of his own
sons.

He had two sons of Mariamne, Alexander and Aristobulus, whom he had sent to Rome for the benefit of education; but, upon their return home, by the same instruments that had procured their mother's death, they fell under their father's displeasure. For having in the heat of their youth let fall many rash words, which expressed their repentment of their mother's hard usage, with threats of revenge upon those that had been the chief authors of it; all this was carried to their father, with such malicious glosses and comments upon it, as made him believe that they were hatching ill designs against his person. He was naturally of a jealous temper, and this was so improved by the artifices of Pheroras and Salome, his brother and sister, that, in a council which consisted of none but his own creatures, he procured their condemnation*, and so ordered them to be strangled: And it was upon the account of

* Josephus has represented this whole proceeding in this light. When Herod had complained to Augustus of the undutiful behaviour of his sons, how they had plotted against his life, and designed to have made their escape out of his dominions, Augustus advised him to call together a council at Berytus in Phœnicia, and so to inquire into the nature of their offences. This Herod accordingly did; but when he came into the assembly, (which consisted of an hundred and fifty persons), such as Augustus had directed him to, (except Archilaus, king of Cappadocia, who, being father-in-law to Alexander, was thought by Herod too much engaged by that relation, to be an impartial judge in this matter), he began to accuse his sons with great vehemence and passion, and, after having spoken in terms very unbecoming a father, he said, "That not only Augustus made him master of his sons destiny, but that the very laws of the Jews declared, That if a son was accused by his parents, and they put their hands upon his head, all who were present should stone him, and put him to death; and therefore, though he might treat his sons in this manner, after the crimes whereof they stood convicted, yet he chose rather to have their opinions upon the matter, not doubting but that they would join with him in giving an example to future ages, of that just severity which ought to be exercised upon unnatural children." Saturninus, a man of consular dignity, who was at the head of the council, was for punishing Alexander and Aristobulus, but not with death; and his three sons, who were present with him, concurred in the same opinion; but Volumnius pronounced that they were worthy of death, which the majority of the assembly too readily coming into, carried the question. On this occasion every one pitied the two princes, but no one durst speak

of their fate, and the execution of Antipater †, another of his sons after this, (who was, in reality, for procuring his father's death), that Octavianus (then called Augustus) was

A. M.
3978, etc.
Ant. Chris.
26, etc.
was from Jos.
lib. xiii.

Speak plainly, for fear of incurring the king's displeasure: But at last, an old soldier of the king's, who had a son about Alexander's age, and his particular friend, took the liberty to make some sharp remonstrances to the king, telling him withal, that not only the officers and soldiers, but the whole body of the people, were moved with compassion for the young princes, and pitied their sad fate. Whereupon the king, losing all patience, commanded the soldier and his son to be seized, and all besides whom he had named. When the old man was put upon the rack, he confessed that he had taken up a resolution to kill the king, and to expose himself, for the love of Alexander, to all sorts of punishment. This confession both enraged and intimidated Herod, so that he sent his sons immediately to Sebaſte, (formerly called *Samaria*), and there ordered them to be strangled. And thus ended the life of these two unfortunate brothers, who, by too much expressing their resentment for their mother's death, provoked those who had been the chief authors of it, by the like artifices, to procure theirs; *vid.* Josephus's reflection hereupon, *Joseph. Antiq. lib. xvi. c. 17.*

† This Antipater was Herod's eldest son by Doris, a woman of no quality, whilst himself was a private man; for which reason he kept him and his mother, for some time, at a distance from court: But when he began to take offence at Alexander and Aristobulus, his two sons by Mariamne, he thereupon treated him with a great deal of distinction, and, in a full assembly of the people, declared him his immediate heir to the crown. After the death of Mariamne's sons, he had nothing that stood in his way, but only the life of his father Herod: and, to get rid of him, he formed a conspiracy with his uncle Pheroras, (who, at this time, was in some disgrace with his brother the king), to have him poisoned: But, that there might be no suspicion of his being concerned in the thing, he procured some of his friends to send for him to Rome, (where he had been before under Agrippa's protection), on pretence of waiting upon Augustus. Herod, however, having found out the whole plot, wrote to his son, without giving him the least hint of it, to hasten his journey home, lest something should happen in his absence to his great disadvantage; whereupon he returned into Palestine, without the least suspicion of what had passed. When he came to Jerusalem, his friends who attended him were not permitted to enter the palace: and when he went to embrace the king, the king thrust him from him, upbraiding him with the murder of his brothers Alexander and Aristobulus, and with the parricide which he intended to have committed on his per-
son,

A. M.
4001, etc.
Ant. Christ.
1, etc.
2ut 2Er.
Vulgi 3.
from Jos.
lib. xiii.
c. 19. to the
end of lib.
xv.

was used to say, that it was better to be Herod's hog than his son.

But whatever opinion Augustus might have of Herod, it is certain that Herod had no small veneration for him, or at least, carried his compliments very far. For he not only built two stately cities, and called them both by his name *, but, in the very city of Jerusalem built a theatre and an amphitheatre, and, in honour of Augustus, celebrated games, and exhibited shows, which gave great disgust to the Jews, as things inconsistent with the legal constitutions and religion of their country. Nay, to such a degree of complaisance proceeded he, as not only to set up the Roman ensign † (which was the figure of an eagle) over

son, and whereof he accused him the next day, before Quintilius Varus, the governour of Syria. The proof was plain against him, that Antipater having nothing to say in his justification, was loaded with irons and put in prison. But while he was there, a false report being spread, that Herod was dead, he begged of his keeper to set him at liberty, and made him large promises if he would do it, which being brought to his father's ear, as weak as he was, (for he died in a few days after), he raised himself upon his elbow, and calling one of his guards, sent him that moment to dispatch his son; *Joseph. Antiq. lib. xii. c. 7. and 9.; et De bello, lib. i. c. 21.*

* The one was Sebaste, which signifies the same in Greek as Augustus does in Latin. It was situated on the same place where stood Samaria, which Hyrcanus had destroyed, and was in part rebuilt by Gabinius, when he was governour of Syria, and called after his name: But as he was soon turned out of his government, it advanced no farther than a good large village, until Herod (who from his stately structures was afterwards called *the Great*) undertook to finish it, and, in so doing, spared no cost to make it one of the richest and most beautiful cities in his kingdom.—The other was Cæsarea, so called in honour of the emperor, though its former appellation was *the tower of Straton*. It stood by the sea-side, on the coasts of Phœnicia, upon the pass into Egypt, and was very convenient for trade, but that it had a bad harbour. To remedy this, therefore, he ordered a mole to be made in the form of an half-moon, and large enough for a royal navy to ride in. The buildings of the town were all of marble, private houses as well as palaces; but the master-piece of all was the port, whereof we meet with a description in *Josephus's Antiq. lib. xv. c. 13.*

† This gave great offence to the Jews, because the Romans were known to pay divine honours to their ensigns, which they used to set up in some eminent place in their camp; according to that

over one of the gates of the temple, but even to raise a sumptuous temple all of white marble in memory of the favours which Augustus had conferred on him; though, by this act of idolatrous flattery, he alienated the hearts of the Jews, and raised some conspirators † against his life.

A. M.
4001, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1, &c.
aut. Æt.
Vul. 3.
from Jos.
lib. xiii.
c. 19. to the
end of lib.
xv.

To recover therefore their good opinion, and to make some amends for these breaches upon their law, in the nineteenth year of his reign, he formed a design of rebuilding the temple *, which, by length of time, (having

that known passage of Tertullian, “ Religio Romanorum tota castrensis, signa veneratur, signa jurat, signa omnibus Diis præponit.”

† There is a remarkable one of this kind, which is related by Josephus to this effect.—Ten citizens, taking offence at Herod’s bringing in the rites of heathenish superstition, entered into a conspiracy to cut him off by an assassination. One of these conspirators was blind, and though in no condition to act any thing for the public good, offered to bear his part in suffering for it, and, by this generous offer, settled them all in their determinations. They therefore provided themselves with daggers under their garments, and went to the theatre, where Herod was to come, with a full intent to slay him there. But, as he was entering the theatre, one of his spies (for he had great plenty of them) having got some notice of the matter, made a discovery of it to him; so that, returning to his palace, he sent for the conspirators, who were so far from denying their design, that they produced the very daggers that were to have done the execution, alledging for themselves, “ that they were not engaged in any criminal combination, to gratify their passions or interests, but in a secret league for the common good, and the defence of their laws, which all true patriots and professors were bound to maintain with their lives.” After this declaration they were hurried away to death, and made to undergo the most exquisite torments. But the infamous informer did not long survive them; for, having incurred the general odium of the people, he was met by some in a private place, and torn to pieces; *Jewish Antiq. lib. xv. c. 11.*

* Whatever some Jewish Rabbins may tell us, it is certain that the temple of Herod was widely different from that of Solomon, and from that which was built by Zerubbabel after the captivity; for the description of it, according to Josephus, who himself had seen it, is much to this purpose.—The front of this magnificent building, which resembled that of a royal palace, was adorned with many rich spoils, which the kings of the Jews had dedicated to God as the monuments of their victories. The middle of it, which was much higher than the two extremes, afforded a very agreeable prospect to the extent of several furlongs to those that either lived

A. M. 4001, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1, etc.
aut Ær.
Vulg. 3.
from Jos.
lib. xiii.
c. 19. to the
end of lib.
xv.

ving now stood five hundred years) as well as the violence of enemies, was in a very decayed and ruinous condition. In two years time he got together all proper materials,

in the country, or were travelling to the city. The gate of it was a very curious piece of workmanship. From the top of it hung a variety of rich tapestry, of several colours, embellished with purple flowers. On each side of it stood a stately pillar, with a golden vine creeping and twining about it, whose branches were laden with a cluster of grapes, that hung dangling down from the cornices. Round about the temple were large galleries, answerable to the rest of the work in magnificence, and in beauty much exceeding all that had been before. The temple was surrounded by three courts or inclosures. The first inclosure, which was a square of a furlong on every side, had a gate on the east, another on the south, and another on the north side; but it had four towards the west; one leading towards the palace, another into the city, and two more into the fields. It was secured without by a strong wall, and within was adorned with stately porticoes or galleries, sustained by no less than 162 columns of Corinthian work, and all so very thick, that hardly three men could grasp one with their arms. They supported a roof of cedar very curiously wrought, and made three galleries; the two outermost of which were of the same dimensions, *i. e.* thirty feet in breadth, fifty in height, and a furlong in length; but that in the middle was half as broad again as the other, and twice as high. The court or area before these galleries was paved with marble of several colours, and, at a little distance, was a second inclosure, formed by an handsome ballustrade of stone, and pillars at equal distances, whereon were inscriptions in Greek and Latin, giving warning to all strangers not to proceed any farther upon pain of death. To this inclosure there was but one entrance towards the east, but towards the north and south, at equal distances, three. In the middle of these two inclosures, there was a third, which included the temple, strictly so called, and the altar of burnt sacrifices, which was fifty cubits high, and forty cubits wide every way, all built of rough stone, on which no tool had ever been used. Into this court (which none but priests were permitted to enter) there were nine gates; one towards the east, four towards the south, and as many towards the north; but towards the west there was no gate, only one great wall ran all along from north to south. At the entrance of each gate within were large rooms in form of pavilions, of thirty cubits square, and forty high, supported by a pillar of eighteen foot in circumference; and the whole was adorned with porticoes, sustained by two rows of pillars, to the east, north, and south, but towards the west there was nothing but the wall just now mentioned. This is the description of the temple, as it was repaired by Herod,

materials, and, in nine || and an half more had it so far finished, as to make it fit for divine service; though, to carry on the out-buildings, workmen were continued about it, to the time of our Saviour's ministry, and longer.

While these things were doing in Judea, the temple of Janus was shut at Rome. In times of war the custom was to have its gates laid open, but shut in the time of peace; and it was now the fifth time, since the building of that city, that the gates of this temple had been shut. The first time was, in the reign of Numa; the second, after the end of the first Punic war; the third, after Augustus's victory over Anthony and Cleopatra; the fourth, upon his return from the Cantabrian war in Spain; and the fifth now, in the twenty-sixth year of his reign, and in the thirty-third of Herod's, when a general peace (which lasted for twelve years together) prevailed over the world, and was a proper prelude for ushering in the advent || of the Prince of peace, even Christ our Lord, who (according to the exactest computation)

A. M.
4001, etc.
Ant. Christ.
1, &c.
aut Ær.
Vulg. 3.
from J. J.
lib. xiii. c.
19. to the
end of lib.
xv.

Herod, that may be extracted from Joseph. Antiq. lib. xv. c. 13. but whoever is desirous to know these things more minutely, must consult those authors that have wrote upon them *ex professo*; among which Mess. de Beaufobre and Lenfant, in their general preface to the New Testament, have given us no bad sketch; and Jurieu, in his *Hist. des Dogmes, &c.* has rectified some mistakes in the account of Josephus; *part ii. c. 4.*

|| And yet the Jews could tell our Saviour, that *forty and six years had the temple been building*, John ii. 20.; but this is easily reconciled. For though, at the time, when the Jews spake to our Saviour, six and forty years had passed, from the time that this building was begun, yet in nine years and an half it was made fit for divine service. The out-buildings however were far from being finished; and therefore a great number of labourers and artificers were continued at work, all the time that our Saviour was upon the earth, and for some years after; till upon the coming of Gessius Florus, to be governour of Judea, eighteen thousand of them were discharged at one time, and these for want of other employ, began those mutinies and seditions, which at last drew on the destruction of Jerusalem, and the temple with it; *Joseph. Antiq. lib. xx. c. 8.*

|| According to the vulgar æra, Christ was born in the four thousand and fourth year of the world's creation; but this way of computation (though it be commonly used, especially in this western part of the world) is a manifest mistake, which Dionysius Exiguus, a Scythian by birth, and afterwards a Roman

A. M. 4001, etc. Ant. Chr. f. 1, etc. aut Ær. Vulg. 3. from Jos. lib. xiii. c. 19. to the end of lib. xv.

putation) was born in the four thousandth * year of the world's creation.

THE OBJECTION.

“ JOSEPHUS indeed may be a good historian, and his account of the Jewish affairs of some help to fill up the chasm, from that period, where not only the sacred penman, but the authors of the acts of the Maccabees are likewise known to leave us; but to his credit it would tend not a little, if we could find any profane writer of good authority making mention of the two great things that stagger our faith, viz. Alexander's adventure with the high-priest at Jerusalem, and the wonderful production of the Septuagint version.

“ For

abbot, was the first author of. In the first ages of Christianity, Christians had no particular Epochæ to themselves: They generally used that of the building of the city, or the years of the Cæsars in common with the Romans. The first, that they made use of, was the æra of Dioclesian; for his terrible persecution had made such an impression on their minds, that the time when it happened was long had in remembrance. It was in the year 527 of the vulgar Christian æra, and not sooner, that the world began to compute time from our Saviour's birth; and therefore the wonder is less, that, after so great a distance of time, this Roman abbot should make a mistake in fixing the first year of it: But the misfortune was, that, before the mistake was discovered, our countryman Bede's taking it without examination from him, and using it in all his writings, gave it a sanction; nor has the learned world as yet thought fit to correct it, out of a persuasion, I presume, that there may be some danger in altering things that are settled. It is thought sufficient for the purposes of chronology, that there is a certain Christian æra fixed, which every one knows, and reckons by, tho' there may be some mistake, as to the particular time, when it should have commenced. In short, this error has been too long followed to be corrected, which must of course alter all dates, and give the world too much trouble; and therefore it is but calling it a vulgar Christian æra, and remembering that Christ was born four years before it began; it is but remembering, I say, that the year which we now write 1743, ought to be 1747, and all is well; *Prideaux's Preface to the first part of his Connection*; and *Hearne's System of universal history*, lib. i. c. 3.

* This, we may observe, falls in exactly with the time when an old tradition of the Jews places the beginning of the days of

the

“ For is it not very strange, that none of the Heathen ^{A. M.}
 “ historians, either Greek or Latin, who trace this great ^{4001, etc.}
 “ conqueror, as it were, through every step he takes, ^{Ant. Caris.}
 “ should ever give us the least hint of his having been at ^{1, etc.}
 “ Jerusalem? If he was incensed against the Jews, while ^{aut Ær.}
 “ he was at the siege of Tyre (c) for refusing to furnish ^{Vulg. 3.}
 “ him with provisions and forces, how can we think, that ^{from Jos.}
 “ a mock procession of a parcel of priests in *pontificalibus*, ^{lib. xiii. c.}
 “ could ever be of efficacy enough to divert the rage of a ^{19. to the}
 “ prince of his impetuous temper? ^{end of lib.} ^{xv.}

“ But supposing a divine interposition in this case; yet
 “ how comes this Alexander, who was of a different reli-
 “ gion, to conform so far to the Jewish way of worship,
 “ as to offer sacrifices to the God of Israel? Phœnicians
 “ indeed he might have in his army, (d) but where he
 “ could pick up any Chaldean troops, (as Josephus (e)
 “ tells us he had several with him), when he had not yet
 “ been at Babylon, is somewhat unaccountable; but tho’
 “ he might be very liberal in his favours to the people of
 “ Jerusalem, and grant them several immunities, yet it is
 “ not a little incongruous, (f) that the high-priest should
 “ petition him for the like privileges to be extended to the
 “ captive Jews in Babylonia and Media, when (as yet) he
 “ had not made the least conquest in either of these coun-
 “ tries.

the Messiah. According to that tradition, the world was to last
 six thousand years; two thousand before the law, two thousand
 under the law, and two thousand under the Messiah. This tra-
 dition is of great antiquity, and esteemed as authentic as any
 of this sort; and though its pretending to foretell when the
 world shall end, (which the Scriptures make a secret that God
 has reserved for himself), sufficiently shews its vanity; yet since
 the Jews have thought fit to place it among the most authen-
 tic of their traditions, it serves against them, 1st, To prove the
 time when, according to their own doctrine, the Messiah was
 to come; and, 2dly, To convict them of their gross and most
 perverse infidelity, in that, though Christ was born in the four
 thousandth year of the creation, from which (according to this
 their tradition) his appearance was to commence, they have now
 suffered above seventeen hundred and twenty years to pass, and
 have not yet acknowledged him; *Prideaux’s Connect. anno 4.*

(c) Joseph. Antiq. lib. xi. c. 8. (d) Moyle’s Works, vol. ii.
 (e) Joseph. *ibid.* (f) *Prideaux’s Connection*, anno 277.

A. M.
4001, etc.
Ant. Christ.
1, etc.
ant. Ær.
Vulg. 3.
in Jos.
lib. xiii. c.
19. to the
end of lib.
xv.



“ Upon the whole, therefore, we may conclude, that,
“ as the Jews (*g*) at this time were very much addicted to
“ religious romances, Josephus might give his invention
“ some scope in this matter, as thinking it a diminution to
“ the honour of his nation, to have to great a man, as this
“ sovereign conqueror of the world, come into the neigh-
“ bouring nations, without paying a visit to Jerusalem;
“ and when he was once there, it was necessary that some-
“ thing extraordinary should happen at his reception.

“ The like piece of fiction we may reasonably presume
“ is the account which this historian gives us of the Sep-
“ tuagint version at Alexandria. For besides the difficulty
“ of conceiving how these seventy-two elders, who were
“ sent from Judea (*b*), (where neither Greek nor Hebrew
“ were, at this time, in common use), should so far be-
“ come masters of both languages, as to be able, in the
“ space of seventy-two days, to finish a translation of the
“ Scriptures: It appears from other histories, that De-
“ metrius Phalerius (who is made the chief agent in this
“ whole affair) was, at this time, in no manner of confi-
“ dence with Ptolemy Philadelphus; and though it may
“ not be thought beneath his dignity to be the king’s li-
“ brarian, yet he was now in prison, if not in his grave,
“ for being an enemy to the king’s succession.

“ It seems improbable however, that if he was alive and
“ in favour, he should address the king, concerning this
“ interpretation, by way of epistle, (as we find he does
“ in (*i*) Josephus), when he was every day at court, and
“ had an easy access to him; that the king should trouble
“ himself about asking the interpreters such questions
“ as are related in the history of Aristeas, to which
“ the same Josephus (*k*) refers us; and, above all, that
“ he should advance such an incredible sum of mo-
“ ney †, as, one way or other, amounts to two millions

“ Sterling,

(*g*) Moyle’s Works, vol. ii. (*b*) Prideaux’s Connection,
anno 277. (*i*) Jewish Antiq. lib. xii. c. 2. (*k*) Ibid.
lib. xii. c. 1.

† According to Aristeas, Ptolemy expended, in redeeming the
captive Jews, that were in his kingdom, 650 talents; in ves-
sels of silver sent to the temple, 70 talents; in vessels of gold
for the same use, 50 talents; in precious stones to adorn these
vessels, 250 talents; in gifts for sacrifices, 100 talents; to the
interpreters,

“ Sterling, (more than his whose library was worth), and
 “ all for the version of one single book, which neither
 “ he, nor any of his court (as long as they continued Hea-
 “ thens) could have any other value for, than as it was a
 “ true and genuine history. But all this Josephus might
 “ say, out of a pious design perhaps, to gain among the
 “ vulgar the greater veneration and authority to a transla-
 “ tion of the Scriptures, which was then more in use than
 “ the original itself.”

A. M.
 4001, etc.
 Ant. Christ.
 1, etc.
 aut Ær.
 Vulg. 3.
 from Jos.
 lib. xiii. c.
 19. to the
 end of lib.
 xv.

It cannot be expected indeed, that any human compo-
 sition should be without faults, and least of all can history
 promise itself that exemption, when it has so many distant
 and abstruse matters to inquire into, and is forced in many
 cases to take up with the testimony, and sometimes the con-
 jectures, of others. It may be said, however, in favour of
 Josephus, that the records, from whence he compiled his
 history of the Jews, were either those of their own sacred
 Hebrew books; those of the prophets during the continu-
 ance of their succession; or those of the most authentic
 writers that flourished in their nation all along afterward.
 For, in the main, he was not so much an original historian
 himself, as an abridger of such ancient histories as he
 found in the highest esteem and veneration; and how fair
 and impartial he has been (about these times more particu-
 larly) in making this compilation, any one may perceive,
 that will but give himself the trouble of comparing his
 abridgment of the first book of the Maccabees with the
 book itself. So justly might Suidas give (1) Josephus the ti-
 tle of a *lover of truth*; and so truly might Josephus say of
 himself, at the conclusion of his Antiquities, as well as of
 his Jewish wars, “ As for the style and manner of my
 “ writing them, that I submit to the judgment of my rea-
 “ ders; but as for the candour and sincerity of my ac-

Answered,
 by shewing
 the truth of
 Josephus's
 history.

interpreters, at their first coming, three talents a-piece, in sil-
 ver, 12,216 talents in the whole; and, lastly, to each of them,
 at their parting, two talents of gold, and a golden cup of a ta-
 lent weight, which, in the sum-total, making 1046 talents of
 silver, and 516 talents of gold, will, when reduced to our
 Sterling money, amount to one million nine hundred and
 eighteen thousand five hundred and thirty-seven pounds ten
 shillings; besides the charges he was at in fetching these inter-
 preters to Alexandria, maintaining them there, and sending
 them back again to Jerusalem; *Prideaux's Connect. anno 277.*

(1) Page 1261.

“ counts,

A. M. 4001, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1, etc.
aut. Ær.
Vulg. 3.
from Jos.
lib. xiii. c.
19. to the
end of lib.
xv.

That Alex-
ander was
at Jerusa-
lem.

That the
Chaldeans
are wrong
named.

A provi-
dential in-
terposition
in this af-
fair.

“ counts, I do here declare to the world, that I have kept
“ strictly to the truth, and have had nothing else in view,
“ through the course of my whole work.”

(m) That Alexander the Great, after his having taken the city of Tyre, invaded the northern parts of Judea, and went as far as the balsam-trees, near Jericho, not only Eusebius in his Chronicon, but Pliny *, in his Natural History likewise, directly informs us; and that he not only subdued that part of Syria which is called *Palestine*, but went also about at this time to those cities that refused to submit to him, we have the concurring testimony both of Curtius (n) and Arrian (o); and, if their testimony be true, it is very presumable that he did not forget to visit Jerusalem in his indignation for its having refused to send him supplies.

The Samaritans indeed acted another part: They obeyed Alexander's summons, and went in a body, of eight thousand men, to his assistance at Tyre. As soon as he had carried the place, they marched with his army to Jerusalem, and these are the men whom Josephus joins with the Phœnicians, though, by an error of the press, or transcription at first, they are called *Χαλδαῖες* instead of *Χεθναῖες* (according to Bishop Lloyd's emendation), *Chaldeans*, instead of *Cutheans* or *Samaritans*, the old inveterate enemies of the Jews, and who therefore were glad of this opportunity of destroying them, and promised themselves, (as Josephus (p) expresses it) “ all the license of blood and
“ pillage upon the high-priest himself, as well as upon the
“ citizens, that rage or revenge could draw from a victo-
“ rious prince, under the sense and provocation of the af-
“ front he had received.”

Alexander accordingly comes, breathing out wrath against the Jews, and, with his victorious army, is ready to revenge the insolent message of their being unwilling to fight for any but his enemy Darius: But, instead of that,

(m) Mr. Whiston's Alexander at Jerusalem.

* Therein he tells us, that as this tree was peculiar to Judea, (he might have said, to that part near Jericho), Alexander, when he waged war there, caused an experiment to be made of the quantity of balsam that distilled from one of these trees, and upon trial it was found, that, on a summer's day, so much would drop from one as filled a concha; *Natural History*, lib. xii. c. 25.

(n) Lib. iv. c. 17.
lib. xi. c. 8.

(o) Lib. 1.

(p) Jewish Antiq.

in

in a day or two he goes away with the greatest love and kindness for them; permits them to live by their ancient laws; forgives them the tribute of the sabbatical year; readily invites them to fight for him as his allies, and, the very next year, in his own new-built city of Alexandria, gives them all equal privileges with the Macedonians themselves. Now this sudden alteration of his cannot well be imputed to any thing else but a divine interposition; and therefore, since Plutarch (q) informs us, that it was no unusual thing for this great man to be influenced in his conduct by dreams and visions on other occasions, it is highly probable, that this remarkable change in him did likewise depend upon the remembrance of the vision which he had at Dio in Macedonia, as himself relates in the history.

A. M.
4001, etc.
Ant. Christ.
1, etc.
aut Ær.
Vulg. 3.
from Jos.
lib. xiii. c.
19. to the
end of lib.
xv.

(r) The like is to be said of the change that was made at this juncture in the conduct of the high-priest, and all the people. For, since before this they durst not fight against Darius, for their oath's sake, and yet could now, without any scruple, go into that very army which had twice conquered his forces, and was then going to take away all his dominions, they must have had such a divine warrant for doing this, as the vision and admonition, which, the night before, was given to the high-priest, may be interpreted to imply. This, indeed, we own, is all providential and miraculous: but, if we look into their histories, (whether canonical or apocryphal), we shall find, that from the days of Abraham to the days of Josephus himself, things of this nature were very common among the Jews.

The short of this matter is this, — The Jews, at this time, had certainly a great and eminent deliverance; but then the question is, Whence did this deliverance come?

(s) If we judge by the entire history of the Jewish nation, we shall expect it to have been after some extraordinary and providential manner. The Jewish records tell us, that it was really so, and give us the particular account of it. The Heathen records say nothing at all, either against it, or about it; and therefore we must be left at liberty to think, that the authority of the Jewish historian, who relates it, (if nothing absurd or incongruous appears in his relation), does certainly preponderate in such a negative ar-

(q) In Alexandro.
rufalem.

(r) Mr. Whiston's Alexander at Je-
(s) Ibid.

A. M.
4001, etc.
Ant. Chris.
1, etc.
aut Ær.
Vulg. 3.
from Jos.
lib. xiii. c.
19. to the
end of lib.
xv.

And that
Alexander
might very
well do
what he did
at Jerusa-
lem.

That the
LXX inter-
preters
might be
skilled in
the Greek
tongue.

gument, as the bare omission of one transaction by some later Heathen historians can amount to.

Upon the supposition then, that Alexander, by this supernatural direction, entered Jerusalem in a peaceable manner, his offering sacrifice to the God of Israel, whom (according to the principles of his own religion) he might take for the national god of the Jews, was exactly agreeable (as appears by the several accounts of his life) to his usual method upon the like occasions; and his promising to grant the same immunities he had given to them in Judea to the Jews in Media and Babylonia, (though he had not as yet conquered these countries), was the natural result of his having seen the prophecy of Daniel, which, both he and the high-priest fully persuaded themselves, that he was the person appointed by providence to fulfil.

Now, whoever considers the natural effects of conquests, what changes and revolutions they make, not only in the constitution, but in the language likewise, of any kingdom, and how fatally prone the very conquered are to learn the speech, as well as imitate the manners, of those that have brought them under subjection, will have no occasion to wonder, that, after the reduction of Judea by a Grecian prince, and a prince who had distinguished that nation above all others with his royal favours, the Grecian language should soon grow into request, especially among the people of the better fashion, and such as made learning their profession.

(*t*) The Macedonians had not long made themselves masters of Babylon, before Berosus (who is said by Tatian to have lived in the time of Alexander) became such a proficient in the Greek tongue, that in it he wrote the history of the affairs of the Chaldeans, and the actions of their kings, whereof we have some fragments in the writings of Josephus and Eusebius; and, (*u*) not long after him, Manetho, a priest of Heliopolis in Egypt, in the same language wrote his commentaries of the Egyptian affairs, which he dedicated to this very Ptolemy Philadelphus, for whose use the Septuagint translation was made. The Greek language, in short, spread itself abroad wherever Alexander's arms prevailed, and soon became the universal language of the polite and learned;

(*t*) Prideaux's Connection, anno 260.
250.

(*u*) Ibid, anno

and therefore we can hardly suppose, but that, in a populous nation, there should be found a competent number of persons duely qualified to translate a short book (for the Pentateuch † was all that they translated, and this (every one knows) is far from being a large one) into a language that was then in the highest vogue, from another, in which some of their doctors are said to have been so critically, so minutely skilled, as to be able to tell how often each letter occurred in the whole.

A. M.
4001, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1, &c.
aut Ær.
Vulg. 3.
from Jos.
lib. xiii. c.
19. to the
end of lib.
15.

Demetrius Phalereus was not only a learned philosopher, but a person likewise of great wisdom, justice, and probity, as appeared by his government of Athens, †, under Cassander, one of Alexander's Captains: But, being expelled from thence by the prevailing power of Demetrius, the son of Antigonus, and, after the death of Cassander, forced to withdraw into Egypt, he was there received with great favour and honour by Ptolemy Soter, and became one of his chief counsellours. He dissuaded the king from making any of his sons copartner with him in the kingdom, and (x) told him the inconvenience of it; but we do not perceive from Laërtius, or any other historian, that he anyways opposed the succession of Philadelphus. The king indeed did not follow his advice in this particular; but still we find him in great favour and request at court, both with the father and son: And therefore, if after the son's accession, he fell into some disgrace, (whatever the occasion of it might be), it is but supposing, either that this misfortune befel him some years after the king's accession, or that he, after a short disgrace, was restored to favour again, and then we may allow him space enough (and without any disparagement to his character) to have, at one and the same time, both the direction of the Septuagint version, and the superintendency of the royal library,

That Demetrius might have the direction of the king's library.

† Aristeas, Aristobulus, and Philo say, that the law only was translated by the LXX; and Josephus, in the preface to his *Antiquities*, expressly tells us, that they did not translate for Ptolemy the whole Scriptures, but the law only.

† In the acknowledgment of his just government, the Athenians erected for him as many statues in their city as there were days in a year, which was the greatest honour that ever was done to any citizen in that place; *Diog. Laërtius in vita Demetrii Phalerei*; and *Diodor. Sicul. lib. 18*.

(x) *Diod. Laërtius in Pha'ereo*.

A. M. For, whatever some may think of the servile employment
 4001, etc. of looking after books, it is very well known (y) that, at
 Ant. Chris. Rome, one of the prime cardinals always holds the office
 1, etc. of librarian to the Pope; and, as to the king's library in
 aut Ær. France, it is not long since the Archbishop of Rheims,
 Vulg. 3. who is by his place primate of the Gallican church, and
 from Jos. first peer of the whole realm, thought it no disparagement
 lib. xiii. c. to his honour to be appointed to the same office:
 19. to the
 end of lib.
 15.

It is natural to suppose, that a prince, who himself was
 a man of great learning, and had always a long train of
 learned men about him, should be for making some trial
 of the abilities of the Jewish interpreters, before he set
 them about the work; and therefore, if the questions
 which the king made, and the answers which the interpre-
 ters returned, be but adapted to their respective circum-
 stances, instead of being an argument against, they will
 prove a confirmation of the truth of the account which
 Josephus gives us of this transaction. Now, whoever looks
 into these questions and answers, as they are set down in
 Aristæas, we will find, that the former (which are said to
 have been suggested by Demetrius) are chiefly philosophi-
 cal, such as favour of the musæum or college of learned
 men that had lately been erected at Alexandria; (z) such
 as became an inquisitive Heathen philosopher, who, in a
 great measure, was grown weary of the gross polytheism
 and idolatry of the Egyptians, and, by his conversation
 with the Alexandrian Jews, more inclinable to the belief
 of that one invisible, and true God, whom they worship-
 ped: And that the latter are every one made with a such
 a distinct regard to God, and his providence, as is always
 uppermost both in the words and writings of every wise
 and religious Jew.

The character which Appian (a) gives us of Ptolemy
 Philadelphus, is, that “ he was the most splendid and mag-
 nificent of all the kings of his time in expending his mo-
 ney;” and therefore we may less wonder at his giving so
 much for the redemption of the captive Jews (b), when
 we find him bestowing upon Aratus the Sicyonian, for his
 having been serviceable to him in the collection of some
 books and pictures, the sum of one hundred and fifty
 talents to adjust the properties and settle the peace of

and give the
 sum of mo-
 ney that is
 related.

(y) Prideaux's Connect. anno 284. (z) Whiston's Defence
 of Aristæas. (a) In præfat. ad opera hist. (b) Plutarch in
 Arato.

his city; (c) may less wonder at his sending away the Jewish interpreters so amply rewarded, when we find him presenting the Roman ambassadors every one of them with a crown of gold, and, upon their taking their leave, heaping upon them gifts of an inestimable value; may less wonder, in short, at his profusion in this particular, when we find him (d) (as Athenæus assures us) spending two thousand two hundred talents in one pompous festival to Bacchus.

A. M.
4001, etc.
Ant. Chri.
1, etc.
aut Ær.
Vulg. 3.
from Jos.
lib. xiii. c.
19. to the
end of lib.
15.

His own inclination, (e) prompted by Demetrius Phalereus, led him to be prodigiously fond of the most complete and authentic copies of any curious book. Fifteen talents he gave for such copies of the tragedies of Æschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides, and yet these were already written in Greek, and needed no translation; (f) whereas the bare permission of a version of the Jewish law (that nation's peculiar and inestimable treasure) was a favour that never had been asked before, and what, upon any common application, would probably have been denied: And, as the authenticity of this version must entirely depend on the skill and faithfulness of the Jewish translators, (since they were the only persons that understood the Hebrew language), the king had no other way to obtain a confidence herein, than by gaining the entire good opinion of the high-priest and people of the Jews.

Upon the whole therefore we may conclude, that though the sums bestowed upon the Jews upon account of this translation be very large, yet, considering the king's vast liberality upon other occasions, the objection would have been stronger, had the sums been less; since, upon the highest computation, his whole expence in redeeming the captives, in presents to the temple and altar, and in rewards to the interpreters and high-priest, being all put together, does not amount to so much as he spent in one festival to Bacchus.

In so great and pompous a court, as this of Philadelphus must needs have been, we need not be solicitous to answer the objection of his being addressed to by way of letter, or memorial, even by persons that had otherwise a constant access to him; because, in matters of great importance,

Other testimonies for the truth of Josephus.

(c) Livy xiv.; Eutropius, lib. 2. Diog. Strato. (e) Van Dale's Dissert. de Aristea. Defence of Aristea.

(d) Laërtius in (f) Whiston's

A. M.
4001, &c.
Ant. Chrif.
1, &c.
aut Ær.
Vulg. 3.
from Jof.
lib. xiii. c.
19. to the
end of lib.
15.

this, in most courts, is the common method of proceeding even now. But this we may safely add, that how warmly soever some modern critics have attacked the history of this Septuagint version, yet the ancient testimonies of such authors as have made mention of it, viz. of Alexander Polyhistor (*g*), a learned Heathen, who was greatly inquisitive about the affairs of the Jews; of Aristobulus, the Peripatetic philosopher, and tutor to Ptolemy Philopater; of Philo, who lived at Alexandria, the very place where this version was made; of Tertullian, one of the most accurate writers of Christian antiquity; of Eusebius, a learned and faithful ecclesiastical historian; of St. Jerom, a vehement enemy to this very version, as compared with the Hebrew copy; and of several others, that might be produced, are a confirmation of what Josephus (a priest of that very temple, to which the presents from Philadelphus were sent) relates concerning it, and such strong holds and fastnesses, as the maintainers of its antiquity have not yet been prevailed upon to give up.

DISSERTATION V.

Of the Profane History during this period.

The success-
sion in the
old Assyrian
empire.

MOST of the historical facts in profane authors, that had any relation to the sacred records, we have, in the course of this history, endeavoured to abridge, and reduce into notes, at their proper periods; and have nothing more now to do, but only to take notice of some extraordinary and remarkable events in the Persian, Grecian, and Roman empires, down to our Saviour's time, which did not then so properly fall in with our design.

After the dissolution of the ancient Assyrian monarchy, by the death of Sardanapalus, there arose up two lesser empires in its stead; one founded by Arbaces, governour of Media, and the other by Belesis, governour of Babylon, the two principle commanders who headed the conspiracy, whereby the former empire was brought to an end.

Arbaces (who in Scripture (*b*) is called *Tiglath Plezer*) had the larger share of the empire, and therefore fixed his

(*g*) Ibid. (*b*) 2 Kings xv. 29, and xvi. 7, 10.

seat

feat at Nineveh, where the former Assyrian kings used to have their residence, and there governed his new-erected empire for nineteen years. He was succeeded by his son Salmanassar; Salmanassar by Sennacherib; Sennacherib by Efarhaddon; Efarhaddon by Suosduchinus, (in (i) the book of Judith called *Nabuchadonofor*); Suosduchinus by Chyniladanus; Chyniladanus by Nabopolassar; and Nabopolassar by his son Nebuchadnezzar the Great, of whom we have said so many things; Nebuchadnezzar the Great was succeeded by his son Evilmerodach; Evilmerodach by Neroglissor; and Neroglissor by Belshazzar; in whom the united empire of the Assyrians and Babylonians terminated.

Belshis (who in Scripture is called (k) *Baladan*) took up his residence at Babylon, and was succeeded by his son Merodach; but who were his successors, we have no account to be depended on, only we know, that Efarhaddon, king of Assyria, conquered the kingdom of Babylon, and that he and his successors Suosduchinus and Chyniladanus possessed it, until Nabopolassar, governor of Babylon, and general of the Assyrian forces, joining his arms with Aftyages, the son of Cyaxares king of Media, slew Chyniladanus, took and destroyed Nineveh, and translated the empire to Babylon.

After the terrible blow which Sennacherib's forces received in Judea, the Medes, understanding in what a low condition he was returned to Nineveh, immediately shook off his yoke, and made Dejoces (who in Scripture is called *Arphaxad*) their king; who, having beautified and enlarged Ecbatana, made it the royal seat of his kingdom, and there reigned for fifty-three years. He was succeeded by his son Phraortes; Phraortes, by Cyaxares I.; Cyaxares I. by Aftyages; Aftyages, by Cyaxares II. called in Scripture *Darius the Mede*, who conquered Belshazzar, and began to lay the foundation of the Persian monarchy, which, during his life, was called the empire of the Medes and Persians, but, after his death, was united by Cyrus.

Cyrus succeeding his father Cambyfes in the kingdom of Persia, and his uncle Cyaxares, in the kingdom of the Medes, and empire of Babylon, by this means founded the second great monarchy, which was the Persian. His wars with the Assyrians, his defeat of Croesus king of Ly-

(i) Judith i. 1. (k) Isaiah xxxix. 1.

A. M.
4001, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1, &c.
aut Ær.
Vulg. 3.
from Jos.
lib. xiii. c.
19. to the
end of lib.
15.

His wars
with the
Scythians
and death.

dia, his wonderful taking of Babylon, and obliging all the east to submit to his power, are subjects that we have already touched upon, either in our history or notes: But there are some things in his war with the Scythians, (might we but credit their story), that justly deserve our observation.

(1) At the time when he made his expedition into Scythia, Tomyris was queen thereof, a woman of great courage, and bravery of mind; for, though she could have hindered Cyrus's army from passing the river Araxes, she permitted them to do it, in confidence of fighting them with more advantage within her own dominions, and of making their retreat more difficult, by their having the river on their backs. Cyrus took this opportunity to pass the river, and, having marched a little into the country, and pitched his camp, the next day he abandoned it as if he had fled for fear, leaving plenty of wine, and other provisions behind him. Tomyris having intelligence of this, sent her son, with the third part of her forces, in pursuit of the enemy; but when he came to their camp, as if he had been sent to a banquet, not a battle, he suffered his men (who were strangers to that kind of liquor) to intoxicate themselves with wine to such a degree, that when Cyrus marched his army back again in the night time, and came upon them, he found them incapable of fighting, or of making any resistance, and therefore put them all to the sword.

Upon the loss of so great an army, and (what more nearly concerned her) the loss of her only son, Tomyris did not betake herself to tears, the usual refuge of women upon such occasions, but cast about in her mind how she might revenge herself of the enemy; which, in a short time she did, by the like stratagem, and with the same success. For, observing that the Persians were now grown secure by reason of their late victory, she retired before them with her army, as if she had been afraid to venture the decision of a battle, until she had drawn Cyrus unawares into a defile, where, having placed an ambuscade in the mountains, she killed two hundred thousand of his men (insomuch that there was not one left to carry home the news) and himself upon the spot. Thus fell this great prince, in the seventieth year of his age, though Xeno-

(1) Justin, lib. i. c. 8.

phon,

phon, and from him other historians, are clearly of opinion, that he died peaceably in his † bed.

He was succeeded by his son Cambyfes, and Cambyfes by the Magian, who, under the false name of *Smerdis*, usurped the throne, and brought discredit upon the whole sect, until its character came to be restored again by the management and reformation of Zoroastres.

At what time this Zoroastres (or Zardusht, as the Persians call him) lived, there is a wide difference both among the Greek and oriental writers; since some of them will have it, that he lived many years before the flood, others, in the days of Abraham, and others again, not before the reign of Darius the son of Hytaspes. Moses (according to the sentiments of several learned men) speaks of the Pyrææ, or temples consecrated to the worship of fire, when he brings in God threatening the Israelites (*m*), to overthrow their high-places, and destroy their *Chaminim*, or places appointed for the worship of fire, and to cast their carcases upon the carcases of their idols; though they are certainly mistaken who think, that the fire which he ordered to be kept always burning upon the altar of the Lord, was in imitation of the fire of the Magians.

† Xenophon adds, (lib. 8.) That finding his death approaching, he called his nobility together, his two sons, Cambyfes and Tanaxares, to his bed-side, and after a long speech concerning the immortality of the soul, and rewards or punishments consequent upon every man's good or ill conduct in this life, he exhorted his sons, by the strongest arguments, to a perpetual concord and agreement, and uttered many other things, which make it not improbable that he received the knowledge of the true God from Daniel, when he governed Shushan in Persia. Strabo assures us, (lib. 15.) that he was buried in a city called *Pasagardes*, which himself had built, and where his monument, even in his time, was, with this inscription. "O vir, quicumque es, et undecunque advenis, neque enim te adventurum ignoravi: Ego sum Cyrus, qui Persis imperium constitui; pusillum hoc terræ, quo meum tegitur corpus, mihi ne invid eas." This very tomb Alexander the Great (according to Q. Curtius) opened, either in hopes of some treasure, which he imagined might have been there deposited, or with a desire rather to do honour to his remains; for so we are told, that he caused the coffin, wherein his body lay, to be covered with his own garment, and a crown of gold to be set upon it: All which gives credit to the account we have in Xenophon, but derogates not a little from Herodotus, who leaves his body in the hand of Tomyris; *Raleigh's hist. book iii. c. 6.*

(*m*) Ezek. vi. 4, &c.

A. M.
4001, etc.
Ant. Chris.
1, etc.
ant. Ær.
Vulg. 3.
from Jos.
lib. xiii. c.
19. to the
end of lib.
15.

An account
of him.

If then we suppose that Zoroastres was the first author of the worship of fire, we must acknowledge him more ancient than Moses; but if we look upon him only as the reformer or restorer of it, (though we cannot tell the precise time when he flourished), it must not be long after the Magians fell into disgrace, and may therefore very properly be thought to be in the reign of Darius Hytaspes.

He was a man of a mean and obscure parentage; † by birth and education very probably a Jew, and (as some suppose) a servant to the prophet Daniel; because he was certainly a man of great learning, and thoroughly acquainted with the books of Moses. As soon as he took upon him the prophetic office, he retired into a cave, and there lived a long time as a recluse, pretending to be abstracted from all worldly considerations, and to be given wholly to prayers and divine meditations. In this retirement

† To this purpose we may observe, that most of his reformati-
ons in the old religion of the Magians are taken either from the ancient
writings, or the ancient usages of the Jews. For whereas Moses
heard God speak to him out of a flame of fire in the bush, Zoroa-
stres pretended, that he in like manner heard God speak to him, at
the time when he was taken up into Heaven. Whereas the Jews
had a visible Shechinah of the divine presence among them, resting
over the mercy-seat in the holy of holies, unto which they turned
themselves when they prayed, Zoroastres taught his disciples, that
in the sun, and in the sacred fires in their temples, God more espe-
cially dwelt; and therefore he obliged them to offer up all their
prayers with their faces turned to both these. Whereas the Jews
had a sacred fire which came down from Heaven upon their altar of
burnt-offerings, which, as long as Solomon's temple stood, was pre-
served with the utmost care from extinguishing. Zoroastres pretend-
ed, that when he was in Heaven, he brought some of that holy fire
out of which God spake unto him; and therefore he enjoined that
it should be kept with diligent care, and that all the fires, on the
altars of new-erected fire-temples, should at first be lighted only
from thence: And whereas the Jews were very nice in using no
wood on the altar of their temple, but what was reputed clean,
and had it therefore all barked and examined, before it was laid
on, and, when it was laid on, allowed of no bellows to blow it,
but left it to kindle and flame out of itself, Zoroastres ordained his
followers, in relation to the sacred fires of their temples, to ob-
serve both these particulars, commanding them to bark all their
wood, and use no other means for the kindling it up into a
flame, but the pouring oil, and leaving it to the blasts of the
open

ment he composed the book †, wherein all his pretended revelations are contained. (n) The first part of it consists of a liturgy, which the Magians, in all their oratories and fire-temples, make use of to this day. The rest is an historical account of the life, actions, and prophecies of its author, the several articles and branches of his superstition, together with rules and exhortations to morality, wherein he is very pressing and exact, except his allowing of incest; and the whole being interspersed with several things taken out of the Old Testament, abundantly shews that his original was from the Jews.

A. M.
4001, etc.
Ant. Christ.
1, etc.
aut Ær.
Vulg. 3.
from Jos.
lib. xiii. c.
19. to the
end of lib.
xv.

Upon leaving his retirement, he went into India among the Brachmans, where having learned all their knowledge in mathematics, astronomy, and natural philosophy, he came back, and taught his disciples these sciences, which gained them so great a reputation, that for many years after, a learned man, and a Magian, became equivalent terms. Nay, he pretended, that, once upon a time, he was taken up into heaven to be instructed in those doctrines, which he was to deliver unto men; that there he heard God speak out of the midst of a great and bright flame of fire; and for this reason he taught his followers, that fire was the truest representation of the divine presence, and the sun (as the most perfect fire) the more immediate throne of his glory; that, of the fire from whence God spake, he upon his return brought

open air: And that he should, in so many singular and unobvious things, imitate the Jewish religion in the scheme of his reformation, it can hardly be imagined, without supposing, that at first he had his education in it; nor is it improbable, that if (as some think) he was the disciple of Daniel, his seeing that great and good man arrive to such an height of dignity, by being a true prophet of God, might put him upon the thoughts of being a false one, in hopes that if he acted his part well, he might obtain to himself the like advancement; *Lightfoot's Temple-service*; *Hyde's Religio veterum Persarum*; and *Prideaux's Connection, anno 486*.

† This book is called *Zendavesta*, and by contraction *Zend*, which signifies a *Fire-kindler*, such as a tinder-box with us; and this fantastical name the impostor gave it, because, as he pretended, all that would read this book, and meditate thereon, might from thence kindle in their hearts the fire of all true love for God, and his holy religion; *Prideaux's Connection, anno 486*.

(n) *Prideaux's Connection, anno 486*.

A. M.
4001, etc.
Ant. Christ.
1, etc.
aut. Br.
Vulg. 3.
from Jos.
lib. xiii. c.
19, to the
end of lib.
xv.

And his
tenets.

some with him, and placed it on the altar of the first fire-temple which he erected; from whence (as they say) it was propagated to all the rest; and this is the reason they give for keeping it so carefully, and treating it with so much superstition.

Having thus qualified himself to be a prophet, he made his first appearance in Medea, in the city of Ziz, say some, or in Ecbatana, (now Tauris), according to others; where the principle doctrines that he professed (as a refinement upon what the Old Magicians maintained) were these, —

“ That there was one Supreme Being, independent, and self-existing from all eternity; that, under him there were two angels, one the angel of light, who is the author and director of all good, and the other the angel of darkness, who is the author and director of all evil, and that these two, out of the mixture of light and darkness, made all things; that they are in perpetual struggle with each other, and that where the angel of light prevails, there the most is good, where the angel of darkness, there the most is evil; that this struggle shall continue unto the end of the world, when there shall be a general resurrection, a day of judgement, and a retribution to every one according to his works; and that after this the angel of darkness and his disciples shall go into a world of their own, where they shall suffer, in everlasting darkness, and punishments of their evil deeds; and the angel of light and his disciples shall go also into a world of their own, where they shall receive, in everlasting light, the reward due to their good deeds, whereupon they shall remain separated for ever, the light and darkness are to be no more mixed together to all eternity.” And all this the remainder of that sect (which is now in Persia and India) do, after so many ages, still hold without any variation, even to this day.

After Zoroastres had acted the part of a prophet in Media, and there settled all things according to his intentions, he removed from thence into Bactria, the most eastern province of Persia, and there settling in the city of Balch (which lies on the river Oxus, in the confines of Persia) under the protection of Hytaspes the father of Darius, he soon spread his imposture through all that province with success. From Bactria he went next

to the royal court at Susa, where he managed his pretensions with so much address and insinuation, that he made Darius likewise a profelyte, and, from his example, drew over the courtiers, nobility, and great men of that city into the same profession: But when, upon his return into Balch, he attempted the like upon Agarsp, king of the oriental Scythians, and a zealous Sabian, and pretended an authority from Darius to that purpose, the Scythian prince resented it with such indignation, that he invaded Bactria with an army, and, having there defeated the forces that opposed him, slew Zoroastres, with all the priests of his patriarchal church, amounting to the number of eighty persons, and demolished all the fire-temples in the province; but, it was not long before Darius * fell upon him, and revenged the injury.

A. M.
4000, etc.
Ant. Christ.
1, etc.
aut Ær.
Vulg. 3.
from Jos.
lib. xiii.
c. 19. to
the end of
lib. xv.

This Darius was one of the seven lords, who slew the false Smerdis; and by an artifice he obtained the kingdom of Persia; but it was by the cruel policy of Zopyrus, that he made himself master of the city of Babylon. This city, having for many years, during the Babylonish empire, been mistress of the east, and domineered over all its neighbouring countries, could not bear the subjection it was fallen under to the Persians; especially since the removal of the imperial seat to Shushan, whereby its wealth and grandeur were much diminished. Taking the advantage therefore of the late revolution which had happened in the Persian empire, the Babylonians resolved to set up for themselves; and accordingly, having stored the city with a sufficient quantity of arms and provisions, in the fifth year of the reign of this Darius, they broke out into an open revolt.

Darius's
taking of
Babylon.

(c) The city, by reason of the strength and height of its walls, was impregnable against all storms, batteries, and assaults; and, as it was furnished with provisions for a great many years, and had large quantities of void ground within the walls, from whence it might annually

* After he had overthrown him with a great slaughter, and drove him out of the province, he rebuilt all the fire-temples, and especially that of Balch, which, as it was the patriarchal temple of the sect, he failed not to erect with a grandeur suitable to its dignity, and had it called after his own name. For he was a zealous promoter of this religion, and, after the death of its author, continued to propagate it with the same ardour as before; *Prideaux's Connection*, anno 486.

(c) *Prideaux's Connection*, anno 516.

A. M.
4001, etc.
Ant. Christ.
1, etc.
aut. Ær.
Vulg. 3.
from Jos.
lib. xiii.
c. 19. to
the end of
lib. xv.

be supplied with more, could never have been starved into a surrender, but must have worn out Darius, and all his army, had it not been for a stratagem of Zopyrus, one of his commanders.

The army had now lain before the city a year and eight months, without having made any great progress in the siege, which raised the indignation of Zopyrus to such a degree, that, having cut off his nose and ears, and mangled his body all over with stripes, in this condition he fled to the besieged, and feigning to them, that he had suffered all this by the cruel usage of Darius, he thereby insinuated himself so far into their confidence, that, at length, they made him the chief commander of their forces, which trust he made use of to deliver the city (which could not otherwise have been taken) into his master's hand; and, for this remarkable piece of service, was rewarded with the highest honours that his prince could heap on him, all his life after.

His defeat
in Greece.

By this hardy stratagem Darius recovered the city of Babylon; but in his war with the Grecians he was so far from having any good success, that, (p) at the battle of Marathon, his vast army received a total overthrow by Miltiades, prince of the Thracian Chersonesus, and his two generals, Dotis and Artaphernes, were forced to return home with baffle and disgrace.

The defeats
of Xerxes.

He was succeeded by his son Xerxes, who, (q) after ten years preparation, renewed the war with the Grecians, but with worse success than his father: For, at the streights of Thermopylæ, Leonidas, the king of the Lacedemonians, with an handful of men, slew twenty thousand of his forces: At the streights of Salamis, Themistocles, the general of the Athenians, ruined the greatest part of his fleet: In Sicily, Gelo, the king thereof, made great havock among his confederates the Carthaginians: At Platea, Pausanias slew his general Mardonius, and cut his army to pieces; and at Mycale, Leotyichides both vanquished his troops by land, and burnt the remainder of his fleet; so that never was there a man, who set out with so great an armament both by sea and land, and returned in so abject and disgraceful a manner. He was succeeded by his son Artaxerxes; Artaxerxes, by Xerxes II.; Xerxes II. by his brother

(p) Herod. lib. 6.; Justin, lib. ii. c. 9.
2.; Diod. Sic. lib. 2.

(q) Herod. lib.

Sogdianus; and Sogdianus, by his brother Ochus, who is commonly called *Darius Nothus*. Ochus was succeeded by Artaxerxes II. surnamed *Mnemon*; Artaxerxes II. by another Ochus, who took upon him the name of *Artaxerxes* III.; this Ochus, by Arses; and Arses, by Darius Codomannus; in whom the Persian monarchy, terminating by Alexander the Great, was translated to Greece.

The army which Alexander carried into Asia, according to the highest computation, amounted to no more than thirty thousand foot, and five thousand horse; and yet, with these few forces, he not only attempted, but accomplished likewise the conquest of the whole Persian empire, and added India likewise to his acquisitions: But what was the most remarkable thing in his expedition, is, that he set out upon it with no more than seventy talents, which was scarce enough to supply the army with necessaries for thirty days; but, as he trusted in providence, providence did not fail him. In a few days, at the river Granicus, he encountered Darius, and having vanquished his troops, though they were five times more in number, he thereby got possession of a great part of his treasure, and all the provinces of the Lesser Asia. Not long after this, at Issus in Cilicia, he gave him another defeat; where, having taken all his camp, bag and baggage, with his mother, wife, and children, he left an hundred thousand Persians dead upon the field of battle: And about two years after, not far from Arbela, he gave him a final overthrow: for there, with no more than fifty thousand men, he vanquished the vast army of the Persians, which consisted of above twenty times as many, and thereby determined the fate of the Persian, and established the third great monarchy, which was the Grecian, in the person of Alexander. It lasted no longer than six years and ten months: For, after his death, it was divided among his generals, and, as Judea lay between Syria and Egypt, according as their arms prevailed, it was generally under the dominion of one of these, until the Roman power began to exert itself.

The Romans, having built their city, and out of the neighbouring villages (r) (as we related the story before) furnished themselves with wives, for seven successions lived under the dominion of kings; but in the family of Tarquin, which had justly incurred the people's displeasure,

(r) Vide vol. iv. p. 226.

A. M.
4001, etc.
Ant. Chris.
1, etc.
2ut Æt.
Vulg. 3.
from Jos.
lib. xiii.
c. 19. to
the end
lib. xv.

sure †, that form of government was quite dissolved. Many, however, and fierce were the wars which, both in their regal and consular state, the Romans waged with the nations round about them, but their conquests were confined to the bounds of Italy only; nor was the glory of their name much known to foreign nations, until the war which they had with Pyrrhus, King of Epirus, gave them an opportunity * to signalize their bravery and greatness of mind, which excited Ptolemy Philadelphus, then king of Egypt, to send them an embassy, congratulating their successes, and desiring to enter into alliance with them.

To

† To make his way to the throne, he murdered his father-in-law Servius Tullius, and, upon his ascending it, put all his friends to death. The affairs of the state he managed by himself alone, slighted the senate, diminished their authority, cut off several of them upon frivolous pretences, and seized upon their estates. Among these Marcus Junius was one, who left behind him a son named *Lucius Junius*; but he, fearing the fate that his father and brother had undergone, counterfeited the fool (and was thence called *Brutus*) so very artfully, that he was taken by Tarquin into his house to make his children sport. In the mean time, Sextus, one of Tarquin's sons, inflamed with the beauty of Lucretia, got privately to Collatia, where she resided, and ravished her, whereupon she sent for her father from Rome, and her husband Collatinus from the camp, (which was then before Ardea), desiring them to bring along with them some of their particular friends. Publius Valerius came with her father Lucretius, and Lucius Junius Brutus with her husband; to whom, as soon as they were arrived, she related the whole story, and then with a ponyard stabbed herself to the heart. Upon the sight of this they were all filled with grief and indignation; but, to their great surprise, Brutus, throwing off the disguise of his folly, declared his resolution, and made them swear upon the bloody ponyard to assist him in revenging this, and the other wickednesses of Tarquin, and his family, by expelling him and them from the government, which accordingly they did, thereby putting an end to the regal power at Rome, and turning it into a consular state: *Haarne's System, lib. 3.*

* One great instance of this appeared in the course of this war, which is thus related by Plutarch——When Fabricius was consul, and at the head of his army, an unknown person came into the camp, and delivered him a letter from king Pyrrhus's chief physician, offering to take him off by poison, and so end the war without any farther hazard to the Romans, if he might have a reward proportionable to his service. Fabricius, enraged at the villany of the man, and disposing the other consul to the same opinion, sent dis-

patches

(s) To make a return of the like respects, the Romans next year sent Q. Fabius Gurgēs, Cn. Fabius Pictor, and Q. Ogulnus, their ambassadors to the Egyptian court, whose behaviour, in that capacity, was very remarkable; for when the king, having invited them to supper, in the conclusion of the entertainment, presented each of them with a crown of gold, they accepted of the crowns, upon account of the honour that was done them, but, next morning, they crowned therewith the statues of the king that stood in the public places of the city; and when again, at their audience of leave, he presented them with very valuable gifts, they took them indeed for fear that their refusal should give offence; but as soon as they were returned to Rome, they delivered them all into the public treasury, before they appeared in the senate to give an account of their embassy, whereby they declared, that they desired no other advantage from the service of the public, than the honour of discharging it well.

A. M.
4001, etc.
Ant. Christ.
1, etc.
aut Ær.
Vulg. 3.
from Jos.
lib. xiii.
c. 19. to
the end of
lib. xv.
Their great
moderation.

This spirit of moderation and disinterestedness, while it continued in the state, and the many great instances of invincible courage and resolution, which upon all occasions they showed, made the Romans of great note in the

patches immediately to Pyrrhus to caution him against the treason. His letter was to this effect.

“ Caius Fabricius, and Quintus Æmilius, consuls of the Romans,
“ to Pyrrhus the king, health,

“ You seem to have a very ill judgment both of your friends and enemies. You will understand by this letter, which was sent to us, that you are in war with honest men, and trust knaves and villains: But we have not discovered this to you to insinuate into your favour, but lest your ruin might bring a reproach upon us, as if we had ended this war by treachery, when we were not able to do it by our courage and virtue.” When Pyrrhus had read the letter, and made strict inquiry into the treason, he caused the physician to be executed, and, in acknowledgment of this civility of the Romans, sent to Rome the prisoners without ransom, and again employed Cineas to negotiate a peace for him. The Romans, who were above receiving from their enemy a recompence for not having been guilty of the vilest injustice, disdained to accept of the prisoners, without returning to him an equal number of Samnites and Tarentines; but, as for the peace, they would not suffer Cineas so much as to mention it, until Pyrrhus had removed his arms and forces out of Italy, and sailed back to Epirus in the same ships that brought him over; *Plutarch in Pyrrho.*

(s) Livy, lib. xiv.; Eutropius, lib. 2.; Valerius Maximus, lib. 4.
world,

A. M.
4001, etc.
Ant. Chriſt.
1, etc.
aut. Ær.
Vulg. 3.
from Joſ.
lib. xiii.
c. 19. to
the end of
lib. xv.

Their wars
with the
Carthagi-
nians ;

world, and after the defeat of the Carthaginians in the ſecond Punic war, they became indeed the terrour of all other nations.

Hannibal was certainly the moſt dangerous enemy that ever Rome had. As ſoon as war was declared between theſe two ſtates, he left Spain, where he then was, and at the head of fifty thouſand foot, and nine thouſand horſe, marched directed towards Italy. He croſſed the Pyrenæan mountains into Gaul, croſſed the Roſne, and came to the foot of the Alps, which, in fifteen days time, he got over, but not without much danger and difficulty, as well as the loſs of half his army. When he got footing in Italy, he defeated Scipio one of the Roman conſuls at Pavia, and his colleague Sempronius, in another action near Trebia. Near the lake Thraſymene he cut off the Roman army, and their conſul Flaminius, even after he had deſtroyed a detachment of forty thouſand, which the other conſul Servilius had ſent to his aſſiſtance ; but in the famous battle at Cannæ, he made the greateſt ſlaughter of them : For therein he defeated their whole army, and ſlew Æmilius, one of their conſels ; killed 50,000 men, two Queſtors, 21 Tribunes, 80 of the Senatorian, and of the Equeſtrian order a much greater number.

This laſt defeat cauſed a dreadful conſternation in Rome, but did not rebate the people's courage, who ſtill reſuſed to hearken to any overtures of peace ; till, having ſent Scipio the younger into Africa, they by that means gave the Carthaginians ſo much diſturbance, that they were forced to recall Hannibal, who, coming to a deciſive battle, was routed by the Romans, and his countrymen forced to ſue for a peace, which was granted them upon terms very honourable and advantageous to Rome.

After this peace with the Romans, Hannibal (*t*) lived quietly at Carthage for the ſpace of ſix years ; but, being under ſuſpicion of holding a correſpondence with Antiochus, ſurnamed *the Great*, (between whom and the Romans there was at that time a miſunderſtanding), and of plotting with him to bring a new war upon Italy, ſome of his enemies at Rome procured ambaffadors to be ſent to Carthage, in order to inquire into the matter, and if they found any reaſon for it, to have him delivered into their hands ; which when Hannibal underſtood, he made his eſcape before the ambaffadors had time to deliver their

(*t*) Livy, lib. xxxiii. ; Cornelius Nepos, de Hanibale ; Juſtin lib. xxxi. c. 2, 3.

meſſage,

message, and put himself under the protection of Antiochus. A. M. 4001, etc.

(u) Antiochus, at this time, was in debate with himself on the point of entering into war with the Romans, but at the coming of Hannibal he soon determined for war; and had he taken Hannibal's advice of carrying it into the bowels of Italy, he might probably have met with a better event; † but his resolution was to begin it in Greece, where being shamefully defeated in every engagement, both by sea and land, he was forced at last to send an embassy to the Roman consuls, desiring conditions of peace, which were granted him upon these hard terms,—That he should pay the whole expences of the war, which were estimated at fifteen thousand talents of Eubæa ‖; should quit all Asia on that side the mount Taurus, and deliver up Hannibal the Carthaginian, and Thoas the Ætolian, as the chief incendiaries of the war: but as soon as these heard that a treaty was begun, they easily foresaw what would be the result of it, and therefore both took care † to get out of the way before it came to a conclusion. Ant. Christ. 1, etc.
aut Ær. Vulg. iii. from Jos. lib. xiii. c. 19. to the end of lib. xv.

Next

(u) Livy, lib. xxxvii.; Justin. lib. xxxi. c. 8.; Appian. de Syriacis.

† Antiochus's army is said to have consisted of seventy thousand foot, twelve thousand horse, and fifty-four elephants; whereas all the Roman forces amounted to no more than thirty thousand, and yet Antiochus was totally overthrown: For, in the field of battle, he lost fifty thousand foot, and four thousand horse; fourteen hundred were taken prisoners, and himself with much difficulty escaped to Sardis; *Appian, in Syriacis; Livy, lib. xxxvii.; and Justin, lib. xxxi. c. 7.*

‖ There is a difference between Livy and Polybius in this matter; for whereas in Polybius the words are, that the money to be paid the Romans should be ἀργυρίῳ Ἀττικῷ ἀρίστῳ, Livy, mistaking the meaning of the Greek phrase, rendered it of Attick talents; whereas Polybius meant it only of the Attick standard: For as the Eubæan talent was of the greatest weight, so the Attick money was the finest silver of any in Greece, and by this treaty the money was to be paid according to both, i. e. the Romans, having conquered Antiochus, not only obliged him to pay this vast sum for his peace, but also made him pay it in talents of the highest weight, and of silver of the best and finest standard in all Greece; *Prideaux's Connection, anno 290.*

† What became of the Ætolian we are not concerned to inquire; but Hannibal, after he was deserted by Antiochus, fled to Prusias, king of Bithynia; where, being slighted by

A. M.
4001, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1, &c.
ant. Ær.
Vulg. iii.
from Jos.
lib. xiii.
c. 19. to the
end of lib.
xv.
with Mi-
thridates.

† Next to the Carthagenian war, the longest, and most obstinate, that the Romans ever had, was the war with Mithridates King of Pontus (in the reign of Alexander Jannæus at Jerusalem) waged with them. For, ha-

him, and in danger of being delivered to the Romans, it is generally said, that he put an end to his days, for which purpose he carried poison always about him concealed under the stone of his ring. This is the account we have in Livy, lib. xxxix. c. 51. and what Plutarch and the Roman Satirist does more than allude to.

O gloria! vincitur idem,
Nempe et in exilium præceps fugit, atque ibi magnus
Mirandusque cliens sedet ad prætoris regis,
Donec Bithyno libeat vigilare tyranno.
Finem animæ, quæ res humanas miscuit olim,
Non gladii, non saxa dabunt, non tela, sed ille
Cannarum vindex, ac tanti sanguinis ultor

Annulus, ————— JUVEN. Sat. 10.

He was born a soldier; and a continual exercise of arms made him a great captain. He was always just in his schemes, and immense in his views: Had an admirable genius at hitting the true means for the execution of his designs, and the greatest artifice in acting without being discovered. He was infinite in expedients, and as skilful in recovering himself out of danger, as he was in drawing others into it. But then he was a person of no fidelity, no religion, no humanity, though he had the art of putting on the appearance of all these virtues, whenever he thought it subservient to his interest; *Vertot's Revolution of the Roman republic.*

† The war with Jugurtha intervened indeed; but this was not of any long continuance, nor is it any where referred to in the sacred history; however, it may not be improper to mention thus much of it.—That this Jugurtha was nephew to Micipsa, king of Numidia, who left behind him two sons, Adherbal and Hiempsal, both of whom Jugurtha murdered, and then usurped their kingdom; that when the Romans were for calling him to an account for all this wickedness, he for a long while bribed the commissioners and generals that were sent against him, till at length, being defeated first by Metellus, and afterwards by Marius, he was betrayed by Bocchus king of Mauritania, who was both his ally and father-in law; that being thus betrayed, and seized, he was laden with chains, and given up to Sylla, who delivered him into the hands of the General Marius, and he, in the triumph that was given him, dragged him like a slave at the wheels of his chariot; and that, after this ceremony was over, he was led to prison, stripped of his royal robes, and then pushed naked into a dungeon, where he was condemned to be starved to death; *Sallusti bellum Jugurthinum.*

ving

ving very unjustly seized on the kingdoms of Cappadocia and Bithynia, when the Romans interposed for the surrender of them to the persons to whom they had decreed them, he refused to obey, and thereupon hostilities ensued. (x) For some time at first Mithridates was successful; but * was very cruel, while he had the superiority; still, having sent into Greece an army of three hundred and ten thousand men, under the command of three of his best generals, Sylla alone, with no more than fifteen thousand foot, and fifteen hundred horse, vanquished them all in several battles; and Fimbria, the next year, with another Roman army, pressed Mithridates himself so very close, that in Patana, a maritime town in Ætolia, he was in imminent danger of being made prisoner, (y) which terrified him to such a degree, that he sued for peace, which, upon these conditions was granted him,—"That he should restore Bithynia to Nicomedes, and Cappadocia to Ariobarzanes, and to the Romans whatever he had taken from them in the late war; that he should content himself with his paternal kingdom of Pontus, yield to the Romans seventy of his ships; and pay them three thousand talents for the charges of the war."

But the terms of this peace were too hard long to be submitted to by a man of Mithridates's spirit; and therefore, as soon as Nicomedes (who left the Roman people his heirs) was dead, he again seized on Bithynia and Paphla-

(x) Plutarch de Sylla; Appian. in Mithrid.; and Vell. Paterc. lib. ii. c. 23.

* To this purpose historians have observed, that when, upon a defeat given to the Roman forces, he had taken Manlius Aquilius, and Quintus Oppius, the two generals, prisoners, he not only treated them with the utmost indignity, but afterwards with equal cruelty tortured them to death; and that, finding a great number of Romans and Italians, upon one occasion or other, dispersed through all the provinces and cities of the Lesser Asia, he sent secret orders to all the governors of these provinces, and magistrates of these cities, to put them all to death in one and the same day, which was accordingly executed with such rigour, that no less than eighty thousand (say some), near double that number (say others), of Romans and Italians were then massacred in that country; Appian. in Mithrid. epit.; Liv. lib. lxxvii. lxxviii. and L. Florus lib. iii. c. 5.

(y) Plutarch de Sylla; Appian. in Mithrid.; and Velleius Paterculus, lib. ii. c. 23.

A. M.
4001, &c.
Ant. Chris.
1, &c.
aut. Ær.
Vulg. iii.
from Jos.
lib. xiii.
c. 19. to the
end of lib.
xv.

gonia, and the Romans again were forced to declare war against him.

(z) The two consuls for the year, Lucius Lucullus and Marcus Cotta, were sent to carry on this war; but the latter of these, being noways skilled in military affairs, was overcome by Mithridates not far from Chalcedon, with the loss of most of his men, and a good part of his fleet, which was there to defend the coasts; till Lucullus, coming to his assistance, not only drove Mithridates from the siege of Cyzirus, a city on the Propontis, that was in the Roman interest, but destroyed his fleet in the Hellespont, retook Bithynia and Paphlagonia from him, pursued him into his kingdom, besieged his very capital, and in one engagement ruined all his forces, and compelled him to flee into Armenia, there to implore the protection and assistance of Tigranes, his son-in-law.

Nor was this all; for, as soon as Lucullus understood that Tigranes was engaged in the war with him, he immediately marched his army against him, passed the Euphrates, passed the Tigris, defeated the forces that were sent against him, and having besieged his metropolis, with not the twentieth part of their number, in one battle gained a complete victory over an army of three hundred and six thousand men, that were coming to relieve it. Lucullus, in short, had in every place the advantage against these two confederate kings, (a) until, by the management of Publius Clodius, his own soldiers began to mutiny against him, insomuch, that having lost all the power and authority of a general, he was forced to deliver up the army to Pompey, and return to Rome.

Pompey, at his first entering upon the war, had taken into alliance with him Phraortes king of Parthia; but the mutiny which had happened in the latter end of Lucullus's time, had given Mithridates an opportunity of recovering a good part of his kingdom, and of getting together a great number of forces, wherewith he endeavoured to harass and distress the Roman army, till Pompey at length fell upon him by surprize, vanquished his troops, made him flee for shelter northward beyond the springs of the Euphrates, and then marched directly against his confederate Tigranes: But Tigranes, terrified at this, and not sufficiently provided to resist the power that was coming against

(z) Plutarch de Lucullo; and Appian. de Mithrid. (a) Plutarch de Lucullo et Pompeio; and Dion Cassius, lib. 36.

him,

him, was resolved to surrender himself and his kingdom, both into the hands of the Roman general; who, upon his paying the Romans six thousand talents for making a causeless war against them, and yielding up to them all his conquests on this side the Euphrates, ordered, that he should still reign in his paternal kingdom of Armenia the Greater, and his son † in Gordena and Sophena, two provinces that bordered upon it.

A. M.
4001, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1, &c.
aut. Ær.
Vulg. iii.
from Jos.
lib. xiii.
c. 19. to the
end of lib.
xv.

(b) In the mean time Mithridates, having passed through several Sythian nations, came at last into the Cimmerian Bosphorus, (now the country of the Crim Tartars), which was part of his dominions, and where he had appointed one of his sons, called *Machares* *, to reign. From hence he sent ambassadors to Pompey, offering in

† The reason why Pompey made this partition of Triganes's kingdom, was, because Triganes's son had put himself under the protection of the Romans. The father Triganes had three sons by Cleopatra, the daughter of Mithridates, two of whom he had, upon slight occasions, put to death; and therefore this third, not thinking his life safe within the power of so cruel a father, fled to Phraortes king of Parthia, whose daughter he had married, and by him was assisted to invade his father's dominions, and lay siege to Artaxata, his capital city; but, being routed by Tigranes the father, and drove out of the country, he betook himself to the Roman camp, and there, by way of a suppliant, cast himself at the feet of Pompey. Pompey at first received him very kindly; but when he seemed dissatisfied with the portion of his father's kingdom that he had allotted him, and was for exciting the nobility of Armenia to renew the war against the Romans, and the Parthians to join in it, Pompey put him among those whom he reserved for his triumph, and after that triumph, left him in prison; *Prideaux's Connection, anno 66.*

(b) Appian, in Mithrid.; Epit. Liv. lib. cx.; and Dion Cassius, lib. xxxvi.

* This young prince having been hard pressed by the Romans, while they lay at the siege of Sinape, and had then by their fleet the mastery of the Euxine sea, (which lay between Sinape and the kingdom of Machares), had made a peace with them, and ever since maintained the terms of it. By this means he had much incensed his father, and dreaded his approach. While, therefore, he was on the way, he sent ambassadors to him to make his peace, and to urge in excuse, that what he had done in that respect was by the necessity of his affairs, and not by choice: But, finding his father implacable, and no possibility of making his escape, he slew himself, to avoid falling into his hands; *Appian. in Mithrid.*

his

A. M.
4004, etc.
Ant. Chris.
1, &c.
an. Ær.
Vulg. lib.
from Jos.
lib. xiii.
c. 19. to the
end of lib.
xv.

his behalf, that in case he might be allowed to hold his paternal kingdom, (as Tigranes had been), he would pay tribute to the Romans for it, and relinquish to them all his other dominions; but, when he understood that Pompey would listen to no proposals of peace, upon any other condition, than that he should come and surrender himself as Tigranes had done, he could not bring himself to submit to that; and therefore, having got together a considerable number of forces out of the Scythian nations, wherewith he augmented his own army, and sent agents to engage the Gauls to join him, as soon as he approached the Alps (c) he resolved to make a desperate expedition † through the way of Panonia, and the Tarentine Alps, into Italy itself, and there assault the Romans, as Hannibal had done at their very doors. But when the army was to go upon their march, they were so frightened at the thoughts of it, that they conspired against him, and made Pharnaces, his son, their king.

Mithridates dreaded nothing so much, as to fall into the hands of the Romans, and be led in triumph by them; and therefore, being apprehensive, that his son might deliver him to Pompey, and finding no possibility of making his escape, he retired into his apartment, and, having there distributed poison to his wives, his concubines, and daughters, that were with him, he took a dose of it himself; but when he found it did not sufficiently operate upon him, he had recourse to his sword, to finish the work *, and so died, after he had lived seventy-two years, and reigned sixty of them.

The

(c) Plutarch. De Pompeio; Dion Cassius, lib. xxxvii.; Appian in Mithridaticis; Epitome Livii, lib. cvi.; and L. Florus, lib. iii. c. 5.

† A desperate expedition indeed, which contained a march of above two thousand miles, through all those countries, which are now called *Tartaria Crimæa, Podolia, Moldavia, Walachia, Transylvania, Hungaria, Stiria, Carinthia, Tyrol*, and *Lombardy*, and over the three great rivers of the Boristhenes, the Danube, and the Po; *Prideaux's Connection*, anno 64.

* The character which Velleius Paterculus gives us of this great man, is expressed in these words. “Per ea tempora Mithridates, Ponticus rex, vir neque silendus, neque dicendus sine cura. Bello acerrimus, virtute eximius, aliquando fortuna, semper animo maximus; consiliis dux, miles manu, odio in Romanos Hannibal:” And from other historians we may learn,—That he was naturally a man of great capacity and understanding, which

The Romans, after they had overcome all foreign powers and potentates that pretended to rival them, and thereby become masters of the greatest part of the then known world, fell soon into contests with one another about the government of it, and in every age some one appeared, who, at the expence of the public peace, affected to become the sole regent of it: but the most remarkable struggles of this kind, that any way relate to the Scripture-history, were between Sylla and Marius, Cæsar and Pompey, Anthony and Augustus.

A. M.
4001, etc.
Ant. Christ.
1, etc.
aut. Ær.
Vulg. iii.
from Jos.
lib. xiii.
c. 19. to the
end of lib.
xv.
Their several civil wars; between Sylla and Marius.

The occasion of the difference between Sylla and Marius was the choice of a general to the Mithridatic war. Marius (*d*), who was by birth a Plebeian, and of a very mean parentage, had, by his military prowess, and interest with the common people, raised himself to the chief command of the Jugurthine war; and, in the war against the Teutones and Cimbri, had gained himself immortal honour;

which he had taken much care to improve: For he was not only well-skilled in the learning of those times, but, though he had two and twenty different nations under his dominions, yet he could speak to every one of them in their own proper language. He was a prince of great undertakings; and though he failed in most of those wherein he had to do with the Romans, yet, after every overthrow, we find him still rising up again with new vigour; for his last design of invading Italy sufficiently shows, that though his fortune often forsook him, yet his stout heart, his courageous spirit, and his enterprising genius never did. After all, he was a man of great vices, as well as virtues. His cruelty was shewn in the murder of his mother, and his brother, and the great number of his sons, friends, and followers, whom, at several times, and often on slight occasions, he put to death. His ambition was manifest by his many unjust invasions of other mens rights for the augmentation of his own dominions, and the many wicked methods of treachery, murder, and perfidiousness, that he took to accomplish his end. And his lust appeared in the great number of wives and concubines he had to serve it: For, in the one or other of these capacities, wherever he found an handsome woman, he always took her to him, and carried some of these with him wherever he went: But, when reduced to any distress, he always poisoned those whom he could not carry off, in like manner as he did his sisters and daughters in this case; that none of them might fall into the enemy's hands; *Velleius Paterculus*, lib. ii. c. 18.; *Valerius Maximus*, lib. viii. c. 7.; *Appian. in Mithridaticis*; and *Plutarch in Lucullo et Pompeio*.

(*d*) Vertot's Revolutions of Rome, c. 10.

but,

A. M.
4001, etc.
Ant. Christ.
1, etc.
aut Ær.
Vulg. iii.
from Jos.
lib. xiii.
c. 19, to the
end of lib.
xv.

but, being now upwards of seventy years old, in the late confederate war he had not so well maintained his reputation; whether it was, that old age rebated his activity, or fortune had not thrown occasions of signalising himself in his way. Sylla, on the contrary, a Patrician by birth, and of one of the most illustrious families in Rome, was lively, active, and impetuous, had gained great battles, taken considerable towns, and, through the whole course of the war, so distinguished himself by his many and glorious successes, that he soon had the consulate conferred on him, and was afterwards declared governour of Asia Minor, and commander in chief in the war against Mithridates. Marius, who thought that all the preferments of the commonwealth did of right belong to him, looked upon this preference as an injustice done him, and was therefore resolved to carry by force, what he had not attained by the peoples choice.

To this purpose, he drew over to his interest a tribune, called Publ. Sulpitius, an inveterate enemy to Sylla, and who, by his power and authority among the people, procured a law to pass, which took from Sylla the command of the army against Mithridates, and conferred it upon Marius. Marius accordingly sent some officers of his party to take possession of the command of the army, until he himself could come to them; but Sylla had prevented them, and made so sure of the affections of the soldiers, that instead of obeying the orders sent from Marius, they killed his officers, and besought Sylla to lead them against his enemies at Rome, before he transported them into Asia. Incensed at the death of his officers, Marius had caused several of Sylla's friends to be put to death, and their houses to be plundered. This made Sylla hasten his march to Rome, where he soon defeated the body which Marius and Sulpitius had raised to oppose him, and entered the city sword in hand. The decree, which transferred the command of the army from him to Marius, he caused to be repealed, and articles of impeachment drawn up against C. Marius, young Marius his son, the tribune Sulpitius, and twelve senators, who were of their party, for having been the authors of the late insurrection. Heretupon they were declared enemies to the Roman commonwealth; were interdicted water and fire, *i. e.* all manner of sustenance, or assistance from any body; had rewards set upon their heads, and troops on all sides detached to hunt them down.

Sulpitius

Sulpitius in the search was apprehended by some of Syl-
la's soldiers, who cut off his head, carried it to Rome, and nailed it to the Rostrum; but Marius had the good luck to make his escape, though † he underwent many dangers and hazards of his life, during the time of his exile.

A. M.
4001, etc.
Ant. Chris.
1, &c.
aut. Ær.
Vulg. 3.
from Jos.
lib. xiii. c.
19. to the
end of lib.
xv.

In the mean time, Cornelius Cinna, who, though a Patrician by birth, had devoted himself to the Plebeian party; when once he was created consul, and Sylla was gone to his command in Asia, was for rescinding the decree,

† After he was upwards of seventy years of age, and had been six times Consul, he was forced to fly from Rome on foot, without either a friend or servant to accompany him; and to avoid Sylla's people, that pursued him, to throw himself into a morass, where he lay the whole night, sunk, and buried in mud up to the neck. In the morning, when he got out, and endeavoured to gain the sea-shore, in hopes of meeting some vessel to carry him out of Italy, he was known by the people of Minturnæ, seized and carried into the town, with a rope about his neck, all naked and muddy. The magistrates of the place, in obedience to the decree of the senate, which had attainted him, and set a price upon his head, sent a public slave, a Cimbrian by birth, to put him to death; but as the slave approached with his naked sword, "Can'st thou, thou Barbarian," (said he, with a loud voice) "have the assurance to assassinate Caius Marius!" Whereupon the slave, frightened at the sound of a name so terrible to his countrymen, threw down his sword, and ran out of the prison in great disorder, crying out, "That it was not in his power to kill Marius." The magistrates of Minturnæ, looking upon this as an interposition of heaven for the preservation of this great man, not only set him at liberty, but furnished him with a vessel, wherein he sailed first into the island of Ænaria, and thence, designing for Africa, he was forced, either by stress of weather, or want of water, to go on shore upon the coasts of Sicily, where he met with new dangers. For a Roman quæstor, who had the chief command there, offered to seize him; so that Marius, being forced to defend himself, lost sixteen of his men, who made a stand just upon the shore, whilst others helped him on board. From Sicily he sailed to Africa, and landed at Carthage; but from thence he was expelled by Sextilius, who, as pretor, commanded in that province, and, notwithstanding the rigour of the season, was forced to go on board, and spend a good part of the winter in his ship, wandering up and down those seas, till, being informed of what was doing at Rome by a messenger from Cinna, he returned to Italy, joined Cinna, besieged Rome, and revenged himself too severely of his enemies; *Vertot's Revolutions of Rome, lib. 10.*

A. M.
4001, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1, &c.
au Æt.
Vulg. 3.
from Jos.
lib. xiii. c.
19. to the
end of lib.
xv.

whereby Marius was proscribed: But, when the senate perceived his design, they soon passed sentence upon him, declaring him fallen from the right of a citizen, and deprived of the dignity of a consul, and in his room they elected Lucius Merula. Cinna, who was naturally proud and fiery, upon hearing of this sentence, raised an army, with purpose to revenge himself upon the authors of it, and sent to Marius to come to his assistance, who, as he passed through the cities of Italy, was joined by some veterans that had formerly served under him, and, by promising freedom to all slaves that would come under his banner, had got together a good body of men. With these, and the forces that Cinna had collected, they both marched directly to Rome, where, of the two consuls, Octavius was killed on his tribunal, and Merula (to prevent the enemy from putting him to a worse death) had his veins opened; where several senators, of great note, were by the order of Marius murdered in the streets, their heads cut off, and laid upon the Rostrum, and their mangled bodies left to be devoured by dogs; and where he caused Sylla's house to be razed, his goods confiscated, his wife, children, and friends to be proscribed, and himself to be declared an enemy to the commonwealth, even while he was adding large provinces and kingdoms to the Roman state.

In the mean time, his wife, children, and friends, who had fled to his camp for protection, were continually soliciting him to turn his arms against his private enemies, and to free his country from those tyrants, who had so long oppressed it: So that, having concluded a peace with Mithridates upon very advantageous terms, he passed over with his army into Italy. But, before he was arrived, Marius was dead of a pleurisy, occasioned by excessive drinking, to which, in the decline of life, he accustomed himself; and young Marius, who inherited his father's cruelty, as well as power, entered into a close league with Cinna, and engaged Valerius Flaccus (whom they procured to be made consul) in their interest, and design of opposing Sylla. But Sylla, as soon as he landed in Italy, defeated Marius, and reduced him to the necessity of laying violent hands upon himself; and having vanquished all his other enemies, entered Rome at the head of his victorious forces, and there gave a loose to his licentious passion of revenge. All the poor people, that had appeared against him in arms, even though they came to beg quarter, he ordered to be massacred.

tered. Fourſcore ſenators, and fix hundred knights, together with an infinite number of the richeſt citizens of Rome, he cauſed to be proſcribed : Their ſons and grandſons he degraded from all their rights and privileges : Thoſe that ſhould protect or harbour any of them, he threatened with the like proſcription ; and to thoſe that ſhould apprehend or murder any of them, he promiſed a reward of two talents ; ſo that it became no uncommon thing for ſlaves, that had murdered their maſters, nay for children, that had murdered their fathers, to come, with their hands reeking in blood, to demand the reward of their treaſon or parricide.

A. M.
4007, etc.
Ant. Chriſ.
1, etc.
aut Ær.
Vulg. 3.
from Joſ.
lib. xiii. c.
19. to the
end of lib.
xv.

Nor was it only the party that favoured Marius, which ſuffered in this barbarous manner, but, as Sylla (*e*) made little or no account of any man's life, he permitted his friends and officers, with impunity, to revenge themſelves of all their private enemies, inſomuch, that freſh numbers were proſcribed, and murdered every day, and no one, (eſpecially if he was rich and wealthy), was ſecure of his life for a moment : Nay, to ſuch an exceſs of cruelty and arbitrarineſs did he proceed at laſt, that, without naming any particular perſons, he proſcribed whole cities and nations, and, by way of conſiſcation, ſeized on all the eſtates, houſes, and territories, belonging to ſuch towns in Italy as had declared for Marius during the civil war, which (to attach them more firmly to his intereſt) he took care to diſtribute among his ſoldiers.

Some, however, that were about him, and had probably been benefited by theſe uſurpations, being apprehenſive that ſuch violent proceedings might not laſt long, (to give them the better ſanction, and ſome colour of law) adviſed him to take upon him the office, not of a temporary, but perpetual dictator. The power of this ſupreme magiſtrate was boundleſs. The authority of the conſuls, and all other magiſtrates, except that of the tribunes, was ſuperſeded by it. He had power of life and death over his fellow-citizens, was ſole arbiter of peace and war, was at liberty to raiſe or diſband forces as he thought fit, and under no obligation to give an account of his conduct to any body. In a word, he had all the power of the moſt abſolute king, (greater indeed than any of the ancient kings of Rome ever had) ; but then it was only in the times of the greateſt exigencies of the common-

(*e*) Vertot's Revolutions of Rome, lib. 10.

A. M.
4001, etc.
Aut. Chris.
1, etc.
Aut. Æt.
Vulg. 3.
from Jos.
lib. xiii. c.
19, to the
end of lib.
xv.



between
Cæsar and
Pompey ;

wealth, when it was endangered either by powerful enemies abroad, or by civil commotions at home, that such an officer was appointed ; and, lest such a large power should be abused, no man was invested with it for longer than six months. But Sylla, who had terrified the people into a tame submission, and made himself absolute at Rome, would have it conferred on him for a time undetermined ; so that the Romans, who had changed kingly government into the republican under consuls, and military tribunes, after many ages, relapsed again into the absolute power of one ; though Sylla, to lessen the aversion which all republicans could not but have to such a form of government, took care to disguise what was in reality a royalty, under the less odious title of a † *Dictatorship*.

This success of Sylla's in climbing up to the empire, and supporting himself therein, made it apparent to those that came after him, that the Romans could bear a master, and gave occasion to the violent contests which afterwards happened between Cæsar and Pompey, who, after the death of Crassus *, and the Parthian war, were the two great competitors for the sovereignty of Rome.

Cncius

† One thing is wonderful in this Sylla, that after he had destroyed more than an hundred thousand of his fellow-citizens in the civil war, and had caused ninety senators, (of which fifteen had been consuls), and more than six and twenty hundred knights, to be put to death, he had the courage to lay down the dictatorship, and to reduce himself to the level of a private citizen, without fearing the resentment of so many illustrious families, whose heads he had destroyed by his cruel proscriptions. The Romans in general looked upon this his abdication of the sovereign power, as an instance of the greatest magnanimity, and gladly forgave him all his murders, for the sake of the liberty which he thereby restored them ; but his enemies imputed it to the natural uneasiness of his mind, and his continual fear, lest some Roman might be bold enough, at one stroke, to deprive him of his empire and his life both. However this be, it is certain, that, after having shed so much blood, he died peaceably in his bed, and a few days before his death, composed his own epitaph, which comprises his true character, viz. “ That no body had ever outdone him, either in obliging his friends, or “ persecuting his enemies ; ” *Vertot's Revolutions, lib. 11.*

* When Crassus led his army into Mesopotamia, there came to him a certain chief of an Arabian tribe, who, having served in the wars under Pompey, had contracted an acquaintance with several of the Romans, and was therefore a proper instrument for Surenas, the Parthian general, to employ upon this occasion.

He

Cneius Pompeius (whose father, being of the same name, had been consul, and served his country faithfully in the wars) was, from his very youth, the darling of the Roman people; created a general, before he had been a soldier; and, through the whole course of his life, attended with a wonderful train of victories and successes; (*f*) But being all along accustomed to the command of armies, he could not so well, upon the expiration of his commission, reduce himself to the simplicity of a private life; and therefore, whenever he appeared in public, he was always followed by a croud of his dependents, whose numerous appearance looked more like the court of some great prince, than the attendance of a citizen of any republic. It must be owned, however, that in his pursuit of dignities, he was less fond of the power that is inseparable from them, than of the honours and splendours that surround them; that, in short, he was a man of show, rather than real ambition; and, if he affected any high office in state, it was chiefly to raise himself above all the commanders of his time; for the great pride of his soul was, to be thought the only general of the commonwealth, whereas, he should have contended himself with being the first.

A. M.
4001. etc.
Ant. Christ.
1, etc.
aut Ær.
Vulg. 3.
from Jos.
lib. xiii. c.
19. to the
end of lib.
xv.
Pompey's
character.

He told Crassus, inquiring about the strength of the enemy, that they were unable to stand before him, and that, to obtain a complete victory, he had nothing to do, but to march directly against them, for which purpose, he offered himself to be their guide. Crassus was weak enough to accept of his offer; and accordingly, the crafty man led them along the plains of Mesopotamia, until he had brought them into a sandy desert, where the Parthians, he knew would have the best opportunity of destroying them, and then rode, off to acquaint Surenas with it, who immediately fell upon them, and gave them a terrible defeat. Nor was this the only false step that Crassus made: For having rested the remains of his army for one day at Carrhæ, not far from the place where the battle was fought, when, in the night following, he endeavoured to make his escape, he committed himself to the guidance of one Andromachus, another traitor, who led him into the midst of bogs and morasses, where Surenas overtook him, slew him, and gave his army the greatest overthrow that the Romans had ever received since the battle of Cannæ; for, in this engagement, twenty thousand were slain, and ten thousand taken prisoners; and the rest forced to make their escape by several ways into Armenia, Cicilia, and Syria; *Plutarch, in Crassus; Appian, in Parthicus; and Dion Cassius, lib. 40.*

(*f*) Vertot's Revolutions, lib. 13.

A. M.
4001, etc.
Ant. Chriſt.
1, etc.
aut /Er.
Vulg. 3.
from Joſ.
lib. xiii. c.
19. to the
end of lib.
xv.
Caſar's
character.

(g) Caius Julius Cæſar was born of the illuſtrious family of the Julii, and was indeed the moſt extraordinary perſon of his age. Nature, which ſeemed to have formed him for the command of the reſt of mankind, had given him an air of empire, and a dignity of aſpect inexpressible; but then this air of grandeur was allayed by the gentleneſs and ſweetneſs of his behaviour, which gained him the hearts of thoſe he converſed with, and laid the foundation of his future greatneſs. He was a man of exalted courage, and inſinuating eloquence; extenſive in his deſigns, indefatigable in purſuing them, and ambitious of the great offices of ſtate, chiefly for the increaſe of his intereſt and power, and for the means and opportunity which they afforded him, by gentle degrees, of becoming the maſter and ſovereign of his country.

Upon the death of Craſſus, who held the balance between theſe two great men, the emulation between them began to break out. Cæſar was in Gaul, purſuing his victories againſt the Helvetians, the Germans, the Belgæ, the Britons, and ſeveral other nations, and aſtoniſhing all the world with the fame of his great exploits; but Pompey, ſince the time of his victories in Aſia, had continued (now for the ſpace of twelve years) for the moſt part in Rome, notwithſtanding he had obtained a large commiſſion to govern the provinces of Spain and Africa.

By his conſtant reſiding at Rome he had got a perfect aſcendant over the ſenate; and ſome, to remedy the diſorders they then laboured under, were for creating him dictator, till Cato, who was always watchful for the public liberty, propoſed rather to chuſe him ſole conſul, without a colleague; becauſe a conſul was reſponſible to the people and ſenate for his conduct, which a dictator was not.

The ſenate approved of this expedient, and accordingly made Pompey the ſole conſul. They continued him likewiſe in his former governments, and, for the payment of the forces he had under him, gave him an annual allowance of a thouſand talents out of the exchequer: But, as all good underſtanding between him and Cæſar was now vaniſhed, he took care to prefer two laws, which the ſenate readily agreed to, viz. "That the miſcarriages of officers, for twenty years laſt paſt, ſhould be inquired into, and that all abſent perſons ſhould not be allowed to de-

(g) Ibid.

" mand

“mand any public employments;” the latter of which was more immediately levelled at Cæsar; for Pompey’s design herein was, to oblige him to abandon the government of the two Gauls, and the command of his army, in order to come in person to solicit the consulate, which he in his turn (as he signified by his letters) expected to have conferred on him.

A. M.
4001, etc.
Ant. Christ.
1, etc.
aut Ær.
Vul. iii.
from Jos.
lib. xiii.
c. 19. to the
end of lib.
xv.

Cæsar was very well aware of Pompey’s design; but, instead of relinquishing his government, and returning to Rome, he chose to remain at the head of his forces, and, when the senate (by Pompey’s procurement) came to a resolution of taking the government from him by naming his successor, he wrote several letters to them, with a great deal of temper, requesting either that they would continue him in his government, as they had done Pompey, or permit him, though absent from Rome, to put up for the consulate; but the majority of the senate, that was entirely under Pompey’s direction, rejected every proposal that he sent; so that finding himself treated with contempt, he passed the Alps at the head of the third legion, and halted at Ravenna, from whence he sent Fabius, one of his lieutenants, with letters to the senate, (b) “wherein he magnified his own exploits, expecting that some regard should be had to his services; and wherein he declared his readiness to lay down his command, in case Pompey would do the like; but that, if that general pretended to retain his forces, he knew very well how to defend himself at the head of his legions, and would, in a few days, be at Rome, to revenge the injuries which were done to him, as well as the public.”

This letter, when read to the senate, was represented as a kind of declaration of war, and accordingly procured a decree that Lucius Domitius should be Cæsar’s successor, and have four thousand new levies to enable him to go and take possession of his government; and that in case Cæsar refused to disband his army within such a time, he should be prosecuted as an enemy to the commonwealth.” When Cæsar was informed of this decree, he sent orders to such of his troops as were nearest at hand, to advance towards the Rubicon, a small river that parted his government of Gallia Cisalpina from the rest of Italy. When he came up the next day, he found there five thou-

(b) Vertot’s *Revolutions*, lib. xiii.

A. M.
4001, &c.
Ant. Christ.
1, &c.
aut. Æt.
Vulg. iii.
from Jos.
lib. xiii.
c. 19. to
the end of
lib. xv.

stand foot, and three hundred horse; and having halted^a while on the bank of the river, he is said there to have been seized with some remorse upon consideration of what he was about to do; till, having reflected on the hatred and inveteracy of his enemies, he threw himself into the river at once, passed it, and took Ariminum by surprise; and from thence put all Rome in such a disorder, that Pompey, not having sufficient forces to resist him, with the consuls, and a great number of senators, retired to Capua, and from thence to Brundisium, where taking shipping, they soon arrived at the port of Dyrrachium, a city of Epirus, where Pompey intended to gather together such an army as might enable him to make a stand.

Upon the retreat of Pompey, Cæsar, in the space of sixty days, made himself master of all Italy, and came to Rome, where he promised the people every thing should be done for the good of the commonwealth: And having filled up the senate, and settled some kind of government among them, he marched his army directly into Spain, where Pompey was governour, and had left several troops attached to his interest. As soon as he came thither, he fell upon Afranius and Petreius, Pompey's lieutenants; and having driven them out of the province, he made himself master thereof, and so returned to Rome, where he was declared dictator, though, after eleven days, he laid down that office, and, together with Servilius Isauricus, was elected consul for the year ensuing.

Pompey, by this time, had been in Epirus for the space of a year, and had got together a considerable army out of Greece, Asia, and all the eastern countries, to support his interest; but when Cæsar went after him, the season of the year was too far advanced, either for the fleets to be at sea, or the armies to take the field, and so both sides lay still in their winter-quarters.

In the spring both armies took the field, and encamped against each other near Dyrrachium, (now Durazzo), where, in several skirmishes, Cæsar had the better; but at length, in one of them he received so great a defeat, that himself acknowledged he must have been utterly undone, had Pompey seen his advantage and pursued it. For fear of the like disaster, therefore, or the want of provisions for his army, Cæsar decamped the next day, and marched towards Thessaly, where he found plenty of all things, and there waited to give Pompey battle. Pompey had an army
of

of forty-five thousand foot, and five thousand horse, but they were most of them raw unexperienced men, raised out of the effeminate nations of Asia, and some Roman senators, and other gentlemen, who knew very little of war. Cæsar, on the other hand, had an army of twenty-two thousand foot, and one thousand horse; but then they were most part of them veteran soldiers, who, for the space of ten years, had been accustomed to war and victory in Gaul. On the plains of Pharsalia these two armies met with two of the greatest generals in the world at the head of them, disputing for universal empire. The engagement for some time was sharp on both sides: But, at length, Pompey's army was vanquished, and broken. Fifteen thousand of them were slain; four and twenty thousand made prisoners; their camp was taken, and their general, with much ado, forced to make his escape in disguise, and, after having wandered from place to place, was, at length, in Egypt, * perfidiously slain in the fifty-ninth year of his age.

A. M.
4001, etc.
Ant. Chris.
1, etc.
aut Ær.
Vulg. 3:
from Jos.
lib. xiii.
c. 19. to the
end of lib.
xv.

After

* After the defeat of his army, Pompey, not well knowing which way to betake himself, determined at last to go to Egypt. He had been a very considerable friend to the late king Ptolemy Auletes, and therefore he expected a kind reception from his son. Taking therefore his wife Cornelia, and his younger son Sextus with him, he steered his course towards Egypt, and, as he drew near to land, sent messengers to the king, desiring his protection, and aid, in his present distress. The king was then a minor, under the tuition of Pothynus an eunuch, and Achilles the general of his army, who, taking Theodotus, and some others into the consultation, advised together what answer to send. Some were for receiving, and others for rejecting him; but Theodotus was of opinion, that their only safe way was to dispatch him: "For should they receive him, as he argued, Cæsar would revenge it; should they reject him, if ever he recovered power, himself would revenge it; and therefore the only method to secure themselves from both, was to cut him off; for hereby they would certainly make Cæsar their friend, and prevent the other from doing any mischief; for dead men (said he, according to the proverb) never bite." This advice prevailed, and accordingly Achilles, with Septimus a Roman commander, then in the service of the king of Egypt, was sent to put it in execution. Under the pretence therefore of conducting Pompey to the king, they took him out of the ship into a boat; but as soon as they came near the shore, they fell upon him, and slew him, cut off his head, and cast his dead

carcass

A. M.
4001, etc.
Ant. Christ.
1, etc.
aut. Ær.
Vulg. 3.
from Jos.
lib. xiii.
c. 19. to the
end of lib.
xv.

After the death of Pompey, and the return of Cæsar to Rome, the senate decreed him uncommon honours, and an unlimited authority. He was appointed consul for ten years, and perpetual dictator; had the name of *imperator* given him, and the august title of *Father of his country*. His person was declared sacred and inviolable; and at all public games he had the privilege of sitting in a gilded chair, with a golden crown upon his head; but notwithstanding all this profusion of honours, we find in what a barbarous manner he was murdered at last.

between
Anthony
and Augu-
stus,

After the death of Julius Cæsar, great confusion and disorders happened in the Roman state, till, at length, Anthony and Octavianus, upon the forced abdication of Lepidus, became the two great men in the empire. Anthony had all the east, and Octavianus all the west; but not content with this, they soon took occasion to differ with each other, and entered into contest who should have the whole.

Anthony's
character.

Anthony was a person of great note for his military skill and abilities. At the battle of Pharsalia he did wonders: And in that of Philippi, (where Octavianus * behaved but very meanly), the whole victory was owing to his courage and conduct: but he was exceedingly addicted to vice, especially to the love of women, which Cleopatra observing, laid hold of him on this weak side, and for the gratification of her ambition and avarice, (which were the two

carcass on the strand. His wife and son seeing this barbarous murder, raised bitter cries and lamentations; but all to no purpose: Perceiving therefore themselves in the like danger, they hoisted sail and made off, leaving this great man (who, in the fifty-ninth year of his age, came to this woful end) no other funeral, than what Philip, an enfranchised bondman of his, and a poor Roman, who came thither by accident, could give him, by making a funeral pile of the broken pieces of an old boat, that lay wrecked on the shore; *Plutarch, in Pompeio; and Appian, De bellis civilibus, lib. 2.*

* On the eve before the battle at Philippi, under pretence of some indisposition, he left the body, which he commanded, and, while the two armies were engaged, hid himself amongst the baggage; and, in a sea-fight against young Pompey, he had not the courage to see the two fleets engage, but lay in the bottom of the ship, with his eyes lift up to heaven, as if he had been in a trance, and never once shewed himself to his soldiers, until news was brought him, that the enemy was fled; *Vertot's Revolutions of Rome, lib. 14.*

predominant

predominant passions in her), put him upon such measures, as gave a general offence to the Romans.

Octavianus, on the other hand, though he was always successful, yet for this he was indebted not so much to his courage, as his cunning and management; for, though he had a genius capable of framing the greatest projects, yet in cool blood, he found himself incapable of facing the meanest danger. And therefore being conscious of his weakness in this respect, he contented himself with supplying the schemes, and called in the valour of other men to put them in execution. In most of his military undertakings, he borrowed (as it were) Agrippa's courage, and the rather made use of him, because he was a mere soldier of fortune, and, consequently, incapable of creating any jealousy, or making himself head of any party.

After * a vast preparation for war, these two great men, of different characters, met with their armies and fleets near Actium, a town on the coast of Epirus, there to decide the empire of the world. Canidius, who had the chief command of Anthony's army, persuaded him to decamp, and march into the country of Thrace and Macedonia, there to try his fortune in a battle at land, because his army was much more to be depended on than his fleet: But Cleopatra, who was then in company with Anthony, advised him rather to decide the matter by a fight at sea; and her advice prevailed.

On the second of September therefore, A. M. 3973, Ant. Christ, 31, the two fleets engaged before the mouth of the Ambrasian gulf, in the sight of the two armies, the one drawn up on the north, and the other on the south side of the streights which entered the gulf, there to attend the event of the battle. The fight, for some time, continued dubious, with as fair a prospect of success for Anthony, as for his adversary, until Cleopatra forsook him: For she, being affrightened with the noise and terror of the battle, gave orders to the captain that commanded her ship, to sheer off, and so drew after her the whole Egyptian squadron, which consisted of sixty large men of war.

* Anthony's forces, at land and sea, consisted of an hundred thousand foot, twelve thousand horse, and five hundred ships of war; and Octavianus's of eighty thousand foot, twelve thousand horse, and two hundred and fifty ships of war; *Plutarch, in Antonio*; and *Dion. Cassius, lib. 80.*

A. M.
4001, &c.
Ant Christ.
1, etc.
aut Æt.
Vulg. 3.
from Jos.
lib. xiii.
c. 19, to the
end of lib.
xv.

Anthony, giving all for lost, made after her as fast as he could, and so, by his flight, yielded the victory to Octavianus; but after he was gone, his ships fought so valiantly, that though the engagement began at noon, it was not ended till it was night.

In the mean time, Anthony and Cleopatra got to Tenedos in Laconia, whither some of his ships that had escaped the fight, and several of his friends, repaired to him, from whom he understood, that though his fleet was destroyed, his land-army was still safe; and therefore he wrote to Canidius to retire with it through Macedonia into Asia, in hopes of being able, by that means, to renew the war: But Canidius, in his march, being overtaken by Octavianus, fled by night to Anthony, and the army, finding themselves deserted by their generals, went over to the enemy, as the foreign forces which had come to the assistance of Anthony, fled all home to their respective countries, and made their peace afterwards with the conquerour on the best terms they could.

By this time Anthony and Cleopatra were both returned to Alexandria, and it was not long before Octavianus went in pursuit of them. On their first coming, Anthony fell upon the Roman troops, while under the fatigue of their march, and put them to a total rout; but, in a second engagement with them, he was vanquished, and driven back into the city with great loss. The next morning, when he went down to the harbour to put the fleet in order to engage the enemy, no sooner were they drawn up in a line of battle, but he saw them desert, and go over to them, and, (to his great mortification), when he returned to the city, he found that all the land-forces, both horse and foot, had in like manner revolted from him.

When Anthony understood that all this was done by Cleopatra's treachery, and in hopes of making her peace with Octavianus, he could not forbear expressing his resentment of it in loud complaints; so that Cleopatra, for fear of him, but (as she pretended) to secure herself from the enemy, fled to a monument, which she caused to be built, of a great height, and wonderful structure, and having there shut herself up with two maids, and one eunuch, she had it given out that she was dead. Anthony no sooner heard the news, but, supposing it to be true, fell upon his sword; however, having intelligence, some time after, that Cleopatra was still alive, he ordered those

about

about him to carry him to her monument, where might be seen one of the most deplorable spectacles that can be imagined. Anthony, all over bloody, and breathing out his last, was, by the hands of Cleopatra and her two maids, drawn up by the ropes and pulleys that were employed in the building, to the top of the monument, and there, in a few moments, expired in her arms.

A.M.
4001, etc.
Ant. Christ.
1, etc.
aut Ær.
Vulg. 3.
from Jos.
lib. xiii.
c. 19. to the
end of lib.
xv.

After the death of Anthony, the great care of Octavianus was to make himself master of Cleopatra's person and riches; of her person, to adorn his triumph; and of her riches, to defray the expences of the war: But, after he had luckily compassed both, she, having private notice given her of her being designed to be carried to Rome, to make part of the show in her conquerour's triumph, caused herself * to be bitten with an asp, and so, to avoid this infamy *, died, after she had reigned, from the death of her father, twenty-two years, and lived thirty-nine.

Octavianus, (i) though much concerned for having thus lost the chief glory of his triumph, did nevertheless make

* The asp is a serpent of Egypt and Libya, and proper only to those climates. Those that are bitten by it, die within three hours, in a kind of gentle sleep or lethargy, without any sensation of pain; and therefore Cleopatra, who had experienced all kinds of poisons upon other creatures, made choice of this, as the easiest way of dying; and, to deceive her keepers, kept an asp always hid in her chamber, under figs, grapes, and flowers, which, when she was determined to die, she took and held to her arm, and, soon after its biting her, fell into a sleep, and so died.

Ausa et jacentem visere regiam
Vultu fereno fortis, et asperas
Tractare serpentes, ut atrum
Corpore combiberet venenum.
Deliberata morte ferocior:
Sævis Liburnis scilicet invidens,
Privata deduci superbo
Non humilis mulier triumpho.

HOR. Carm. lib. i. Ode 37.

* In her death, ended the reign of the family of the Ptolemies in Egypt, which hereupon was reduced into the form of a Roman province, and was governed by a Prefect sent thither from Rome. Under this form, it continued a province of the Roman empire six hundred and seventy years, till it was taken from them by the Saracens, in the year of our Lord 641; *Prideaux's Connection*, anno

30.

(i) Dion. Cassius, lib. 51.; and Suetonius, in Octavio.

for

A. M.
4001, etc.
Ant. Christ.
1, etc.
aut Jer.
Vulg. 3.
from Jos.
lib. xiii.
c. 19. to the
end of lib.
xv.

for Cleopatra (as he had permitted her to make for Anthony) a splendid and royal funeral. He had them both reposed in the same monument which they had begun, and gave orders to have it finished. Having thus settled his affairs in Egypt, and cut off all those from whom he might expect any fresh disturbances, he made a review of the several provinces of the Lesser Asia, and the isles adjoining, and so passing through Greece, returned to Rome, where he triumphed for three days successively, for his victory over the Dalmatians, and for the sea-fight at Actium, and for the conquest of Egypt; in the last of which, were led before him the children of Cleopatra, and though herself had escaped that fate, her effigy was carried in procession, with an asp hanging at her arm, to denote the manner of her death.

He is made
sole emperor
and pontifex
maximus.

After this triumph, he held a private consultation with Agrippa and Mecænas, (his two chief ministers, and principal instruments of his greatness), whether he should restore the commonwealth to its ancient state, or retain the sovereign power. Agrippa was for the restoring, but Mecænas for the retaining part; whereupon Octavianus, knowing that the senate was filled with his creatures, whose fortunes depended on his holding the sovereignty, proposed indeed, in a formal speech, to resign his authority; but, no sooner was the proposal made, than the whole senate, with an unanimous voice, dissuaded him from it, and, with all manner of arguments, pressed him to take upon him the sole administration of the government, which, with much seeming reluctance, at length he consented to. But, by no means would he submit to accept of it for a longer term than ten years, though, from ten years to ten years, upon one pretence or other, he continued himself in it as long as he lived, and so transmitted it to his successors.

With this new power, the senate was determined to confer on him a new name. Himself had taken upon him the common title of *Imperator*, which the soldiers, during the times of the republic, used to give to victorious generals; but this was not thought adequate to his merit: And therefore, since the word *Augustus* seemed to signify something that, above human, was *sacred* and *venerable*, this was made choice of, and, by the general suffrage of the senate, first given to him, with many more things decreed in his honour, by the flattery of some, who court-
ed

ed his favour, and the fear of others, who dreaded his power.

Augustus (for so we must now call him) having raised himself to this height of power and glory, as soon as Lepidus *, who had been pontifex maximus, or high-priest of Rome, was dead, assumed to himself (as did his successors in the empire) that office ; and the first thing he did, was to examine into the prophetic books, which at that time went abroad under the name of the *Sibyls* †.

That in the reign of Tarquinius Superbus, there came a strange woman to Rome, who offered to sell to the king nine volumes of these Sibylline oracles, but, upon his refusing

A. M.
4001, etc.
Ant. Christ.
1, etc.
aut Æt.
Vulg. 3.
from Jos.
lib. xiii
c. 19. to the
end of lib.
xv.
An account
of the Sibyl-
line oracles,
and their va-
lidity.

* This Lepidus was one of the triumvirate with Octavianus and Anthony, but a man of no manner of merit. He joined Octavianus, in carrying on the war against Sextus Pompeius, the son of Pompey the Great ; but when he arrogated the whole honour of their successes to himself, Octavianus drew over all his army to desert him, and so reduced him to the necessity of begging his life, and of being content to lead the remainder of it in a private and mean condition, at Circetii, a small maritime town among the Latins, where he was sent into banishment, and there died in obscurity and contempt ; *Suetonius, in Octavio, lib. 16. ; Appian, De bellis civilibus, lib. 5. ; and L. Florus, lib. 4. c. 8.*

† The Sybils were women, of ancient times said to be endued with a prophetic spirit, and to have delivered oracles, foreshewing the fates and destinies of kingdoms. We have, in the writings of the ancients, mention made of ten of them : The Cumæan, the Cumanian, the Persian, the Hellespontican, the Lybian, the Samian, the Delphian, the Phrygian, the Tiburtine, and the Erythræan : But some are of opinion, that the Cumæan and the Erythræan was one and the same Sibyl ; that she was born at Erythræ in Ionia, and therefore was by the Greeks called Erythræa ; but, having removed from Erythræa to Cumæ in Italy, and there delivered all her oracles, she was from thence, by the Romans and Italians, called *Cumæa*. These Sibyls, among the Pagans, were what the prophets and prophetesses were accounted among the Hebrews ; and, as the most ancient of these was named *Sibylla*, so all others of the same sex, who pretended to the like fatidical, were called *Sibyls*. The place from whence these Sibyls gave out their oracles, was generally a cave, or subterraneous vault, (if we may judge of others by that at Cumæ), whereof Justin Martyr gives us this account. " I have seen the place," says he, " which is a large chapel, or " oratory, hewn out of the main rock, and must have been a work " of great labour. Here the Sibyl (as the inhabitants, who had a " tradition

A. M.
4001, etc.
Ant. Chriſt.
1, etc.
aut Ær.
Vulg. 3.
from Joſ.
lib. xiii. c.
19. to the
end of lib.
xv.



fuſing to purchaſe them, burnt three of them, and afterwards coming with fix, and being rejected, burnt three more, and yet, at laſt, obtained the full price of what ſhe had aſked at firſt, for the three remaining: That theſe volumes, when purchaſed, (*k*) were laid up in the Capitol, committed to the cuſtody of proper officers, never conſulted but upon great exigencies of ſtate, and carefully preſerved, until, at the burning of the Capitol, in the civil wars between Sylla and Marius, they happened to be conſumed: That, upon the rebuilding of the Capitol, (*l*) the Romans, with great care, made another collection of Sibylline oracles from ſeveral countries, and, after they had ſelected ſuch as their church and ſtate did approve of for their purpoſe, laid them up in the new Capitol, inſtead of thoſe which the fire had conſumed; that, beſides thoſe Capitoline volumes, there were a great many more Sibylline oracles in the world, (*m*) which Auguſtus, in the beginning of his office of pontifex maximus, endeavoured to collect, and what he reputed genuine, or rather what ſuited his purpoſe beſt, theſe he depoſited likewiſe in the Capitol, burning the reſt: That (*n*) Tiberius made another review of theſe oracles, and condemned ſeveral volumes of them to the flames; but the Capitoline copies were ſtill held in great veneration, (*o*) until they fell into diſgrace in the reign of Honorius, and, by his order and appointment, were burnt and deſtroyed; (*p*) theſe are facts that are confirmed by all antiquity, and what compriſe indeed the whole hiſtory of theſe Sibylline writings. But if they were all

“ tradition thereof, told me) gave forth oracles. In the middle
“ of the chapel, they ſhewed me three hollow places, hewn out
“ of the ſame rock, in which, when filled with water, the Sibyl
“ uſed to bath herſelf, and ſo, having put on her garment, retired
“ into the innermoſt cell of the chapel, (which was likewiſe hewn
“ out of the ſame rock), and, having placed herſelf upon an ele-
“ vated ſeat, which jutted out into the middle of the cell, ſhe there
“ uttered her oracles;” *Lactantius De falſa religione, lib. i. c. 6*; *Salmaſius in exercitatus ad Solinum, p. 8.*; et *J. Martyr, Cohortatio ad Græcos.*

(*k*) Dionyſ. Halicar. lib. 4.; Pliny's Nat. hiſt. lib. 13.; Solin. Polyhiſt. lib. 2.; and Aul. Gel. lib. i. c. 19. (*l*) Tully de divinat. lib. 1.; Dionyſ. Halicar.; and Aul. Gel. ubi ſupra. (*m*) Lactan. De falſa religione, lib. 6, et De ira Dei, c. 22. (*n*) Sueton. in Octavio. (*o*) Dion. Caſſius, lib. 57.; Tacit. Annal. lib. 6. (*p*) Aug. De civit. Dei, lib. xviii. c. 53, 54.

thus

thus finally destroyed, the question is, how came we by the present collection of Greek verses, comprised in eight books, which go under the name of the *Sibyls*, and of what merit and authority are we to account them?

Now, in answer to this, it is to be observed, (q) that, long before the times of Christianity, there were extant, among the Heathens, several oracles, or predictions of future events, ascribed to one or more of these prophetesses, who were styled *Sibyls*; that these predictions were held in great esteem among the ancients, as containing notions consonant to true religion, the worship of one God, the conflagration of the world, the renovation of it again, the general resurrection, and the rewards and punishments hereafter; and that both Heathen, Jewish, and Christian authors, who make mention of these Sibyls, give a strong sanction to their authority. Varro looks upon them as inspired prophetesses; Virgil does them honour in citing their predictions; Josephus thinks them useful to establish some positions in sacred history; and Clemens Alexandrinus (as he quotes a more ancient author for it) brings in St. Paul addressing himself to a Heathen audience in these words: "Take the Greek books in your hands, read the Sibyls, and see what they say of the unity of God, and how they foretell what is to come, and you will there clearly find the Son of God." It must be acknowledged, indeed, that the whole Collection of these Sibylline oracles, as they are now extant, in eight entire books, is far from being genuine. The 1st, 2d, and most of the 5th, all the 6th, 7th, and 8th books, seem to be a manifest forgery, the spurious production of some zealous Christian, (perhaps about the middle of the second age after Christ), for the promotion of the religion he professed.

(r) In one place, he explicitly declares himself to be a Christian, and speaks of the whole mystery of our salvation, and of the methods whereby it was accomplished; of the incarnation and birth, the circumcision and death, the resurrection and ascension of our Saviour Christ, with as much accuracy as do the evangelists. (s) In another place, he mentions Christ's future reigning here upon earth, according to the notion of the Millenari-

(q) Whiston's Vindication of the Sybilline oracles.

(r) Lib. viii.

(s) Lib. ii.

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4 K

ans,

A. M.
4001, etc.
Ant. Christ.
1, &c.
aut Ær.
Vulg. 3.
from Jos.
lib. xiii. c.
19. to the
end of lib.
xv.

A. M.
4001, etc.
Ant. Christ.
1, etc.
aut. Ær.
Vul'g 3
from Jos.
lib. xii. c.
19. to the
end of lib.
xv.

ans, which was not started till the second century; and, (t) in another, gives us a succession of the Roman emperours, in their order, from Julius Cæsar to Antoninus Pius, together with the adoption of Marcus Aurelius, and Lucius Verus, which has much more the air of an historical narrative, than a prophetic prediction.

These things discover a forgery (at least a great part of these pretended oracles) a little too palpably; but then, it must be observed, that neither the Heathens before, nor the Christians, for the three first centuries after Christ, knew any thing of these spurious pieces, because we nowhere find them making any citations from them; but now, (u) from the whole poem, the greatest part of the third, all the fourth, and a small branch of the fifth book, (which are the only parts of the present collection, that are either cited or referred to by the ancient Heathens), their quotations are innumerable: And therefore we may justly infer, that the present copy of eight books is not the same with what was extant before, and in the first ages of Christianity. but widely different from it; that those are the genuine prophecies only, which we find the ancient Heathens, and primitive Christians, so frequently citing, and so generally esteeming, upon the account of their divine inspiration; and that the rest, which have visible marks of forgery upon them, were probably the spurious additions of such conceited Christians as called themselves *Gnosticks*; because Epiphanius tells us, that this set of men boasted of having books, written by the daughter of Noah, even as the pretended prophets, at the end of the third book, (which is a spurious addition to what went before), gives us to know, that she was a wife to one of the three sons of Noah, and was with him in the ark during the whole time of the deluge.

Upon the whole, therefore, we may conclude, that tho' in the collection, which we now have of the Sibylline prophecies, several whole books, and some parts in others, are confessedly spurious; yet others there are, which have all the evidences we can desire of their being genuine: And therefore to condemn them all in the lump, and, because some appear to be palpable forgeries, to include all under the same category, is an act of great injustice.

If indeed we attend never so little to the contents of those oracles, which we deem genuine, we cannot but per-

(t) Lib. v.

(u) Ibid.

ceive, that neither Heathens, Jews, or Christians, could, consistently with themselves, be any ways the forgers of them. (x) The Heathens could not, because they are directly levelled against their wickedness, idolatry, and Polytheism. The Jews could not, because they foretel the subversion of their state and temple by the Romans, which, we all know, they would never believe: And the Christians could not, because many quotations, out of these oracles, are found in other authors, previous to Christianity; and in the beginning of it, several of them are cited by the first Christians, in the open view of all men, as very ancient at that time, very well known, and universally received over all the Heathen world.

If then these genuine prophecies of the Sibyls were not of human contrivance and invention, the conclusive question is, from whence was it that they derived their origin? God, no doubt, who forced Balaam, contrary to his will, to bless the Israelites, and to prophecy (y) *the coming of his Son out of Jacob*, could, in what manner he pleased, controul the diabolical spirits, which presided in the Heathen oracles, and make them utter things, even relating to the kingdom of the Messiah, which otherwise they might have no inclination to utter. But there is no necessity for our having recourse to this extraordinary expedient; since the contents of the Sibylline oracles (those I mean that are genuine) are every where agreeable to the Scriptures, and foretel, for the main part, the same great revolutions of providence, that they do; it is no way inconsistent with the divine attributes to suppose, that, though God gave positive laws, or an institution of religious worship to the Jews only, and intrusted none but them with those divine oracles, which related to that worship; yet he might not wholly confine divine inspiration to that nation, but might support the law and religion of nature, and the right worship of himself, as the one true God, among the Heathens likewise, by the help of these oracles, until (z) *the day dawned, i. e.* a more perfect revelation came, and *he who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, gave the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of JESUS CHRIST.*

(x) Whiston's Vindication of the Sybilline oracles.

(y) Numb. xxiv. 5, &c.

(z) 2 Cor. iv. 6.

A

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE

OF THE

H I S T O R Y

OF THE

H O L Y B I B L E.

P E R I O D I.

<i>Anno Mun.</i>	From the CREATION, to the DELUGE, 1656 years.	<i>Ante Chr.</i>
1	THE creation of the world, and our first parents.	4000
2	The birth of Cain, Adam's eldest son.	3999
3	The birth of Abel.	3998
129	Cain kills his brother Abel.	3871
130	The birth of Seth, son to Adam and Eve.	3870
235	The birth of Enos, son of Seth.	3765
325	The birth of Cainan, son of Enos.	3675
395	The birth of Mahalaleel, son of Cainan.	3605
460	The birth of Jared, son of Mahalaleel.	3540
622	The birth of Enoch, the son of Jared.	3378
687	The birth of Methuselah, son of Enoch.	3313
874	The birth of Lamech, son of Methuselah.	3126
930	The death of Adam, aged 930 years.	3070
987	The translation of Enoch, aged 365 years.	3013
1042	The death of Seth, aged, 912 years.	2958
1056	The birth of Noah, son of Lamech.	2944
1140	The death of Enos, aged 905 years.	2860
1235	The death of Cainan, aged 910 years.	2765
1290	The death of Mahalaleel, aged 895 years.	2710
1422	The death of Jared, aged 962 years.	2578
1536	Noah warned by God of the future deluge.	2464
1651	The death of Lamech, aged 775 years.	2349
1656	The death of Methuselah, the longest liver of all men.	2344
	The same year Noah, being 600 years old, by God's command, enters the ark.	

A Chronological Table of

P E R I O D II.

<i>Anno Mun.</i>	<i>From the Deluge, to the Calling of Abraham, 426 years.</i>	<i>Ante Chr.</i>
1657	NOAH , with his family, and three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japhet. leave the ark.	2343
	The rainbow made a pledge of no future deluge.	
1658	The birth of Arphaxad, the son of Shem.	2342
1663	Noah plants a vineyard, and drinks to excess.	2337
1693	The birth of Salah, son to Arphaxad.	2307
1723	The birth of Heber, the son of Salah.	2277
1757	The birth of Phaleg, son of Heber.	2243
1770	The building of the tower of Babel, the confusion of languages, and dispersion of nations.	2230
1771	The beginning of the Babylonian, or Assyrian monarchy, founded by Nimrod; and of the kingdom of Egypt, by Misraim the son of Ham.	2229
1787	The birth of Reu, the son of Phaleg.	2213
1819	The birth of Serug, the son of Reu.	2181
1849	The birth of Nahor, the son of Serug.	2151
1878	The birth of Terah, the son of Nahor.	2122
1943	The death of Nimrod, succeeded by Belus.	2057
1948	The birth of Harah, son of Terah.	2052
1969	The death of Belus, succeeded by Ninus.	2031
2006	The death of Noah, aged 950 years, and the beginning of the postdiluvian idolatry.	1994
2008	The birth of Abram, son of Terah.	1992
2017	The death of Ninus, succeeded by his wife Semiramis.	1984
2018	The birth of Sarai, Abram's wife.	1982
2059	The death of Semiramis, succeeded by her son Ninias.	1941
2083	The call of Abram from Ur, to Haran in Mesopotamia, where his father died, aged 205 years.	1917

P E R I O D III.

From the Calling of Abraham, to the Israelites Departure out of Egypt, 430 years.

2083	ABRAHAM 's second call out of Haran, into the Land of Promise, where he lived at Sichem.	1917
2084	His going down into Egypt upon account of the famine, and returning thence, when Tegar Amichus was king of Egypt.	1916
2092	His defeating Chedorlaomer's victorious army, and retaking his nephew Lot, with much booty.	1908
2094	The birth of Ishmael, son of Abraham, by Hagar, Sarah's hand-maid.	1906
2107	God's covenant with Abraham. The institution of circumcision. Abraham's entertaining angels. The destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. Lot's preservation, and committing incest with his daughters.	1893
2115	The birth of Isaac, son of Abraham and Sara.	1885
2118	The dismissal of Hagar and Ishmael.	1882
2133	Abraham's offering up his son Isaac.	1867
2148	The death of Sarah, Abraham's wife, aged 127 years.	1852
2148	Abraham's sending his servant into Mesopotamia, to procure Rebekah for his son's wife; and much about this time the kingdom of the Argives in Peloponnesus began.	1852
2150	The marriage of Abraham with Keturah.	1854
2167	Rebekah, being barren for 19 years, at last conceived.	1833
2168	The birth of Jacob and Esau.	1832

The History of the BIBLE.

<i>Anno Mun.</i>		<i>Ante Chr.</i>
1184	The death of Abraham, aged 175 years.	1817
2200	Isaac's covenant with Abimelech, king of Gerar.	1800
2208	Esau's marriage with Canaanitish women. The deluge of Ogyges in Attica this year.	1792
2231	The death of Ishmael, Abraham's eldest son.	1769
2245	Isaac's mistake, in giving his blessing to Jacob, and Jacob's withdrawing into Mesopotamia, and there marrying first Leah, and then Rachel.	1755
2246	The birth of Reuben, son of Jacob and Leah.	1754
2247	The birth of Simeon the son of Leah.	1753
2248	The birth of Levi the son of Leah.	1752
2249	The birth of Judah, son of Leah.	1751
2259	The birth of Joseph, son of Jacob and Rachel. Biryis was then king of Egypt.	1741
2265	Jacob, taking his wives and children with him, leaves Mesopotamia, and returning into his own country, contrary to his fears, is graciously received by his brother Esau.	1735
2273	The rape of Dinah, and the severe revenge which her brothers take. The birth of Benjamin, and the death of Rachel.	1727
2276	Joseph sold by his brothers into Egypt.	1724
2286	Is tempted by Potiphar's wife, and, upon his refusal, put into prison	1714
2287	He explains the dreams of two officers at court. The death of Isaac, aged 180 years.	1713
2289	Joseph explains the king's dreams, and is thereupon made governour of all Egypt. Saomis was then king of Egypt.	1711
2296	The beginning of the seven years famine.	1704
2297	Joseph's ten brethren come into Egypt to buy corn.	1703
2298	Jacob, and his whole family, go down into Egypt. Senfaopis was then king of Egypt.	1702
2302	The Egyptians sell their lands and liberties for food.	1698
2302	The end of the seven years famine, and Joseph's returning to the Egyptians their lands and cattle.	1698
2315	The death of Jacob, aged 147 years.	1695
2369	The death of Joseph, aged 110 years, desiring to have his bones carried into the land of Canaan.	1631
2427	The new king of Egypt persecuting the Jews. Ramesses Miamon was then king of Egypt.	1573
2427	About this time lived Job, famous for his virtue and wisdom, as well as patience.	1573
2430	The birth of Aaron, son of Amram and Jacobed.	1570
2433	The birth of Moses, brother of Aaron, together with many wonderful incidents attending it.	1567
2148	Cecrops first founded the kingdom of Athens.	1552
2473	Moses killing an Egyptian, flies into Midian, and marries Jethro's daughter.	1527
2513	The miraculous appearance to Moses in the burning bush, and his being sent to deliver the Israelites out of Egypt.	1487
2513	After ten plagues inflicted on the Egyptians, the Israelites are allowed to depart from Egypt. Amenophis was then king of Egypt, and he it is who was drowned in the Red-Sea.	1487

A Chronological Table of

P E R I O D IV.

Anno *Ante*
Mun. *From the Israelites departure out of Egypt into the land of Canaan, Chr.*
40 years.

- 2513 **A**fter the Israelites passage through the Red-Sea, the destruction of the Egyptians, and other remarkable incidents, the law is given on Mount Sinai.
- 2514 After the delivering of the law with several circumstances of terrour, the people's covenant with God, their gross idolatry, and many other incidents, the tabernacle is erected. 1486
- 2512 The Israelites continue a good while at Kadish-barnea. 1484
- 2552 After their wandering, for the space of thirty-seven years, in the wilderness, they come again to the same place. 1448
- 2553 After their murmuring for want of water, the death of Aaron, in the 123d year of his age, and the erection of the brazen serpent, to cure them of the biting of fiery serpents; upon Sihon king of the Ammorites refusing them a passage through his dominions, the Israelites make war against him, and take his country. 1447
- 2553 At this time the great Sesostris is supposed, by Usher and others, to have reigned in Egypt. 1447
- 1553 After the defeat of Og, king of Bashan, the practices of Balak king of Moab, the defection of the people into idolatry, and their war with the Midianites, Moses, the servant of the Lord, died in the 120th year of his age, and is succeeded in the government of the children of Israel by Joshua.

P E R I O D V.

From their entrance into the land of Canaan, to the building of Solomon's temple, 447 years,

- 2554 **A**fter the succession of Joshua, the passage of Jordan, the taking of Jericho, the league with the Gibeonites, the defeat of the five confederate princes, and the arrest of the sun and moon during the action, Joshua begins the war against the kings of Canaan. 1446
- 2561 After the conquest and division of the country, fixing the tabernacle in Shiloh, and appointing cities of refuge, etc. Joshua exhorts the people, and dies, in the 110th year of his age. 1439
- 2562 During the succeeding anarchy, the idolatry of the Danites, and the war with the Benjamites, Deucalion's flood, and the burning of Phaeton, (as the poets fable) seem to have happened. 1438
- 2599 The government of the principal judges, as, that of Othniel. 1401
- 2679 That of Ehud. 1321
- 2719 That of Deborah and Barak. 1281
- 2759 That of Gideon, 1241
- 2768 That of Abimelech. 1232
- 2786 The rape of Ganymede. 1214
- 2801 The adventures of Perseus. 1199
- 2817 That of Jephthah. 1183
- 2821 The taking of the city of Troy. 1180
- 2831 The reign of Ninus. 1169
- 2848 That of Eli, the high-priest. 1152
- 2849 Danaus's fifty daughters murder their husbands. 1151
- 2887 That of Samson. 1113
- 2888 The ark taken by the Philistines. 1112
- 2908 That of Samuel. 1092
- 2909 Saul is appointed king of Israel. 1091
- 2911 His war with the Philistines. 1089

The History of the B I B L E.

<i>Anno</i> <i>Mun.</i>		<i>Anno</i> <i>Cbr.</i>
2930	His war with the Amalekites.	1070
2941	Samuel anoints David king.	1059
2942	David fights against Goliath, and kills him.	1058
2944	Is forced to flee from court into different places by reason of Saul's jealousy.	1056
2947	The death of Samuel at the age of 98 years.	1053
	The history of Nabal and his wife Abigail about this time.	
2949	Saul, in his war with the Philistines, consults the witch of Endor, causes Samuel's ghost to be raised, loses the battle, and kills himself, whereupon David is acknowledged king by the tribe of Judah.	1051
2956	After his reconciliation with Abner, (who is treacherously slain by Joab), and the death of his rival Ishbosheth, he is declared king over all Israel.	1049
2958	His wars with the Philistines.	1042
2959	His bringing home the ark.	1041
2960	His design to build a Temple.	1040
2967	His wars against the Ammonites and Syrians.	1033
2969	His adultery with Bathsheba, and murder of Uriah,	1031
2971	The birth of Solomon.	1029
2972	Ammon's ravishing his sister Tamar.	1028
2974	Abfalom's killing his brother Ammon.	1026
2781	His rebellion against his father David, and death by the hand of Joab.	1019
2983	The famine sent to revenge the death of the Gibeonites.	1017
2987	The plague for David's numbering the people	1013
2988	David prepares materials for the building of the temple,	1012
2989	Causes his son Solomon to be proclaimed king.	1011
2990	Upon David's death, Solomon ascends the throne; puts Adonijah and Joab to death; deposes Abiathar from the high-priesthood, and marries the daughter of the king of Egypt.	1010
2992	Obtains of Hiram, king of Tyre, timber and workmen to assist him in building of the temple.	1008
3000	Finishes the whole structure of the temple.	1000

P E R I O D VI.

From the building of the Temple, to the Babylonish Captivity 400 Years.

3001	T HE dedication of the temple.	999
3026	The rebellion of Jeroboam against Solomon.	974
3029	The death of Solomon, succession of Rehoboam, and the revolt of the ten tribes.	971

<i>Anno</i> <i>Cbr.</i>	Kings of JUDAH for 388 years.	Kings of ISRAEL for 264 years.	<i>Anno</i> <i>Mun.</i>
3029	971 Rehoboam, intending to make war with the tribes, is diverted from it by a prophet.	Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, abolishes the worship of the Lord, and sets up the worship of golden calves.	3030 . 970
3032	970 He gives himself up to impiety.		
3033	767 Is plundered by Shishack, king of Egypt.		
3046	954 Dies, and is succeeded by his son Abijah.		

A Chronological Table of

<i>Anno Mun.</i>	<i>Ante Chr.</i>	Kings of JUDAH.	Kings of ISRAEL.	<i>Anno Mun.</i>	<i>Ante Chr.</i>
3047	953	Abijah's victory over Jeroboam.	Jeroboam is overcome by Abijah, with the loss of 500,000 of his men.	3047	953
3049	951	He dies, and is succeeded by his son Afa, who suppresses the idolatry that had been introduced into the kingdom of Judah.	The death of Jeroboam, and succession of his son Nadab.	3050	950
3064	936	He engages Ben-hadad king of Syria, to invade the territories of Baasha, king of Israel, in order to make him quit his undertaking at Ramah.	The death of Nadab; and succession of Baasha, who builds Ramah, to hinder the Israelites from going to Jerusalem.	3054	946
			The death of Baasha, and succession to his son Elah.	3074	926
			Zimri kills Elah, and usurps the kingdom of Israel; but Omri soon besieges him, and forces him to burn himself in his own palace.	3075	925
			Omri, when seated in the throne, builds Samaria, and makes it the seat of his empire.	3079	921
3090	910	The death of Afa, and succession of his son Jehoshaphat, who expels all sorts of superstitious worship out of his dominions.	His death; and the succession of his son Ahab.	3086	914
			Elijah, the prophet of the Lord, causes the false prophets of Baal to be slain, and appoints Elisha to be his successor in the prophetic office.	3096	904
			Ahab defeats Ben-hadad, king of Syria, who laid siege to Samaria, and afterwards in a pitched battle.	3103	897
3107	893	Jehoshaphat accompanies Ahab in his expedition against Ramoth-Gilead, and is in danger of being slain.	He makes war against Ramoth-Gilead, and there being slain in disguise, is succeeded by his son Ahaziah.	3107	893
3108	892	He equips a fleet for Ophir, but miscarriage in the voyage. Eliahan is this year translated in a fiery chariot.	Ahaziah, by a fall, is dangerously wounded. He dies, and is succeeded by his brother Jehoram.	3108	892
3115	885	The death of Jehoshaphat; and his son Jehoram's succession to the crown.	Elisha foretells the victory of the army of the Israelites, and procures plenty of water for them.	3109	891
3116	884	Jehoram introduces idolatry into Judah; is smitten with an incurable disease; dies; and is succeeded by his son Ahaziah,			
3119	881	HOMER about this time flourished.	The siege of Samaria by Ben-hadad, wherein he and his army are seized with a panic fear, and break up in confusion at night.	3119	881

The History of the BIBLE.

<i>Anno Mun.</i>	<i>Ante Chr.</i>	Kings of JUDAH.	Kings of ISRAEL.	<i>Anno Mun.</i>	<i>Ante Chr.</i>
3110	880	Ahaziah accompanies Jehoram, king of Israel, to the siege of Ramoth-Gilead, and being afterwards put to death, by the order of Jehu, his kingdom is usurped by his mother Athaliah, who destroys all the royal family, except young Joash.	Jehoram is wounded at Ramoth-Gilead, and after that slain by Jehu, who usurps the crown.	3120	880
3147	853	Athaliah is put to death, and Joash, being seated on the throne, repairs the ruins of the temple.	The death of Jehu, and succession of his son Jehoahaz.	3148	852
3164	836	Joash orders the high-priest Zechariah to be slain in the temple; wages war with Hazael, king of Syria; is forced to give him large sums of money; is murdered by his servants, and is succeeded by his son Amaziah.	The death of Jehoahaz, and succession of his son Joash. Elisha dies about this time. The death of Hazael, king of Syria, and succession of his son Benhadad, who wars against Joash.	3165	837
3178	822	Amaziah declares war against Joash, king of Israel, and is defeated; he dies; and is succeeded by his son Uzziah, otherwise called <i>Azariah</i> , in whose reign the prophets Isaiah and Amos arise in the kingdom of Judah.	Joash obtains a great victory over Amaziah, king of Judah. He dies; and is succeeded by his son Jeroboam II. in whose reign the prophets Jonah, Hosea, and Amos, prophesied in Israel. The Olympic games were instituted this year. The death of Jeroboam II. and a long <i>interregnum</i> . Zechariah, the son of Jeroboam, at length obtains the kingdom, but, after a reign of six months, is killed by Shallum, who, after a reign of one month, is killed by Menahim, who dies; and is succeeded by his son Pekahiah.	3178	822
				3225	775
				3232	768
3246	754	The death of Uzziah, and succession of his son Jotham, in whose reign Isaiah and Hosea prophesied.	Pekahiah is assassinated by Pekah, who succeeds him. The city of Rome began to be built. Arbaces, governor of Media, (who in Scripture is called <i>Tiglerb-Pileser</i>), and Belshazzar, (otherwise called <i>Nabonassar</i>), conspire against Sardanapalus, king of Assy-	3245	755
				3249	751
				3254	746

A Chronological Table of

<i>Anno Mun.</i>	<i>Ante Chr.</i>	Kings of JUDAH.	Kings of ISRAEL.	<i>Anno Mun.</i>	<i>Ante Chr.</i>
3262	738	The death of Jotham, and succession of his son Ahaz, who is invaded by Rezin, king of Syria, and Pekah, king of Israel, and at length invites to his assistance Tiglath-Pileser, king of Assyria, submitting to pay him tribute.	ria, and having besieged him in Nineveh for three years, compels him at last to burn himself and all his riches in his own palace; whereupon Tiglath Pileser is acknowledged king of Assyria, and Nabonassar lays the foundation of the Babylonish empire.	3254	746
			Tiglath Pileser overcomes Rezin, king of Syria, and puts him to death; then enters the land of Israel; takes many cities, and carries away a great number of captives.	3264	736
			Hoshea, the son of Elah, puts Pekah, king of Israel, to death, and usurps the throne.	3265	735
3278	722	Ahaz dies; and is succeeded by Hezekiah, who restores the true worship of God (which Ahaz had almost quite subverted) in Judah and Jerusalem.	Tiglath-Pileser dies; and is succeeded by Salmaneser, who invades the kingdom of Israel, and makes Hoshea tributary to him.	3276	724
			Hoshea, king of Israel, thinking to shake off the yoke of Salmaneser, makes an alliance with So, or Sabacon, king of Egypt; whereupon Salmaneser besieges Samaria, and, after three years, takes it, and carries away the people captive, and so extinguishes the kingdom of Israel, after it had subsisted, from the separation, 264 years.	3279	721
3285		Salmaneser dies; and is succeeded by Sennacherib, who invades the kingdom of Judah, and takes several of its cities.			715
3291		Hezekiah's sickness and recovery. He gives money to Sennacherib, who still continues the war against him, but at length loses all his army by the stroke of an angel; whereupon the Medes revolt from his dominion, and at his return to Nineveh, he is put to death by two of his sons, and succeeded by a third, named <i>Efarhaddon</i> .			709
3306		Hezekiah dies; and is succeeded by his son Manasseh.			694
3323		Efarhaddon makes himself master of Babylon, and reunites the Assyrian and Babylonish empire.			667
3329		He takes Manasseh prisoner, and carries him in chains to Babylon.			677
3347		Holofernes invades Judea, and is slain by Judith.			653
3361		Manasseh, after his return from Babylon, dies; and is succeeded by his son Ammon.			639
3363		Ammon is murdered by his servants; and succeeded by his son Josiah, in whose reign Zephaniah prophesied.			637

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<i>Anno Mun.</i>	<i>Ante Chr.</i>
3370 Josiah endeavours to reform several abuses that had been introduced, and restores the true worship of God.	630
3376 At this time Jeremiah begins to prophesy.	624
3394 Josiah is slain in battle against Necho, king of Egypt; (whereupon Jeremiah composes his book of Lamentations), and is succeeded first by Jehoahaz, and after him by Jehoiakim, in whose reign Habakkuk prophesied.	606
3398 Nebuchadnezzar takes Jerusalem, and carries Daniel and his companions captives into Babylon.	602
3402 Daniel interprets Nebuchadnezzar's dream of the great statue.	598
3404 The history of Susannah at Babylon, and Jehoiakim's revolt against Nebuchadnezzar.	596
3405 The birth of Cyrus, and the death of Jehoiakim, whose body is thrown into the highway, without any burial; and the succession of Jeconiah, who (after a short reign) is taken and carried to Babylon, while his uncle Zedekiah is left at Jerusalem in his place.	595
3410 Ezekiel begins to prophesy in Chaldea, and foretells the destruction of Jerusalem.	590
3412 Zedekiah confederates with the king of Egypt, and revolts against Nebuchadnezzar.	588
3414 Nebuchadnezzar besieges Jerusalem; defeats the Egyptian army; takes the city, and utterly destroys it, with the temple; puts out Zedekiah's eyes; carries him to Babylon; and sends the Jews, that were left in the country, captive beyond the Euphrates. And thus ended the kingdom of Judah, after it had subsisted, from the time of the separation, 388 years.	586

P E R I O D VII.

From the Babylonish Captivity to the Birth of Christ, 588 Years.

3416 G EDALIAH is made governour of the people that are left in Judea, and is murdered by Ishmael.	584
3417 Nebuchadnezzar returns to Babylon, and erects the golden image in the plains of Dura.	583
3439 He runs distracted, and thinks himself changed into an ox.	565
3433 Is restored to his senses; dies; and is succeeded by his son Evil-Merodach, who is slain by a conspiracy.	557
3446 Cyrus, being made general of the Medes and Persians against the Babylonians, kills Neriglissar the king in battle, and routs Cræsus their confederate.	552
3455 Cyrus vanquishes Cræsus a second time at the river Halys; pursues him to Sardis; takes the city and Cræsus in it; whom he first orders to be burnt, but afterwards pardons, and takes him into his confidence.	545
3463 Returning into Assyria, he lays siege to Babylon; takes it; and having slain Belshazzar in it, places his uncle Darius on the throne.	537
3468 Darius dies; and Cyrus, succeeding him, destroys the Assyrian, and begins the Persian monarchy; and, the year following, restores the Jews to their liberty, and so puts an end to the 70 years captivity.	537
3469 The Jews, returning to Jerusalem, begin to rebuild the city and temple, but are obstructed by the Samaritans.	531
3475 The wars of Cyrus with the Scythians, wherein he dies, being 70 years old; and is succeeded by his son Cambyfes.	525
3480 Cambyfes puts his brother Smerdis to death; makes war in Egypt; and, returning into Syria, there dies.	520

A Chronological Table of

<i>Anno Mun.</i>		<i>Ante Chr.</i>
3483	Smerdis, the Magian, (whom the Scripture calls Artaxerxes) succeeds Cambyfes, stops the building of the temple; but he, and all the other Magians are destroyed by certain of the Persian nobility; and Darius, the son of Hyftaspes, succeeds in the throne.	517
3484	Darius, by an exprefs decree, allows the Jews to rebuild their temple, and takes Babylon, which had revolted, by an hardy stratagem of Zopyrus.	516
3489	The temple rebuilt, and dedicated; and the revenues of Samaria granted for the support of its worship.	511
3518	Zoroaftres, the famous Perfian prophet appears; and Darius dying, is fucceeded by his fon Xerxes, who confirms the Jews in their privileges.	482
3524	Xerxes's expedition againft the Greeks, and inglorious return. He is flain by the treason of Artabanus, and fucceeded by his fon Artaxerxes, in the Scripture called <i>Abafuerus</i> .	476
3542	He divorces Vafhti, and makes the Jewifh Esther his queen.	458
3546	Ezra is fent to be governour of Judea, and feparates the Jews from their ftrange wives.	454
3552	Haman's plot againft all the Jews ends in his own deftruction.	448
3559	Nehemiah fent governor to Judea. He rebuilds the walls, repeoples Jeru- and proceeds to reform the church and ftate, while Ezra publifhes his edition of the Hebrew Scriptures.	441
3571	Nehemiah goes from Jerufalem to the Perfian court, and comes again with a new commiffion. In the time of his adminiftration, Zacharia and Malachi both prophecy.	429
3580	Artaxerxes dies; and is fucceeded by Xerxes II. his fon, who is flain by Sogdianus, as Sogdianus is by Ochus, who, with the crown, affumes the name of Darius, and is commonly called <i>Darius Notus</i> .	420
3580	The death of Nehemiah, and the reduction of Judea to the prefecture of Syria, under which it was governed by the high-prieft.	420
3596	The temple on mount Gerizzim began to be built by Manaffeh.	404
3599	Darius dies; and is fucceeded by his fon Artaxerxes Mnemon.	401
3638	Jonathan kills his brother Joshua contending for the high-priefthood, for which the Jews are put under a mulct for feven years.	362
3646	Artaxerxes Mnemon dies; and is fucceeded by Artaxerxes Ochus.	354
3648	Alexander the Great born at Pella in Macedonia.	352
3666	Bagoas, the eunuch, poifons Ochus, and makes his brother Arfes king in his ftead; he afterwards deftroys Arfes, and fets up Darius Codomannus, who puts Bagoas to death.	334
3667	Philip king of Macedon, being made general of Greece againft the Perfians, is flain by Paufanias, and fucceeded by his fon Alexander, both in his kingdom and command.	333
3670	Alexander paffes into Asia, and defeats Darius in two pitched battles.	330
3672	Deftroys Tyre, and marches to Jerufalem, where the high-prieft diverts his anger, and engages his favour to the Jews.	328
3673	He chaftifes the Samaritans for killing their governour Andromachus.	327
3674	The death of Darius Codomannus, who is flain by Belfus, and with whom ends the Perfian monarchy.	326
3681	The beginning of the Grecian empire, and the death of Alexander, who was the firft founder of it.	319
3681	After the death of Alexander, Aridæus, his bafard-brother, is made nominal king, while the great officers in the army divide the provinces of the empire among themfelves.	319
3684	Ptolemy, the fon of Lagus, whom the Greeks call <i>Soter</i> , feizes on Egypt, and conquers Judea.	316
3708	Simon the Juft, high-prieft of the Jews, having completed the canon of the Old Testament, dies; and is fucceeded by Eleazar his brother.	292

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<i>Anno Mun.</i>		<i>Ante Chr.</i>
3716	Ptolemy Soter dies; and is succeeded in the kingdom of Egypt by Ptolemy Philadelphus, who causes the Hebrew Scriptures to be translated into Greek.	284
3730	The Romans, at this time, begin to make a figure.	270
3471	The first Carthaginian war began.	259
3757	Upon the death of Ptolemy Philadelphus, his son Ptolemy Euergetes succeeds to the throne of Egypt, and makes himself master of Syria and Judea.	243
3778	Onias, the high-priest, having offended Ptolemy by neglecting to pay the annual tribute due to the crown of Egypt, sends his nephew Joseph to accommodate the matter, and make his peace.	222
3783	Ptolemy Euergetes dies; and is succeeded by his son Philopater, who enters into war with Antiochus surnamed the Great, king of Syria.	217
3787	Ptolemy Philopater gains a great victory over Antiochus; attempts to enter into the temple of Jerusalem; but, being hindered by the priests, at his return into Egypt, he orders all the Jews, either to renounce their religion, or to be trod to death by elephants: but God wonderfully delivers them.	213
3800	Upon the death of Ptolemy Philopater, Ptolemy Epiphanes, an infant five years old, succeeds him; but has Phœnicia and Judea soon ravished from him by Antiochus the Great.	200
3802	Scipio vanquishes Hannibal in Africa, and the Romans begin now to make a considerable figure in the world.	198
3815	Hannibal, coming to Antiochus, prevails with him to enter into war with the Romans, but the Romans soon defeat him, and compel him to make an inglorious peace.	185
3817	Hyrcaus is sent by Joseph his father to make his compliment to King Ptolemy, upon the birth of his eldest son.	183
3818	Antiochus the Great dies; and is succeeded in the kingdom of Syria by his son Seleucus Philopater, who sends Heliodorus to fetch the treasure that was in the temple of Jerusalem, but is hindered by an apparition of angels.	182
2829	Upon the death of Seleucus, Antiochus Epiphanes, his brother, succeeds to the kingdom of Syria, and proves a violent persecutor of the Jews. He takes the city of Jerusalem by storm; slays its inhabitants, and grossly profanes the temple.	171
3836	He sends Apollonius to complete the ruin of Jerusalem, and begins a public persecution of the Jewish religion; whereupon Mattathias and his sons take up arms against him.	164
3737	Old Eleazar, and the seven Maccabees, brothers, together with their mother, are martyred, and the persecution violently carried on.	163
3838	Upon the death of Mattathias, his son Judas Maccabeus is made captain of the Jews, and vanquishes several of Antiochus's commanders, recovers Jerusalem, and the sanctuary, and institutes the feast of the dedication.	162
3840	Antiochus Epiphanes dies a miserable death in the east; and is succeeded by his son Antiochus Eupater, who under the tuition of Lyfias, still oppresses the Jews, but is still vanquished by Judas; as are likewise the Edomites and Ammonites.	160
3842	Demetrius surnamed Soter, son of Seleucus, who had been sent to Rome as an hostage, returns from thence, while Eupater is besieging Jerusalem; and, having put both him and his governor Lyfias to death, seizes upon the kingdom of Syria.	158
3843	Upon the death of Judas, who is slain manfully fighting, Jonathan Maccabeus is made captain of the Jewish forces, who defeats Bachides, the general of Demetrius, and makes peace with him.	157
3852	Demetrius, upon Alexander Balas, an impostor, pretending to the kingdom of Syria, makes his court to Jonathan; but Jonathan	148

A Chronological Table of

<i>Anno Mun.</i>		<i>Ant Chr.</i>
	takes part with Balas, who defeats and slays Demetrius, and so becomes king of Syria.	
3854	Demetrius Nicanor, eldest son to the late Demetrius Soter, by the help of Ptolemy Philometer, king of Egypt, regains the kingdom of Syria from Alexander Balas, who is beheaded by the king of Arabia.	146
3860	Tryphon brings young Antiochus, surnamed <i>Theos</i> , son of Alexander Balas, into Syria, and claims for him his father's crown; but as he designed it for himself, he, to prepare his way, treacherously murders Jonathan.	140
3861	Simon Maccabeus succeeds Jonathan, as captain of the Jewish army, and, as soon as Tryphon had put Antiochus to death, and usurped the kingdom of Syria, he declares against him, and takes part with Demetrius Nicanor, from whom he obtains a grant of the sovereignty of Judea.	139
3863	Demetrius Nicanor, being taken prisoner by the Parthians, his brother Antiochus Sidetes marries his wife Cleopatra, and, having vanquished Tryphon, takes him and puts him to death.	137
3866	Antiochus Sidetes, far from absolving his promise to Simon, imposes hard conditions on him, which Simon refusing to comply with, he, with his two sons, Judas and Mattathias, are treacherously murdered, at the procurement of Sidetes, by one Ptolemy, Simon's son-in-law.	134
3870	John, commonly called <i>Hyrchanus</i> , succeeds his father Simon in the command of the army of the Jews; disappoints the murderer of his design of usurping the government, and makes peace with Antiochus Sidetes, who was slain in the Parthian war.	130
3874	Hyrchanus shakes off the Syrian yoke, and makes himself independent: Takes several cities from Syria; destroys the temple of Gerizzim; and, having conquered the Idumæans, makes them embrace the Jewish religion.	126
3894	He besieges Samaria, and takes it. He dies; and is succeeded by Aristobulus, his eldest son, who, first of his family, wore a diadem, and took the title of king. Under his father's government the three principal sects of the Jews, the Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes, began to make a figure.	106
3898	Aristobulus starves his mother to death; conquers the Itureans, and makes them embrace the Jewish religion; orders his brother to Antigonus to be slain; dies himself; and is succeeded by his brother Alexander Jannæus.	102
3899	Alexander Jannæus besieges Ptolemais, but is defeated by Lathyrus king of Cyprus; is relieved by Cleopatra queen of Egypt, with whom he enters into an alliance.	101
3906	He takes and demolishes Gaza; maintains a war with his subjects for six years; and, after many military exploits, dies at last at the siege of Ragaba; and is succeeded by his wife Alexandra.	94
3921	The war between the Romans and Mithridates at this time began.	89
3926	Alexandra gains the Pharisees, a leading sect at that time, to her party, and diverts Tigranes, king of Armenia, from invading Judea.	74
3935	Upon the death of Alexandra, Aristobulus, the second son of Alexander Jannæus, having defeated his elder brother Hyrchanus, seizes upon the kingdom, and compels him to live a private life.	65
3939	Hyrchanus, at the instigation of Antipater, the father of Herod the Great, by the assistance of Aretas, king of Arabia, defeats Aristobulus, and claims the kingdom.	61
3940	Mithridates is reduced to the necessity of slaying himself.	60
3940	Pompey, coming to Damascus, hears the cause of Hyrchanus and Aristobulus; but Aristobulus, perceiving him to incline to his brother, withdraws to Jerusalem, and maintains the city against Pompey,	60

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- Anno* who takes it; and, carrying him prisoner to Rome, makes Hyrcanus high-priest, and prince of the Jews. *Ante*
Mun. 3954 Aristobulus is poisoned at Rome; and the difference, between Cæsar and 46
Pompey breaks out.
3957 Antipater obtains for his son Phasaël the government of Judea, and that 43
of Galilee for his son Herod, who, being summoned before the san-
hedrim and in danger of being condemned, retires in great rage to his
government.
3960 Julius Cæsar is murdered in the senate-house; and Herod causes Mali- 40
chus, who had poisoned his father Antipater, to be slain.
3962 Brutus and Cassius, being vanquished by Octavianus and Anthony, are for- 38
ced to slay themselves.
3963 The Jews accuse Phasaël and Herod to Mark Anthony several times, but 37
all to no purpose.
3964 Antigonus the son of Aristobulus, prevails with the Parthians to set him 36
upon the throne of Judea; whereupon the war between him and He-
rod commences, and ends in the death of Antigonus.
3970 Herod, at the request of his wife Mariamne, makes her brother Aristobulus high-priest, and afterwards causes him to be drowned, for 36
which he is called to an account by Mark Anthony, but makes his
peace by bribery.
3972 A war breaks out between Octavianus and Mark Anthony, wherein He- 28
rod sides with Anthony.
3973 The battle at Actium, wherein Octavianus obtains a complete victory o- 27
ver Anthony.
3974 Herod addresses himself to Octavianus, and makes his peace with him, 26
who pursues Anthony and Cleopatra to Alexandria, and there compels
them to kill themselves.
3975 Octavianus returning to Rome, enters it in triumph, and has the mo- 25
narchy of the whole Roman empire conferred on him, with the
name of *Augustus*, which he and his successours ever after bore.
3976 Herod, in a fit of rage and jealousy, puts Mariamne, his beloved wife, 24
to death, and the next year her Mother Alexandria.
3982 He undertakes several buildings in compliment to Augustus, contrary 18
to the religion of the Jews; but to make them amends for that, builds
them a glorious temple.
3989 Augustus, upon the death of Lepidus, takes upon him the office of high- 11
priest of Rome, and, by virtue thereof, examines the Sibylline prophe-
cies, burning such as were reputed spurious, and depositing the rest in
Apollo's temple.
3998 Herod causes Alexander and Aristobulus, his two sons by Mariamne, to 2
be strangled.
3999 The annunciation of the son of God to the virgin Mary. The birth of 1
John the Baptist six months before the birth of Jesus. The temple
of Janus shut.
4000 The birth of our blessed Lord and Saviour JESUS CHRIST.

N. B. That the vulgar Christian æra (which was the invention of Dionysius Exiguus) begins four years after the time of Christ's nativity.

A N I N D E X O F T H E P R I N C I P A L M A T T E R S I N T H E H I S T O R Y O F T H E O L D T E S T A M E N T.

N. B. That the letters *Ap.* stand for *Apparatus* to the Old Testament, *Pref.* for *Preface*, and *N.* for what is contained in the notes. The numeral letters stand for the *Vol.* the figures for the *Page*.

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